

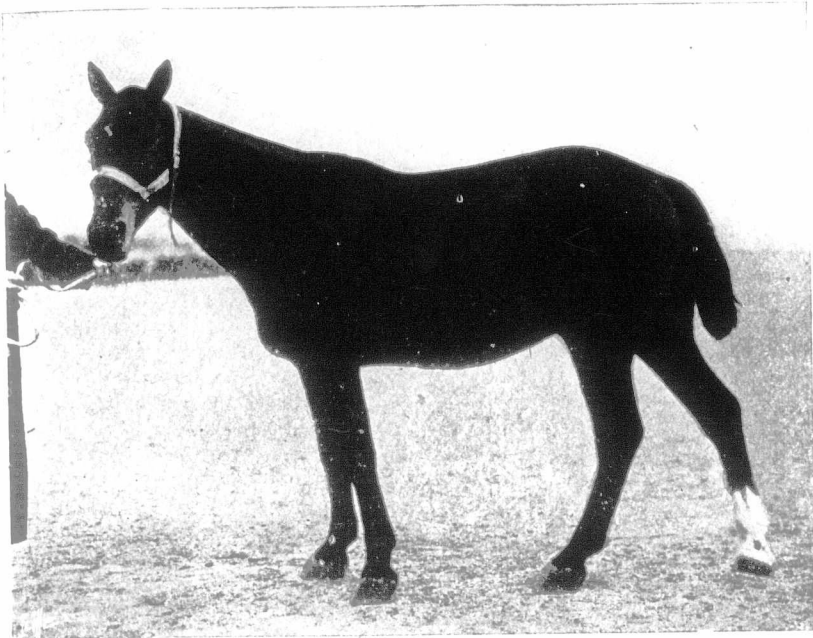


FIG. 3.—ORDINARY TYPE OF BASUTO PONY (14.1). Photo by M. H. Hayes.

and many others too numerous to mention, are to be traced in the hands of the natives, crossed on the old Dutch breed obtained from the farmers, as above described. The comparatively small size and sturdy frame of the Basuto pony is to be ascribed to the influence of climate. The breeding stock live in the mountains, winter and summer, exposed to the wildest weather and extremes of heat and cold, the thermometer in winter often indicating from 10 to 15 degrees of frost in the rocky valleys and arid plateaus of the Maluti and Drakensberg Mountains, where the ponies are mostly bred. The spring and early summer are spent in recovering the condition lost during winter, and in April the frosts commence again, so that only a few months' growth can be made yearly, and the result when mature is the hardy, thick-set Basuto pony. Its evolution is a simple enough matter when the conditions are known, and I fail to see the object of ascribing the virtues to mythical Shetland stallions, of which no local tradition exists: whereas what is perfectly well known is that the earlier Dutch and Colonial strain has been of late years repeatedly crossed with and improved by the English Thoroughbred and by Arabs imported by the Government.

Fig. 3 shows a good ordinary type of Basuto pony; and Fig. 4, a better bred one. Fig. 5 is a useful Transvaal gelding, whose rider is a fine horseman, and is on active service in South Africa, where I took these photographs last year (1901).

The Ranching Industry in Canada --- How it First Started.

BY R. GORDON MATHEWS, SECRETARY OF THE WESTERN STOCK GROWERS' ASSOCIATION.

Who, twenty-five years ago, would have thought it possible, let alone probable, that this land of Alberta would be to-day as it is? He would indeed have been a bold man who had ventured to predict the swinging strides of development that have taken place between then and now. What was there here twenty-six years ago? Ask the half-tamed Blackfoot, stolidly undergoing his process of British inoculation; ask the skulking timber wolf, gorged with the marrow bones of a suckling calf; ask that prince of poisoners, the deadly rattlesnake. They know.



R. G. MATHEWS.

There was a young green land snuggling tight to the stony ribs of British Columbia;—a mere babe of a land compared to its nineteenth-century surroundings, yet hoary with scattered remnants of prehistoric periods;—a land that reached from the purple peaks of the iron-bound Rockies to the far-away slopes of the Cypress Hills, and from the mound-marked borders of Montana clear to the God-forsaken homelands of the musk-ox and the polar bear;—a land whose southern portion was just one vast breeding ground for the fowls of the air and the wild beasts of the field, and whose green-swathed bosom was sprinkled with the bleaching bones of many a tough old buffalo

bull, and traced with the myriad paths of countless herds of that bygone quadruped—those multitudes which no man could number;—a land, generous with limpid lakes, rippling brooks and thundering rivers; its wide acres carpeted with a grass which, rich and luxuriant in summer, in autumn cured itself as it stood, nature's bountiful contribution for the winter months; its foothills and river-bottoms clothed with sheltering trees and shrubs; its climate beautiful and bright, where

"The lungs with the living gas grow light,
And the limbs feel the strength of ten;

While the chest expands with the maddening might—
God's Glorious Oxygen."

A land peopled with that powerful and savage tribe of Indians, the Blackfoot Nation, and giving abundant sustenance to the vast bands of buffalo that roamed throughout its length and breadth. That is, briefly, what there was here twenty-six years ago. That is, briefly, what there is to-day, only perhaps a little less so. That is why, twenty-six years ago, this land of Southern Alberta was a veritable paradise for the buffalo, and that is why, to-day, its hills and vales are dotted with thousands and thousands of their successors, the range cattle.

Unless, however, some may think this the prologue to an emigration pamphlet, let me hasten

N.-W. Mounted Police bear witness. But what I want to particularly get at is that their advent in Southern Alberta was the dawn of everything in that hitherto lawless and isolated country.

When the Police arrived there were no cattle in the country; not a hoof on the wide ranges now so thickly stocked; but with them came two old milk cows and a few yokes of oxen, called, in the vernacular, bull-teams. Shortly afterwards, I. G. Baker & Co., a Montana mercantile firm who had trading posts at different points through the Indian country, drove in a small herd to provide beefsteaks, etc., for the Police.

It was not, however, until the summer of 1876 that the first real genuine bunch of breeding stock made their appearance on the scene. This consisted of one bull and fourteen cows with their calves, totalling up to about twenty-five head. They were brought over from Sun River, Montana, by one John B. Smith (still, by the way, a resident of Macleod), who sold them to a member of the Mounted Police, named Whitney (old Bob, likewise still residing in Macleod), and he, not having a ranch, calmly turned them loose on the world. It was perhaps, under the circumstances then existing, a risky thing to have done, but the fact remains, and it is an interesting one, that in spite of being strangers in a strange land, homeless and shelterless, they took their chances with the buffaloes, the wolves, the Indians, and the prairie fires, and each and all, individually and collectively, turned up fat and serene on the spring round-up. There were only two riders on that round-up, and there was only the one small bunch of stock to ride for, but, nevertheless, this was the first round-up ever held in this country. Small as it was, it was an eminently satisfactory one—25 turned loose, 25 gathered in—many a rancher to-day would like to see the same percentage—but there was nothing small about the country it covered. The cattle, as may be imagined, took a lot of looking for, and might have taken a great deal more but for the unwitting assistance of a buffalo calf, who stood bawling on the banks of a deep coulee, now called Scott's, and so attracted the round-up's attention, with the result that the cattle were found "right foreinst."

Joe McFarlane and Oleson Ling were the next to appear upon the scene. They brought in a small bunch of mixed cattle, and took up a ranch just east of the Police fort, in a river bottom close to the trading post of old man Weatherwax. Mr. Weatherwax, by the way, was at that particular time "in durance vile." He had fallen foul of the minions of the law through a misconception on his part as to the exact rights and privileges of a free and independent citizen of the United States. He had been in the habit of importing Montana "Red-eye" and dishing it out to the Redskins in exchange for buffalo robes, but had been peremptorily ordered by the Police to change his ways. He did not, so he retired temporarily to the sheltered seclusion behind the guardroom's bars.

From this time on newcomers gradually began to arrive. In 1877, Sam Brouard "happened along" with 50 head; the same year old man Lee settled right in the jaws of the Crow's Nest

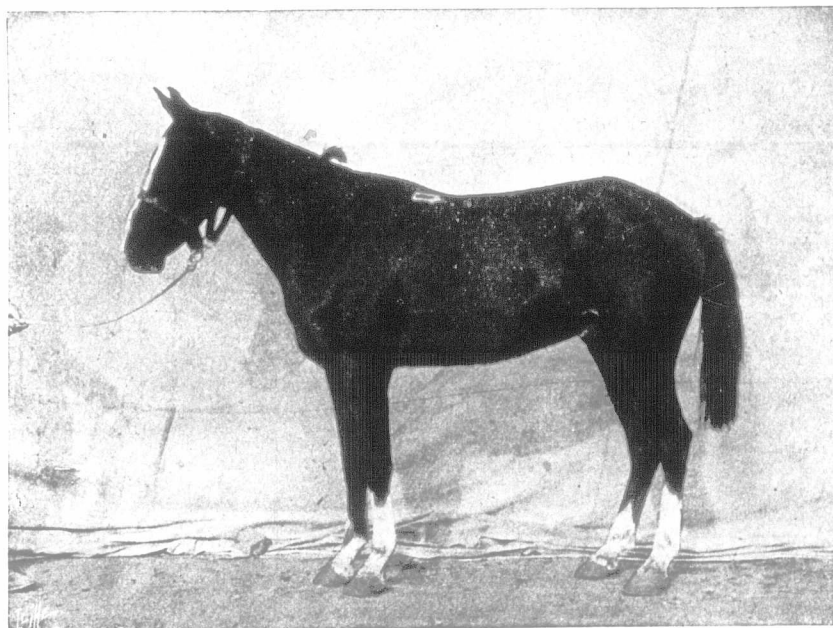


FIG. 4.—WELL-BRED BASUTO PONY (13.2). Photo by M. H. Hayes.

to state that it is not so. It is merely a short description of the land whose natural advantages suggested to its first settlers the profitable results to be obtained from "growing cattle."

It was on the 13th October, 1873, that a dauntless little band of red-coated men reached, after many a hundred miles of weary travel, the banks of the Old Man's River (a branch of the South Saskatchewan), near where the present town of Macleod is situated. They had left Fort Garry and civilization behind them, and under the leadership of the late Judge Macleod, then an officer in the N.-W. Mounted Police, had cast the old drum routine to the dogs and launched themselves into the hidden dangers and hardships of an unknown land. They flew the banner of liberty and justice, the flag of England, and they firmly planted in a part of her domain where it had never been unfurled before. That was part of their mission, as it also was to wrench the land from its state of savagery, and to gently and gradually spread the ever-widening horizon of British rights and principles. So it was their mission to oust the whiskey trader and ban him from the land; to formulate laws and ordinances, and generally to establish an organized system of good government. How well their mission was accomplished, the records of the



FIG. 5.—THICK-SET TRANSVAAL GELDING (15.1). Photo by M. H. Hayes.