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THE ARAB HORSE

(By Col. Spencer Borlen.)

It was the fashion a few years ago to claim that the Arab horse did not exist, excepting as a figment of the imagination. Scientists, later, were compelled to acknowledge that there was such a horse, and that he differed from all others even in his anatomy. Then a claim was put forward that what was called an Arab was really an African horse, originating in Lybia, the country lying between Egypt and Tripoli, on the shores of the Mediterranean.

These wise people even asserted that the horses we had always called Arabians, were never in Arabia until after the beginning of the Christian era, some going from Egypt, others sent from Cappadocia, north of the Taurus mountains, on the Black Sea. The fact that no such horses remain either in Lybia or in Cappadocia, although they are numerous in Arabia, caused no embarrassment to these pundits.

Had such special pleaders gotten their Xenophon or Herodotus from the upper shelves of their book-cases, certain embarrassing facts might have caused them to modify their contention.

They would have learned that Semiramis, who succeeded her husband, Nimrod—builder of Nineveh—had an army in which were 300,000 cavalry, with which she invaded India, before she started to build Babylon. Nineveh is perpetuated by the present town of Mosul, built on its site, in the north-eastern part of Arabia, on the Tigris river; and the ruins of Babylon are near Bagdad on the Euphrates, both these points being in the heart of Arabia.

We are forced to believe, therefore, that there were some horses in Arabia at least 3500 years B. C. Not only is this certain from the written records, their representation is preserved by bas-reliefs in stone uncovered by Layard, when he explored the ruins of Nineveh, in the middle of the nineteenth century. These show horses of the Arabian horse size and type, ridden by men making use of them in a manner such as no horse but an Arab was ever known to stand up to. The riders are hunting lions, with spears and arrows. It is notorious to this day that no horse but an Arab has the courage to face a lion or a wild boar.

If these would-be scientists still claim the proofs insufficient to establish our contention, we turn to the history of Cyrus the Great, as written by Xenophon. When Cyrus fought Croesus, King of Lydia, it is plainly stated that part of his cavalry were Arabians. In arranging his forces to meet the enemy, Harpagus suggested that he put the camels he used for transport animals, in front of his cavalry. And when they came up to the contest, the Lydian horses, terrified by the sight and smell of the camels, became unmanageable; while the horses of Cyrus' army, having been brought up with camels, and partly nourished on camels' milk, were not afraid, but dashed after the Lydians and completely routed them.

Later, when Cyrus captured Babylon—the night of Belshazzar's feast—celebrated the event by a grand review of all his army. This was 500 B. C., 3000 years before Christ. In that review Xenophon tells us Cyrus paraded 120,000 cavalry (more than all the cavalry in Europe today) besides his chariots drawn by four horses each.

This parade was in the heart of Arabia; and the empire ruled by Cyrus extended from the Indus river on the east, to the Red Sea, the Mediterranean, and Aegean on the west; from the Black and Caspian Seas on the north, to the Indian Ocean on the south.

In the days of Darius the Younger, the Medo-Persian empire had an enormous horse-breeding establishment in the plain near Mt. Corone. From this source alone Darius drew one hundred thousand horses to oppose the Macedonian invasion, and still left fifty thousand in the pastures which Alexander saw in his march through the country.

It would appear safe to claim therefore that there were horses in Arabia before they were sent from Lybia. It is not more probable that the horses of Lybia were some left in that coun-

try by Camyses, son of Cyrus, who conquered Egypt and Lybia and Ethiopia to add to the possessions left him by Cyrus?

The Egyptians had no cavalry, any more than had the Persians until the time of Cyrus. Horses in Egypt came after the time when the Shepherd Kings were driven out. Four hundred years after the days of Joseph, when Pharaoh pursued the Hebrews who went out with Moses through the Red Sea, we are told that he followed with six hundred chariots—"all the chariots of Egypt"—according to the Bible statement. Horses were so scarce even then that each Egyptian chariot had but two horses; and all these were destroyed in the Red Sea.

And now in our day and country, certain "progressive" Americans suggest that though there may have been Arab horses, and they may have been good enough a long time ago, they are not such as would be suited to our modern conditions and American climate. The greater part of such people probably never saw an Arab horse.

In other lands the Arabian horse is sought after and valued at his true worth. The Hungarian Government has a stud of Arab horses at Babolna established in 1790. In their official account of this stud, the Hungarian Department of Agriculture tells us,—"The original purpose for which the stud at Babolna was established, was that it might breed foundation stock (animaux reproducteurs) that could contribute a progressive element in raising the quality of its horses."

In France the government also uses Arab blood for "raising the quality of its horses." In 1906 the Republic had 579 such animals, pure bred or half bred, in its government studs.

In Austria, the famous Lipizan boys, the oldest established breed next to the Arab, near Trieste (from which place the breed takes its name, since that stud was established in 1585. As Austria and Hungary, however, are joined under a common ruler, Emperor Francis Joseph, most of their cavalry horses come from Hungary. Baron Slatin—brother of the famous Slatin Pasha—told the writer of these lines, in 1911: "We believe the horses bred in Hungary are the best cavalry mounts in the world. They are not too large, and have a great proportion of Arab blood in them."

In the great Russian Imperial Strelski stud, devoted to horses of Eastern blood, they had four hundred and eight breeding animals, eighty-five of them pure Arabs, in 1889.

Italy, since the days of Giovanni de la Branle Nere, the greatest of the Medician generals, has never missed an opportunity to secure Arabian blood. Christopher Hare, in his "Romance of a Medici Warrior" tells us that Giovanni, writing to his agent Fortunati, from his camp at Pesaro, under date of April 14, 1517, says: "And besides, I am badly mounted. You must send me the best and finest Arab horses that you can get in Florence, for mine are all out of condition."

Of him Hare tells us: "In this war he would replace the heavy cavalry, the cumbersome armor, the slow massive horses which it required, by light, active Arab horses, easily managed and full of spirit, ridden by agile men lightly equipped."

We also learn that, at Vaprio, "He was riding that splendid white Arab horse, Sultan—who was to survive him and never suffer another rider—and he turned his head toward the rushing torrent; the noble animal leaped into the river and swam across, his master sitting firmly on the saddle with his lance at rest."

So today also, the Italian Government secures every pure Arab they can lay hands on, having agents in the east at all times to procure them. In 1903 they had fifty-five pure Arab stallions in the Italian royal stud.

Turkey had, in 1900, four studs of horses, for producing cavalry horses, one at Schitteler (where were fifty-five pure-bred Arabs, eleven half-breds, thirteen Hungarians, and eleven Russian stallions, with six hundred brood mares), another at Sultan Lou, in the province of Harpoot, one at Tchou Korova, province of Adana, one at Vezirle, near Bagdad. The raison d'etre of the last, especially, is plainly asserted: "The object of this stud is to promote the

breeding of the best Arab strains."

Can it be that all these peoples are mistaken, and only those Americans are correct who assert that in these days Arabs are not good horses, they lack in endurance? Many great soldiers would differ with them, some in bygone days, some in our own times.

Washington rode a son of the Lindsey Arabian through our own war of Independence. Bonaparte pinned his faith to the white Arab, Marengo, that carried him through his campaigns in Egypt, and the freezing retreat from Russia. His stuffed skin is still preserved in Paris. Wellington would trust himself to nothing but an Arab horse. Kitchener and "Little Bobs," Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, will ride no others. Lord Roberts rode an Arab horse named Vonolel at the head of Queen Victoria's jubilee procession, and wore on his breast two medals presented to the horse by Her Majesty, one for the Afghan wars, another for his service in Africa. He carried Lord Roberts for twenty-two consecutive years through all his campaigns in Afghanistan, India, Burma, South Africa, had covered in his campaigns 50,000 miles and never once been lame or sick. We are told that Sysobay is the greatest of all thoroughbred horses. His skeleton stands beside that of the Arab horse Nimr in the Museum of the American Society of Natural History, in New York. Sysobay is said to have won \$170,000 for his owner, the late James R. Keene, and to have died an unseaten race horse. Yet secondly reached the end of his career when four years old. In winning \$170,000 the total distance he ran, in all his races added one to the end of the other, was twelve and one-half miles. How does this great race horse 16.1 high, compare with Vonolel the Arab, 14.1!

The history of the XIXth Dragoons (English) who went with Kitchener to Kartoum, is familiar to all modern soldiers. They had to abandon their big English horses at Cairo, were mounted on Syrian Arabs averaging 14.1, and these carried them nine months through the desert, sometimes for seventy hours without water, with an average loss of but twelve per cent of the horses.

Col. Gore of the Inniskillen Dragoons, rode a pure Arab through the whole South African campaign. It is reported that "this horse was never sick nor sorry, lasting our four picked horses which his master brought with him from Ireland."

Many other instances proving the sagacity, endurance and soundness of these wonderful horses must be omitted that this paper go not too far beyond the limits set for its length. A single one near at home may interest readers of Our Dumb Animals.

Capt. Frank Tompkins, of the Eleventh Cavalry, U. S. A., Superintendent of Military Instruction at Norwich University, Northfield, Vermont, tried a little Arab he has, on the thirtieth of October, 1912, over the hills of Vermont.

Having occasion to go to Fort Ethan Allen, Burlington, Capt. Tompkins rode the five-year-old Arab horse Razzia fifty miles in the morning, attended to his business at Fort Ethan Allen, and rode him back to Northfield the same day. The horse carried one hundred and seventy-five pounds on his back, the entire time on the road was fifteen hours, thirty minutes, and he was never distressed. The next morning he was in condition to repeat his feat. As he had no special preparation for the test, and several showers during the day made the road slippery, it would surely be to the breed of American horses that might contribute something useful to the breed of American horses. He would appear to measure up to the description Capt. W. A. Kerr, V. C., gives to Arab horses, as animals "whose blood (no matter in what channel directed, or with what plebeian puddle mingled) has ever brought improvement in some shape or other, but mainly in respect of quality, stamina, nervous energy, ivory-like bone, tough hoof, and hereditary soundness."—From "Our Dumb Animals."

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MATE BRAM HAS BEEN RELEASED.

Boston, August, 28—Faultless behavior for seventeen years in the federal prison at Atlantic, during which he has been a great force for good, according to Warden Moyer has convinced the government authorities that Thomas M. C. Bram, convicted of a triple murder on the high seas, is an innocent man, and as a result he was set free today on the parole system. The government acted under the new law which extends terms of parole to life men.

Bram was tried in the United States district court in Boston twice and both times was found guilty.

He was a mate of the Maine barkentine Herbert Fuller which in 1896 left Boston laden with lumber for South America. One night Captain Nash, his wife and the first mate had been killed.

A sailor, Charles Brown, and Bram were both under suspicion and were taken from Halifax, N. S., to Boston for trial. Brown declared that Bram was the guilty man. Friends enlisted in Bram's behalf, and a few days ago his application for parole was favorably acted upon. Everybody liked him and the warden was glad to aid in getting him his freedom.

Bram accused me falsely, said Bram solemnly today. I do not know who committed the crime, but I hope to know some day. I know only that I did not do it.

ADVANTAGE OF SHADE

The deleterious effect of sunlight are all too often lost sight of, and it is a common occurrence in a Canadian city to see eggs, meat and other comestibles exposed in store windows to the rays of the sun. Eggs in particular will deteriorate very rapidly in quality when exposed to the sunlight, although the same thing holds good of canned goods, meats and ripe fruits.

In spite of the fact that the advantage of shade have frequently been clearly pointed out and are generally recognized, many shopkeepers do not seem to consider this matter worthy of attention.

The erection of an awning is a simple matter, and one which is in the highest degree advantageous where food stuffs are concerned.—W. L. C.

CANADIAN FLOUR IN FIJI

Flour, hitherto chiefly imported from New South Wales, Victoria and New Zealand, is being imported in increasing quantities from Canada. Biscuits, which are imported principally for use as food for labourers and for consumption by the Fijian population, are manufactured in, and imported almost exclusively from Victoria and New South Wales. Meats consist almost exclusively of tinned beef for the use of labourers and Fijians, and are imported from New Zealand, New South Wales and Victoria.—Board of Trade Journal.

Mink breeding is making considerable progress in Prince Edward Island. Two pairs were recently sold there at \$200 a pair.

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