

LIVESTOCK INTERESTS

Color of Live Stock.

Every one must admit that color is an essential element in the improvement of stock, but when one notices the stress that is being put upon color in preference of other essential elements, one cannot help but feel a sense of surprise and astonishment. In fact, with a large number of stockmen and farmers, color is the only determining factor in the quality of the animal, and it is the "color blindness" which is in a very large measure responsible for the discouraging results that so many have experienced in improving their herds. That consideration of color should be paramount to consideration of individual merit can be accounted for no other rule of explanation than ignorance of what constitutes a superior animal, and this is evident by the fact that a large portion of stockmen look to the color of an animal as the sole indication of its breeding. It is only necessary for one to visit some of the ranches and take a glance at the males found there, and it would not be difficult for one with a fair idea as to the requirements of a desirable animal to see at once the injury resulting from them. One may find many bulls on the range which are much inferior to the quality of the stock they are intended to improve simply because of their color. As I said, color is an essential element and in the purchase of animals we cannot in the least disregard it. But, after all, color is only one of the indications of its breeding and is not by any means an assurance of its quality. Though itself possessing the desired color, it is not at all certain that it will transmit to its progeny, and, in fact, many of the males used on the range do not, because they lack prepotency, a quality found only in superior animals. Besides color, we must look for individual merit, and the consideration for the latter should always outweigh that of the former. We cannot afford to be color blind and thus retard the progress in the improvement of our herds, the very thing we are striving for. I heard once a remark by one of the most progressive and intelligent stock men in Texas that "it is a most unfortunate thing that we ever had white faces." There is a great significance in that remark. Not that he deprecated the introduction of the Hereford breed, for he himself is an enthusiast of the Hereford. But what he meant was that the "white face" has come to be looked upon among stockmen as an index of Hereford blood, leading to great deception and fraud. Now we would not buy a Hereford lacking in that characteristic, but in itself it is no guarantee that we are getting what we want. After all, it is color and individual merit by which we must be guided in the purchase of our stock.—Correspondence Texas Stockman and Farmer.

New and Old Hay.

We have often heard the opinion expressed by numerous ranchmen that hay properly preserved affords more nutriment when a year old than when new. In other words, old hay is generally considered better than new hay. Wolff, the great German investigator, writing on the effects of storing forage, says: "The storage of fodder for a long time may decrease both its di-

gestibility and flavor, even when all necessary precautions are observed, such as a dry and airy storage place, etc. This conclusion can be drawn from experiments carried out at Hohenheim, when it was found that the crude albuminoids of a sample of after-math immediately after harvest were digestible to the extent of 62 per cent.; three months later 56 per cent. and in the following spring only 54 per cent. were digested by the same animal, while the digestible coefficient for the other nutrients remained practically constant." The crude albuminoids mentioned by Wolff embrace the group of nutrients which we call protein and which go to build up the muscular portion of the animal body. The conclusion seems reasonable that as a rule both hay, dry forage and even the grains decrease more or less in digestibility as time goes on, for there is no substance contained in these which would increase the digestibility. Palatability is another important factor in all feedings stuffs and this usually also decreases with age. This probably is more or less measured by the amount of essential oils which the feeding stuffs contain and these oils are likely to be dissipated or changed in character, especially in our dry and harsh climate. We all know that nuts used as human food grow stale and used as human food grow stale and the oils they contain undergo a change and become rancid. Corn stover in fall and winter seems quite palatable to cattle, but as spring comes on it changes quite rapidly in several particulars and is then not readily eaten by stock. Partially cured seeds and forage plants possess purgative properties which work seriously against their effectiveness for feeding purposes. Corn and oats, for example, cannot be fed with satisfaction until

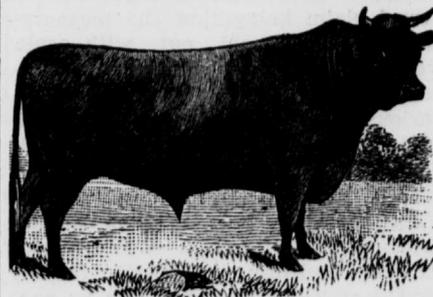
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