ADVICE AND BREED.

By R. G. HORB, Michigan.

Fourth Paper.

An American Peculiarity.—Some cynical person has said that American people are peculiarly noted for one characteristic; he says that as a rule they talk best on the things they know the least about. That being the case, I am in excellent condition to talk to a farmers' institute, and I think there is some truth in the saying, for I think I have noticed in my entire life, that people do usually talk the best in this country about things they know the least about. If a man is sick, he can always get a prescription from every man and woman he meets right on the street; they will always tell him just the thing that is needed to cure him, that is everybody but the doctors. They will give you their pills because it is their business, you know, but if you could see the doubt in their own minds as to whether they were going to kill or cure you, you wouldn't take their medicine. You remember we fellows who staid home during the war. You let us get down town in some office and couldn't we put down rebellion in good shape, while the people at the front were generally a little doubtful how the thing was coming out.

Gratuitous Advice.—Every farmer here knows as a rule you can get advice how to run your farm better and easier from the man who never plowed a furrow in his life or hoed a cabbage, than anybody else. I don't mean any reflection on you, Brother Keyes. I used to, when young, teach school and board around, and do you know, I could always get advice as to how to run my school from every patron in the district. Any preacher will tell you that he can always get advice how to preach a sermon, just what to say, when to say it, and how to say it. He will always get it the most readily from the fellows, who, to save their souls, can't tell the difference between orthodox and burdocks. After this explanation, you won't think it preposterous in me if I talk about cattle, will you? Of course, I need not tell you that I have one big advantage in talking about cattle, and that is, that I was raised myself upon a farm, and, by the way, did you ever see a man that wasn't raised on a farm? I'd go a good ways to strike a man of that kind.

Breeds of Cattle.—I am interested somewhat in the discussion that I have heard since I came in here on this question of breeds of cattle, from the fact that where I lived in our State, it is a subject of very great interest, and I was surprised to find my friend, Keyes, reading an essay to prove that the best cattle that there were in the entire world was a breed that I never heard of in my life. Most of these pictures hanging around this room, are familiar to me. Where are your Red Polled?

Now, there isn't anything that interests farmers in the cattle line more than the question of how you can get an animal that it will pay you to keep. That is
the only test of which cattle are good for anything; it is the kind that pans out well in the end. Do you know I have a sort of an old fogey idea that we have been struggling and fussing over this question in this country for thirty years a good deal, and you know the subject I am talking on is something I don’t know much about, but I don’t think for beef, we have ever beat the Shorthorn yet. I think we can improve our cattle by mixing them with any good breed.

Holsteins for Milk.—Now, have you ever noticed cows in pictures? Are they always just as they are in the barn? They vary in the barn; they never do in pictures, and isn’t it true it doesn’t make so much difference what breed of cattle you have? The best cows in every breed are pretty good ones, and the poorest cows in every breed are almighty mean, that is the fact about it. I have an idea that the best milkers today in the world are the Holsteins. I say that because I am better acquainted with them than any other of the modern animals in this country. Yes, I think they give more milk, but I don’t think it is fair to test them by the rules that they adopt in showing these wonderful weights of milk. You take a big Holstein cow, and in order to get the record that they get, you have to keep two men feeding her, and one milking her, and if you keep that right up vigorously year in and year out, you will get considerable milk. I have an idea that for cheese making purposes, and for skim milk purposes, the Holstein is the best animal. For coffee, give me the Jersey, but don’t want her for anything except coffee. As a rule my observation is, the Jersey is too small. As a rule, she doesn’t give milk enough for a good sized family, but as I stated a little while ago, you can get a pretty good cow if you get the best in any breed, and there is nothing that this country ought to examine more than to find out a breed that will combine the two things, as our friends said, beef and milk. I don’t know, I doubt whether you can combine both those qualities, even in your Red Polled. I doubt it. I think as a rule an animal that is the best for milk is not very well adapted for beef; at least my experience is, that where an animal runs to beef she is a poor milker, and that a good cow never puts on flesh much while she is milking, and consequently I have an idea, that the great question of raising cattle should be divided into two classes. If you are going to make dairying your business, and it is a very good business in these days, breed your cattle for milking, and if you are going to feed steers, and run to beef, I would run to beef and let the milking business go. Some people may raise both. There may be animals in the world that are fitted for both, but I have never discovered them. I know they tell me the Holsteins are wonderful beef cattle. I never saw any of them that were.

Herefords and Durhams.—Where we live we run to Herefords. There are some very valuable ones near where I live and they are very fine for beef purposes, that is, those they take to the fair. I don’t know how they do on an ordinary farm. The animal that pays best is the one that we men who don’t run to fancy cattle are going to keep. The cattle we want are those that are hardy, those that look durable, even if you don’t feed them all the time or curry them every morning. I don’t know just exactly, nor do I think anybody knows, just what breed of cattle we should raise. In the country where I was raised, an old English gentleman brought with him from England some old Roan Durhams, and from that day to this, you go into that neighborhood
and the steers in that neighborhood will average three or four hundred pounds more than they will average in any other place in that section of the country; that man did the farmers of that community more good than they could ever comprehend, even after he has been dead and gone thirty years, and yet the improvement in stock that he introduced into that township is living right on to-day; that is the reason that I am prejudiced in favor of the Shorthorns.

At our State Agricultural Society, a few weeks ago, were some cattle they called Red Durham, but they don't look at all like those I am talking about. They lacked size, they lacked what I called the beef qualities, they were very sleek looking animals, but I have an idea that for the farmer, what you want of a steer is one that will weigh. At least, that has been my experience. When I had one to sell, if he didn't weigh anything, I didn't get much for him. Consequently, I am in favor of those old fashioned Roan Durhams for beef, that you could make without constantly feeding them. Now, if somebody could only invent or produce an animal that would get along without eating, that would be the stock to introduce; but as a rule you have to feed your animal everything that the animal makes into meat, and I say, as a rule, the old fashioned Roan Durham would appropriate more feed and come out with more meat than any animal I ever met in the United States.

The Great Industry.—Now, my friends, there are people here who want to talk on something they know about, and consequently I must just simply thank you for this kind greeting. I am very glad to have been here and I am going to stay and see what you people have to say, because we are all interested in the advancement of the great industry which lies at the bottom of all the industries of the United States. Without the products of the soil, our country would beof no use in the world. I believe in just such associations as this, and all I hope is that, as a rule, you will have people talk to you about things that they have investigated. What I have said was simply because they got hold of me and forced me to say something. I am very thankful to meet so many of the farmers of Wisconsin, and I hope hereafter some time, we may all meet again.

THE FARMER'S DUTY TO HIS SCHOOL.

By C. W. GARFIELD, Lansing, Michigan.

Fiftieth Paper.

Our Rural Schools—Are the fountains of agricultural progress in our country. Our future farmers and farmers' wives are largely moulded for their life-work within their precincts, and we should let nothing stand in the way of their highest development in method and results. We can afford to take time in a farmers' institute to discuss their weaknesses and lay plans for their betterment.

No Children to Send.—There is no