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Horse Breeding in Canada.

HORSE breeding in Canada has undoubtedly undergone a decided change for the better during the past few years. And yet a great amount of educational work needs to be done before our farmers have reached the goal of perfection in their horse breeding methods. However, the turn in the tide two or three years ago has had its effect in directing more attention to horse breeding and distributing a better class of breeding stock throughout the country. At the Horse Show, a report of which appears in this number, the high average quality of the animals shown was most notable. As compared with the shows of even a couple of years ago this is most marked and may be taken as a proof of the general improvement in quality of the horses throughout the country.

To make a success of horse breeding the farmer must breed the kind of horses the market demands and the one best suited to his own conditions and environment. Taking everything into consideration, we believe the draft horse is the most profitable sort for the average farmer to raise. Good heavy horses, weighing from 1,500 lbs. upwards, sound, of good quality, are in good demand at the present time and are likely to meet with ready sale for sometime to come. By breeding a good mare to a heavy Clydesdale or Shire stallion, a farmer is reasonably sure of securing a colt, that at five years old, will bring not less than \$125. The draft horse does not require so much care in breaking, and if a colt does have a blemish it is not such a disadvantage to a horse employed at slow work, while with the lighter breeds a blemish means a serious loss. There is also less risk of a draft colt being blemished. Besides, in case of a serious blemish the animal can be used for work on the farm. Likewise, if a sale cannot be effected at once, the draft horse will earn enough at any sort of farm work to pay for its keep, which a lighter or fancy horse would rarely do.

If, however, a farmer has the taste and the inclination to breed the lighter types of horses, there is money in the business, if properly conducted. Carriage and saddle horses of the best types sell readily at good prices and will be in good demand both in the United States and Great Britain for some-

time to come. It must be remembered, however, that the farmer does not get the highest prices for which this class of horses sell for. The high prices that a fine carriage team or a hunter frequently brings are only got after weeks of training and fitting at the hands of some dealer. The farmer seldom has the time and necessary knowledge to train and fit up the finished carriage or saddle horse. If he has, however, there is nothing to prevent his getting the fancy prices that are being paid today for well trained and fancy carriage horses and hunters. But if he does not do this, the dealer will always pay a good price for good horses of this class and consequently their breeding can be made profitable for the farmer. Perhaps, the best carriage horses are sired by a thoroughbred or Hackney stallion. Very often some good horses are got by coach and standard bred stallions. When the mates are of sufficient size and are of good quality a thoroughbred produces a good style of carriage horse.

During the past few years much attention has been given to the military horse. It is a question, however, whether it will pay the farmer to make a specialty of breeding horses for this trade. But while this may be the case, it is a branch of the business that should receive attention. Since the beginning of the South African war some 7,000 or 8,000 horses have been purchased in Canada for remounts. These have been selected from the general run of the horses in the country and in the future, should no special effort be made to breed horses for this purpose, there may be, as in the past, a large number of horses bred that are unsuitable for the carriage or saddle classes that might be taken for remount purposes. This, as we are able to size up the situation at present, seems to be the line of policy for our farmers to pursue in reference to this trade. That so many of the general run of horses in the country have been found suitable for remounts, shows a higher average quality than was expected. If better breeding methods are adopted and the average quality of the horses bred in the country is raised, there will be more and a better type of horses to select remounts from, even after the best animals are taken for the fancy carriage or saddle trade. Should a permanent remount depot be established and some assurance given that the

market for remounts will be continued it might be worth while for the farmer to give some attention to the breeding of horses for this trade. At any rate, it would furnish an outlet, as it has done during the past few years, for a certain class of horses, which the farmer may find it difficult to dispose of for other purposes.

There are three types of horses now required for military purposes: Mounted infantry horses, ranging in height from 14.1 to 15 hands; cavalry horses, ranging from 15.1 to 15.3, and artillery horses from 15.2 to 16 hands high. Col. Dent, who has purchased the Canadian horses for army purposes gives the following description as to their qualifications:

"The stamp of horse required for artillery purposes is a blocky sort of horse, with as much breeding and bone as possible. The cavalry horse is of a lighter type, with good shoulders, loin and neck. The mounted infantry cobs are miniature horses. The best stamp I have come across is the French Canadian, the only fault in their case being often a shortness of rein, (neck). The type of horses, for whatever branch of the service required should be that of the English hunter, with short legs, short cannon bone, good shoulders, backrib and loins, and the more breeding combined with strength, the better. What I think are most needed to produce this type, are good thoroughbred sires, not over sixteen hands high, compact horses with plenty of bone and action."

In conclusion, a word regarding the selection of stallions. Whether from carelessness or ignorance many of our farmers are very lax in regard to the choice of stallions for breeding purpose. In horse breeding the farmer is aiming to produce a product that when finished, will bring him at least \$125 or \$150. It is, therefore, the height of folly to quibble over a dollar or two in the service fee of a stallion. Select the best stallion for the purpose to be had and run no risk of having an inferior colt thrown. A good colt can be raised as cheaply as a poor one, and is a much safer and better investment. It must be remembered, however, that the best of breeding will avail little unless the colt is well fed and well nourished. Many an otherwise good colt is spoiled for lack of proper feed and care. Good breeding and good feeding must go hand-in-hand.