

HOUSE AND FARM.

Thorough-bred Stock.

The idea is prevalent among a certain class of farmers that it will not pay to purchase thorough-bred stock, for the reason that the value of such stock being far above that of common animals, there is no adequate profit in the investment. There are two serious mistakes made in taking this view. The one is that the cost of thorough-bred stock is excessive, and that an immense profit is made by the breeders selling animals at exorbitant prices; the other is that it does not pay to improve common stock by crossing pure-bred stock upon them, and that unless there is large capital available, with fine stables and costly attendance, the condition of these animals so deteriorates that they no longer possess any superiority over any other stock. Now, while year by year the value of the choicest specimens of the favorite breeds, either of horses, cattle, sheep, or swine, gradually increases, on the other hand, fair average animals, in which the blood of the choicest is intermingled, are gradually decreasing in price. The great demand for the best of everything now existing, and the competition of a largely-increased number of breeders desiring to purchase the best, and to cause their increasing price, but the very same increased number of breeders who have stock to dispose of tends to operate in the contrary direction with the average class of stock. It is now possible to purchase full-blood stock of good strains for very reasonable prices—not more than twice or thrice those asked for good native stock. We constantly see reports of sales of bulls and cows of Jersey, Ayrshire, Devon, or short-horned breeds at from \$100 to \$500. These prices are certainly within the means of a vast majority of farmers. If not, now is the time, when co-operation and combination is the fashion, to make this business one of those to be brought under the influence of joint effort. As to the second mistake made it is only necessary to point out the money value of the product of thorough-bred stock to show that the investment is a profitable one. In addition it might be shown that the profit is not confined to the thorough-bred alone, but that the first cross partakes so much of the better qualities of its high-bred parent that the advantage is immense, even at so early a period of improvement. Dairy stock of half-blood Jersey or Ayrshire will produce double the amount that an average native dairy will, or can. In a dairy of twenty-five cows, one pure-bred bull, at a cost of \$500, will produce twenty-five better calves every two years. The value of these calves is doubled from the moment of their birth on account of their parentage. When weaned the owner would rarely accept \$20 each for them. The \$500 then returns twenty-five per cent. each year in this way alone. But if these calves are raised until they come into profit, their product as cows will doubtless be double that of their dams on the whole. Then, twenty-five cows each year producing a clear profit of \$50 each, instead of \$25, as heretofore, (a low estimate,) a difference of \$625 yearly is shown to the credit of the investment. In beef stock a larger margin than this even can be shown, for not only is a greater amount of flesh produced for the same quantity of feed consumed, but the market price of a grade steer is higher for the whole weight of the animal than that of a native. Generally the benefit accruing is equal to a return of the value of a pure-bred bull in the third year, and every year afterward, on the beef sold, in addition to the increased value of the heifers as breeding stock. The same is true of sheep, hogs, and poultry, and were our young stock thus improved each year to come, as far as might be possible, undoubtedly the census of 1880 would show the value of our live stock to be double at least that of the stock enumerated in the previous one of 1870.

If you wish to add to the wealth of your town never buy anything abroad that can be purchased at home.

Large and Small Farms.

The census shows that the average size of farms in the United States was reduced 23 per cent. from 1860 to 1870, yet in Illinois and Indiana they increased in size from 125 to 302 in 1870—or 108 per cent. The proper management of these great estates requires that they should do nearly all the work by machinery, employing as few men and horses as possible. The small farmer, near by, produces his crop at a greater proportional cost, fails to compete, and sooner or later sells out to his rich neighbor. This gives rise to what is there very properly denominated "land monopoly," and in the farmer's granges this has already created two parties or factions—one composed of those owning a thousand acres and over, the other of average sized farmers. They are divided in interest, and the small farmer has the sympathy of the community, inasmuch as he directly aids business all about him, by employing help, patronizing stores, and in effect exchanging products for goods. The larger producers occasionally hold their products for a rise, make corners in wheat, corn, etc., and control the market as far as their foreign customers will permit them. The more democratic, poorer but more numerous elements, are already suggesting inquiries in their respective organizations, as to the effect of immense farms on the markets, and whether the Western tendency to land monopoly is beneficial to the general agricultural interest. The investigation will doubtless show that one monopoly is not materially different from another in its effect upon the masses of the people, and the business and political interests of the country; and the natural result will be a weeding of the granges. In the East, owing not alone to our thickly settled population, but to our varied industries, to manufacturing, workshops, and countless individual enterprises, the general tendency is toward small farms—such as can be used conveniently and profitably to supply existing home markets, so far as the law of supply and demand will permit them; and their position is better, more useful, more permanently prosperous, all round, than if each and all of them had the control of thousands of acres. The large land owners of Great Britain produced a system of tenantry which has entailed misery and poverty for generations. The small farms of New England and the Middle States have given incentive to growth and enterprise, and social and political happiness, never before equaled in the history of any land.

The Wool Trade.

A correspondent inquires whether he had better sell his wool now or wait for an advance. Our reply is that we do not assume to give advice in any specific instances, but we endeavor to present general principles which should actuate business men, and leave each to apply them in particular cases modified as circumstances require. Some two months ago we reviewed the condition and prospects of the wool trade, and have since then seen no cause to change the conclusion then reached, except, perhaps, as regards the long staple and higher grades of wool. The indications are that our domestic clip is larger than last year, and it comes upon a market already pretty well supplied with the coarser and lower grades of wool and woolen fabrics, so that the demand for this class of wool is not likely to be large enough to exhaust the supply, especially as California and Texas are furnishing an increased quantity, and there is considerable foreign wool of this quality arriving and to arrive. The indications are that there will be no improvement in prices which will pay for the shrinkage and cost of carrying; indeed, we should not be surprised if this class of wool should sell at lower prices later in the season than now. As regards fine strong wool with a long staple, however, the case is different. There appears to be no surplus of the fabrics made from this wool upon the market at present, and the demand for the fine domestic goods increases every year, as manufacturers improve in

their abilities to turn out qualities which sell in successful competition with foreign fabrics. The cost of making foreign goods has materially increased in New England, France, and Germany since the Franco-Prussian war, with the increased cost of coal and labor in these countries, and this gives our home mills an advantage which they have never possessed before, and encourages them to improve the quality of their goods, and to use better raw material. The chances are that for the better grades of wool there will be a steady demand during the whole season. There has, however, been an increase in the production of this class of wool during the last few years, and it is not improbable that the supply will be found adequate to the wants of manufacturers. The Eastern dealers evidently think that this is the fact, for they assert that the prices current in the West are higher than the circumstances warrant. However this may be, we do not think that there is any probability of a scarcity which will cause a sufficient advance on mixed lots of wool, such as the average clip of a farmer, that would justify us in advising him to take the risk of the market and the cost of shrinkage and carrying. The mills have been buying wool freely, and when they are filled up there will probably be a dull in the market, which will make holders wish they had realized earlier in the season.

The old rule is a good one that whenever the farmer can realize a fair remuneration upon the cost of production, it is time for him to sell. If he cannot obtain above cost price and is able to hold, he may be sure that the market will eventually turn in his favor, but it sometimes takes a year or two to bring this about, and there is considerable risk assumed meanwhile.—Cincinnati Price Current.

Changing Pasture.

A correspondent of the Weekly World asks farmers to give their experience as to the advantages of changing cows from one pasture to another during the grazing season; that is, is it better for the pasture to be in one field or in two or three, so that there may be periodical changes into fresh feed. This matter deserves the attention of graziers, and some with extended experience have emphatic opinions relative to the matter, that it is far better that there be no change, care being taken not to over stock the pastures, and to provide soiling material (sowed corn, rye or oats) with which to supplement the grazing in case of drouth or the falling off of grass supply from any cause. On the other hand, others deem change essential, care being taken that it be at regular intervals and at such intervals as not to allow too rank a growth in the fresh pasture, thereby deranging the appetite and stomachs of the animals. Others think that all the change needed—and the wisest one to make—is from the pasture in which the cows have foraged during the day to another at night after milking.

How to Destroy the Caterpillar.

The season for that dreadful pest, the orchard caterpillar, being at hand, and many farmers knowing of no cheap and easy method of their destruction, I offer the following plan, that I have used on a couple of orchards of several hundred trees, at comparatively no cost, and very light labor: Take a common water bucket full of water, make it very strong with common lye and soft soap, that nearly every farmer has; then add a lump of unslacked lime about as large as a hen's egg, and your preparation is complete. apply with a rag tied on a stick, or a pole long enough to reach all the webs in the tree. Swap the nest well and your work is completed; it is instant death to every caterpillar that is wet with the mixture. One bucket of the mixture will destroy from one to three hundred nests, owing to the size and age.

The Vermont Farmer says a man in Sheffield by the name of Hinman Frost has three cows that walk across a mud hole on a peeled spruce log that lies over four feet above the mud.

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