

JUNE 10, 1915

THE HORSE.

Do not forget the salt.

Stick to the draft horse.

Breed the mare now as soon as possible.

Feed the sucking colt as soon as he will eat.

Keep the sucking colt in a big, clean box-stall when working the dam.

Up to May 1 225,000 head of horses and 40,000 mules left the United States for the war.

At this season of the year there is no better place for a mare to foal than in a good grass paddock.

The Canadian horse market is still unsettled, but the man who sticks to a good thing will win out in the end.

Return all brood mares regularly to the horse and avoid trouble with the stallion owner and risk of not getting a foal.

June is a good month to start the work horses staying out on grass at night, but do not forget that horses at hard work require oats as well as grass.

Heaves.

A disease of horses commonly met with and very often caused by carelessness in attention to the animal is heaves. How often do we see a horse "blowing" loudly with sides heaving in an effort to get its breath! Heaves, once established, cannot be cured, but the trouble can generally be relieved. The disease sometimes comes as a sequel to distemper which has been followed by a dry cough not properly attended to. Allowing horses to gorge themselves on hay, especially clover hay, and then taking them to the trough and permitting them to drink too much water is frequently blamed for causing the trouble. Putting to strenuous work, either fast travelling or hard pulling, immediately after a heavy feed of hay or drinking much water may bring on the trouble. As a general thing, however, heaves follows a chronic cough. We once knew a driving mare which coughed for several years before heaves finally developed, but they came in their worst form. The mare had produced a fine filly foal just before heaves became well marked on her, and strange to say the filly developed a dry, hacking cough like her dam, only at the early age of five years. Heaves may not be hereditary, but the constitutional weakness which favors their development undoubtedly is.

As a general thing heaves do not develop until the horse is matured, or at least seven or eight years of age. They are more prevalent in older horses. They may be brought on by any disease which affects the system generally, and the lungs in particular, such as influenza. Dusty, musty or poor feed aggravates the trouble, and is often blamed for it.

While heaves cannot be cured, some relief can be given by feeding only first-class feed. Avoid all dusty hay. Clover hay is generally omitted from the ration of the heavy horse. Some resort to straw entirely, but good clean hay fed in limited quantity will do no harm if properly handled. All feed including hay, straw and grain should be dampened with lime water. Rolled oats should be fed in place of whole oats where at all practicable. Always feed roughage in small quantities, and increase the grain ration if the horse is at hard work and must have more feed.

If medical treatment is resorted to try giving every morning a ball composed of 1½ drams powdered opium, 2 drams solid extract of belladonna, 1 dram camphor, and 2½ grains digitalis with sufficient oil of tar to make plastic. Roll in tissue paper and administer. This treatment is advisable when the horse shows symptoms of a chronic cough which might lead to heaves. Prevention is much better than attempted cure.

It is always well to remember that the symptoms of the disease are more marked in hot weather, and still more violent in dull, foggy, damp weather. A loaded stomach also aggravates the trouble, and a horse should never be put at violent work immediately after taking a heavy feed or a big drink of water.

A Regular Breeder.

A Middlesex County, Ontario, Correspondent reports an unusual regularity in breeding. A mare on his farm has given birth to strong foals on May 24 three times in succession. She was bred June 20, 1912; June 20, 1913; and June 19, 1914. Can any reader duplicate this record?

The Importance of Action in Horse Breeding.

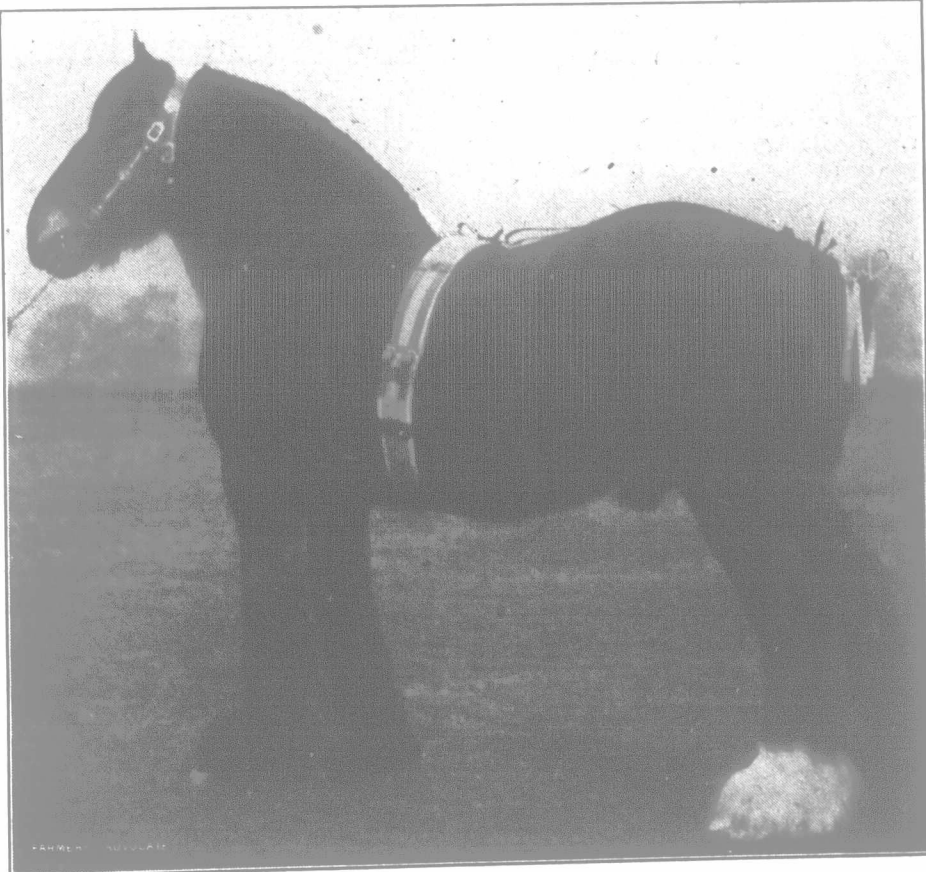
An old friend of mine once, when he was told that a certain horse he was looking over was deficient in bone, replied tersely, "Action is power." The statement is so self-evident that one would think it needs no insistence, yet I am afraid that it is every day overlooked in favor of some point which, however important it may be, is of less importance to the practical utility of the horse. If we come to examine the question carefully we shall find that the value of the horse depends entirely on his being capable of doing the work for which he is intended with the least expenditure of waste and with the greatest amount of comfort and ease to the man who is working with him. In other words, the horse's value depends upon his capability to work on the lines of least resistance, and to form a fair estimate of that it is necessary carefully to examine a horse's action. This is not always done, even in the show ring, and I have seen men, both when purchasing and when judging, who seemed to make a point of never standing in front of, or behind, a horse. It should not seem necessary to insist on the necessity of getting in a direct line with the horse whose action you are examining, but apparently it is.

When I was starting life an experienced "old hand" told me that I was to leave a horse which did not make a good impression when he first came out, and never look at him again. He said I should be sure to buy him if I did, and that he would never give me any satisfaction whilst I had him, and that when I came to sell him I should probably be so glad to see his back that I should sell him badly. The advice is thoroughly sound, as I found by experience, though I would remind my readers that it is quite possible to be so fastidious when purchasing

should be correct. However little it may be out of the correct line as the horse stands, it will be far enough out of it when he is extended, and a horse whose feet are thrown about, as we so frequently see when going at a good pace, is working at a disadvantage, and when he is beginning to grow tired he is very apt to fall. If he is correct in this point he will stand up when many an apparently better horse will be in hopeless difficulties. I remember an instance in which this was strongly impressed upon me. I was riding a horse that was decidedly short of breeding. He was good looking enough, and his action was well balanced, but he lacked pace, yet the angle of his pasterns was perfect. It was my lot to ride this horse in two of the fastest runs I ever saw. One was forty minutes, the other forty-five. In the former I was one of some dozen, and I owed my position entirely to the correct pasterns and shoulders of my horse and his well-balanced action. There was in my way a stiff post and rail with a wide drain on the landing side. I rode slowly at the obstacle, a fairly big one under any circumstances, and sufficiently formidable on a beaten horse. My horse cleared it handsomely; it saved me more than half a field and got me on to good ground. But I am convinced that a heavy fall would have been the result had he thrown his feet about as some that I see in the show ring.

Many years ago the late Earl of Zetland—the owner of Vottigeivo, Fandango, etc., impressed upon me the value of shoulder action. He pointed out that unless a horse put his foot well out, which he cannot do unless his shoulder is properly placed, the risk of his falling is great. He also said that we were likely to make the fatal mistake of taking high action for good action. This we have done with a vengeance, and no one can examine carefully the action of the modern Hackney without recognizing that much of the force expended is wasted in the air, and that high stepping and well-balanced action are not convertible terms. Years ago the fatal mistake was made of ignoring the horse for the sake of the action. If a horse "pulled up," that is, if he hit his curb chain with his knee it mattered nothing that he threw his feet all over the place, or whether he put his feet more than half a dozen inches in front of his nose. The result has been that Hackneys have, to a considerable extent, lost the good shoulders for which they were at one time famous, and that their action has also lost to a certain extent that balance which is the foundation of all good action.

The foundation of all action is the walk. It is a natural pace with all breeds of horses, and if a horse walks well, reaching



A Good Shire.

First-prize three-year-old at the 1915 Shire Show in England.

as to fall into the same difficulty. A man may get so tired of looking for the horse he wants that he buys a worse one than those he has previously rejected. I have known this happen more than once. But I think it is quite safe to urge on the would-be purchaser that he will be wise in shutting his eyes to all the perfections of a horse whose action, as a whole, makes a bad impression when he is first sent out. There may be exceptions—for instance, a horse may be upset when he first comes out either by the incompetence or bullying of the man who shows him, or by some outside circumstance. But even then, if carefully looked for, balance and actions will be found provided they are there.

One frequently hears such remarks as "His shoulders are all wrong but his action is perfect," or "He is perfect in shape but his action is deficient." Such remarks as these are contradictory. If a horse is perfectly shaped, if his joints and those forces which control his action are all in their proper place and in their proper working order, he must move well; he cannot do otherwise. And, per contra, if a horse is not truly shaped, he cannot move well and truly. It is an impossibility. He may move in a more or less showy manner, which in a certain sense pleases the eye, but his action cannot by any means be on the lines of least resistance. An important point is that the angle of the pasterns

out in front and getting his hind legs well under him, and walking on at a good pace, he is pretty certain to move well in his other paces. Somehow the walk seems to have been much neglected of late years. If a horse is brought out for inspection everything is done to excite and upset him so that he shall not walk, and a similar state of things prevails in the show ring. In how many cases when the judges say to an exhibitor, "Walk him down and trot him back," is the walking down an undignified shuffle. It of course by no means follows that because a horse shuffles in his walk that he will trot badly or gallop badly. I have known and owned horses that trotted and galloped well and that were bad walkers, having neither style nor pace, but I hold that the walk is a valuable pace in a horse, and that if he is at all built on right lines he ought to walk well. The question therefore rises, has the horse's education in this direction been neglected for many generations until the bad habit has become hereditary? It is possible. And I would point out that by "neglected education" I mean the teaching of those bad habits which are the result of indifferent or careless horsemanship.—Palesman, in Farmer and Stockbreeder.

Do not make one team do all the work. Divide it up.