

HORSES.

Training the Colt.

RATED THIRD IN COLT-TRAINING ESSAY COMPETITION.

Having lived on a farm all my life, I have had the opportunity of training several colts. The first thing I aim to do is to study the disposition of the colt I am to train, whether he be nervous, vicious, excitable, stupid, stubborn, high-strung, or intelligent. Knowing the disposition of the colt, half the difficulty of training is overcome.

Next, I try to win the confidence of the colt, and, also, keep him from knowing his real strength as a resisting power against man.

To accomplish this, I begin handling the colt when he is two or three days old. At first, I fondle him, at the same time calling him by name. I do this at every opportunity, until he becomes so tame that he will come to me whenever he sees me.

Next, I get colt and his mother into the box stall, and quietly slip a strong halter on the colt's head. If he flies back, I hold him until he is convinced that I am master, talking kindly to him the while. When he ceases to pull, I pat him and give him a lump of sugar or salt. Then I let him go, leaving the halter on his head.

Next day I try leading him around the box stall. To do this, I take a short hold of run strap in left hand; then, with a buggy whip in right, I tap him gently on the muscle of hind leg, and tell him to come.

When I get him to lead around stall, I then try leading him beside his mother to pasture. I do this by putting a long shank on halter; then, I take a short hold of the mare, and start her up, giving colt plenty of shank. In this way, he will nearly always start right after the mare. I lead them like this at every opportunity, shortening the colt's shank as he leads up, until at last he leads right up by my side.

A short time before weaning, I tie him beside his mother to a good strong manger. Of course, he is apt to pull back; but if he is tied securely, he will soon give up. I leave them tied an hour or so, then turn them back into box stall. I repeat this treatment every day until I am confident that the colt will stand like an old horse.

After weaning and putting into winter quarters, I groom him every day. While doing this, I tie him in a single stall, then, with a good stiff brush, I groom him from head to heels, making him step from side to side of stall, as wanted.

The grooming being done with, I pick up his feet, one by one, and clean them out. If he struggles, I simply hold the foot until he stops. I then pat him and turn him loose in box stall, being careful that he backs straight out of single stall.

If it be a blood colt, I exercise him by leading him behind a cutter drawn by his mother. When he gets used to the cutter, I tie him beside his mother on the off side, tying his run strap to the shaft back of shaft-bearer. I also put a line on outside of colt; thus, it is impossible for him to plunge ahead. I then start the pair up, quietly, letting them walk for the first few times. In the course of a few days I start them to trot, and continue this treatment every chance I get all winter, being careful not to drive the colt too far. In this way he develops speed, as well as muscle.

Starting with the second winter, I handle the colt the same as I did the first, but, in addition to this, I give him a mouth, by putting an open bridle on him, and leaving it on for three or four hours each day. When he has ceased to fight the bit, I place a girth and back-strap on him, and check him up moderately tight, using a piece of strong elastic between girth and check, and let him run loose in box stall or paddock for two hours in forenoon and two hours in afternoon each day.

After a month or so of this treatment, I make him acquainted with the harness. I let him run in box stall for a couple of hours each day with harness on. Then, when he becomes accustomed to the harness, I try driving him without being hitched. I like to drive him single, for in this way he learns to depend upon the lines, and not upon being pulled or pushed around by another horse.

In order to drive him, I use a single harness, and remove the lines from terrets, and run them through loops on shaft-bearer. Thus, with a line on each side, it is hard for him to turn.

When he gets to drive well on lines, I hitch him to a cutter or cart, using a heavy strap over his hips, with ends attached to shafts. This makes it impossible for him to kick. I start him up carefully, and usually he goes off like an old horse. I drive him now every day until he feels quite at home in harness. This I continue with a driving colt until he is old enough for real work.

If it be a heavy colt, I hitch him with a well-mannered old horse sometime before the winter is over. This I consider of little consequence, if he be first well trained in single harness. In fact, I consider the training of the colt up till hitching

time far more important than after. Having him now trained to drive both double and single, all that I consider necessary is to give him plenty of practice until he is old enough to go to work. I might say here that I always, from the very first, teach a colt to obey the different phrases used in speaking to a horse, by speaking to him firmly and distinctly, at same time directing him on the line. Kindness and strictness I find to be prominent features in colt-training.

Victoria Co., Ont.

JOHN A. TORREY.

Our Scottish Letter.

I expect I am not in favor with the Editor of "The Farmer's Advocate" at the present hour. I was to have written a "special" for his Christmas number on the inviting topic, "Will the Clydesdale Hold His Own?" and I failed to toe the line. It was beyond my power at the time specified to execute the task, and this is my only excuse. After a bit, I propose to offer some remarks on that topic, but meanwhile, something more general must be dealt with.

THE WEATHER.

November here was a very severe month. About the middle of it we had a terrible fog. It lasted five days, during which there was no movement on the river, and traffic of every kind to Glasgow by water was suspended. Along with the fog we had abnormally severe weather for this time of the year. The frost came keen and biting, with farmers unprepared, and few roots stored, while the prolonged harvest had so retarded the lifting of potatoes that a large proportion of that crop has been hopelessly ruined and lost. About the Martinmas termday (Nov. 11th), the thermometer registered two degrees below Zero. A Canadian would probably not think much of that, but it is almost unprecedented with us, and quite un-

of it, so that farmers are thinking to leave the crop unlifted, and take their chance in spring of the good ones that may have been buried deep enough to escape the frost. Roots are only a fair crop, and the full effect of the keen frost upon them has not yet appeared. The best class of swedes may not be much the worse; probably they will be rather the better of the ordeal through which they have passed, but the softer kinds, in some cases, have gone to pulp.

Dairy farmers have had a good year, and stock-breeders, other than sheep-breeders, of almost every kind have no reason to complain. In the cattle line, pure-bred stock has sold well. Commercial cattle have been making good money, and fat cattle have been as dear as fat sheep have been cheap. There is room for a good deal of speculation as to the reasons for the relative prices of cattle and sheep—or, more strictly, beef and mutton—this year. Whatever may be the reason, the beef-producer has done well, and is to be congratulated on good profits, compared with none in years bygone.

THE CLYDESDALES IN FAVOR.

So far as horse-breeding is concerned, Clydesdales have seldom been in better demand. Something like 1,400 head have been exported in 1909. These have, in a great majority, gone to Canada, and have been chiefly yearling and two-year-old fillies. The breeders have been getting about £35 apiece for them, so that this trade has brought to the tenant-farmers of Scotland something like £45,000 to £50,000. That is a very substantial sum, and naturally we hope the Clydesdale will hold his own.

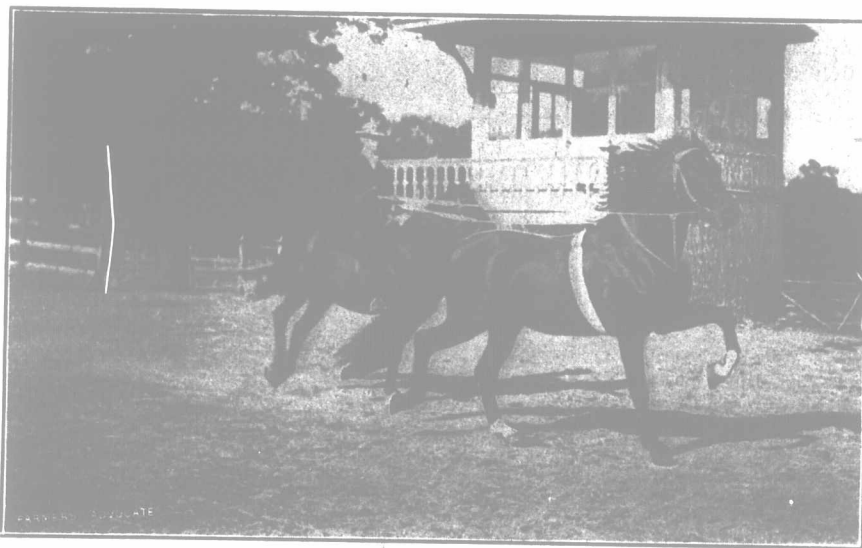
HOLDING HIS OWN.

The question is, What is the Clydesdale's own? He is the favorite—one might almost say, the only draft horse bred in Scotland and the North of

England. He is by many thousands the most popular draft horse in Canada. In New Zealand he far outnumbers the Shire, and the same holds true, although perhaps in less proportions, in Victoria and New South Wales. He is bred extensively in South Australia, and he is not unknown in South Africa. He has been exported in hundreds to Germany and Russia during the past twenty years. The only country in which, up to this time, he has not held his own—that is, he has lost, rather than gained, in popularity—is the United States of America. The causes of this are not known to the writer. He is not sufficiently well acquainted at first hand with the history of horse-breeding in the United States to dogmatize, but he may be permitted to speculate. The Clydesdale is

primarily a farmer's horse. He is a horse for agricultural purposes. By breeding him for weight—that is, up to 1,800 or 2,000 pounds, and above that—he becomes invaluable for street traffic. He is a horse for quick walking, and although he can break into a trot when wanted, his natural gait is a speedy walk. The street traffic of cities like Glasgow and Liverpool calls for such a horse, and in these centers no species of draft horse is more popular. Traffic in the cities of the United States is only to a limited extent conducted along these lines. There the horse in favor is the trotting express horse, the heavy-bodied animal, with clean and comparatively light limbs. The Percheron and the Percheron cross, whether with Clydesdale or Shire, fills the bill and has the trade. The Clydesdale for a time seemed to make good headway in the three central States of Indiana, Illinois and Iowa. Whether he holds his own there, I am unable to say. He has a good footing in Pennsylvania, through the action and favor of Scots settlers and their descendants. He is known in the same way in Wisconsin and Michigan, and recently he has been exported in considerable numbers to Virginia and New Jersey. In most cases Scotsmen have been his importers, and it remains to be seen whether he will make further conquests in these territories. But, on the whole, it is possible the Clydesdale may be said to have held any territory won in the eighties, even in the United States.

My own impression, however, is that both in the United States and South America the Clydesdale has been sorely wounded in the house of his friends. I have been familiar with the export trade for nearly thirty years. In 1880 I first made the acquaintance of the American and Canadian buyers, some of whom still survive, and are reckoned by me among friends who have never failed. But another class of men entered the trade to both of these countries. They shipped horses from here in hundreds—I might almost say



Mograzia.

Multi-champion Standard-bred stallion. Owned by Miss K. L. Wilks, Galt, Ont.

precedented so early in the season. In the uplands of Aberdeen and Banff shires, the unwanted spectacle was witnessed of the oat crop being "carried" on sleighs, and while the farmers were engaged in harvest work, their neighbors were eagerly pursuing the "roaring game." The great bonspiel at Carsbreck was played between North and South during this period, and that again established a record. For several years past it has not been played at all, the frost never being keen enough, or lasting long enough. And only on rare occasions has it been played before the New Year. On this occasion it has been played in the middle of November, and, while curling is no doubt a very fine game in this country, we would much prefer to be without it until after the potatoes are lifted.

CROPS AND STOCK IN 1909.

Nineteen-nine is likely to prove one of the worst seasons certain sections of the British farming community have experienced for many a long day. For some it will only be paralleled by the abnormally desolate year, 1879. That was the season in which the grain crops in some districts never ripened, and it was the year which led to the collapse of the period of high rents and inflated agricultural values. All farmers shared in the disasters of that year; 1909 has not been quite so universally black. There have been rays of light. Wool has rallied, and the good price realized for it has enabled the flockmaster to survive, even with mutton at a figure almost unparalleled in the memory of those alive to-day. Wheat has been selling better than for many years, and a greatly extended breadth would have been sown this winter had the weather been drier after the early frost vanished. But that has been succeeded by a deluge of rain, so that much land that it was intended to sow with wheat will have to be left alone until spring, and some other cereal will be put down. Potatoes were a fine crop, but in some cases the early frost has ruined one-half