

to man. They were fabled as being half horse and half man. They are represented as perfect horses in all respects below and behind the withers and the chest; there, at the intersection of the neck, began a human body, the hip joints articulating into the shoulders of the lower animal and the abdomen of the man passing gradually into the chest of the horse. Above this the human form was perfect, with the erect bearing, chest, shoulders, arms, neck and head of a complete man. They were reputed to be possessed of extraordinary mental as well as physical powers, and to be as superior to ordinary men in wisdom and art as they were in fleetness and strength. They were evidently a tribe of horsemen whom the ignorance and superstition of that early age elevated into a superior race, in the supposition that the horse and man were united in one. Everything points to them as being the first who succeeded in breaking and using the horse.

Coming down to the time of authentic history, we find the Parthians to have been among the most renowned for their skill in training and using the horse. Their feats of horsemanship in battle showed a complete mastery of the animal, which in their battle with the Romans rendered them so efficient as mounted archers.

Frequently in ancient paintings the mounted steed is represented without a bridle, and the Numidian cavalry are said to have guided and restrained their horses without it, an assertion by no means improbable, as a Comanche Indian of the present day will frequently jump on the back of a wild and untrained horse, and guide him by the simple expedient of covering with his hand the eye of the animal on the opposite side to that in which he wishes to direct him.

In sacred history the first mention of the horse is in the time of Joseph, when in Egypt, at which period the horse had been broken and subjected to the harness, thus corroborating the already mentioned records of the monuments. Thus we find that as civilization advances, and historic records multiply, that the use of the horse becomes more universal. Where the original country of the horse was matters little, except as an interesting fact, whether in Asia or on the soil of Africa, to which his near relations, the Zebra and the Quagga are certainly indigenous.