

HORSES.

A bold, proud outlook from a head well set on a strong, high neck, counts for more in a stallion than mere appearance. It means vim, vitality and "bottom" in the stock he leaves.

Thoroughbred stallions are the longest lived of the entire males of any breed of horses. This is undoubtedly traceable to the fact that they are never loaded up with fat to improve their appearance, and receive plenty of hard, steady work.

If there is no time to oil harness in the summer months, when the sun can dry it in, give it a good cleaning and oiling now. Oiling harness is like giving a boy a bath—it should be done once a year whether it needs it or not.

Some Scotchmen realized that it was necessary to draw attention to size and substance in their favorite draft breed, hence the Brydon trophy. Three-year-olds have to be at least 16.3 hands, and aged horses 17 hands, and must pass the vets. as sound.

How Can We Get the Farm Horse?

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

Your discussion on the subject of the farmer's horse-breeding policy is surely timely, and I hope to see a liberal contribution from the experience of horse-breeders and horse-owners. Not being specially interested in horses, I have waited for some horse-breeder to set the ball rolling in this discussion.

I quite agree with you that we have no breed of horses which, as a breed, exhibit the characteristics which, to my mind, belong to the ideal farm horse. In this part of the country the Clydesdale is the most commonly used, and, while there are many excellent specimens of the breed and its crosses, and while, as a rule, they are highly intelligent, docile, strong, and free from disease, as a breed they are too sluggish in temperament, too unwieldy in body, and have too much "feathering" on the legs for an ideal farm horse. If these undesirable characteristics could be eliminated, I think we could not do better than stick to the Clyde. But as we take things as we find them, I have for years been rather inclined to pin my faith to the Percheron; but if, as is claimed by some, he has bad feet, that would quickly rule him out of the running. I had not observed and was not aware before that this was the case, if it is. However, individuals of the breed seem to differ considerably, which would lead one to doubt their prepotency, or at least suspect an undesirable number of strains in the breed. But whether from this or some other cause, the Clyde and Shire seem to outstrip the Percheron in general favor. It would seem from this that the farmer has been breeding more for the market than his own particular needs, which doubtless is the best policy, as he can depend on usually getting more surely in the open market what will best suit his particular needs, as, according to my observation, among the multitude of breeds and their crosses one can generally find what he is looking for, though the specimen may have no particular breeding. The ideal farm horse is liable to "turn up" in almost any of the general-purpose or draft breeds; and yet, if one should attempt to produce this type deliberately by breeding, he would probably be disappointed. As to what breed one should use in the attempt, if the Percheron be ruled out, I would be inclined to try the Coachers, and, in this connection, what is the matter with the Cleveland Bay? It is heavier than the French Coach, and has sufficient speed for either wagon or carriage; but, further than this, I cannot say that I know much about the breed. Of all the light breeds at present available, I think the product of the Coachers would bring the readiest sale, but if I were breeding horses for the market I would choose a heavy breed like the Clydesdale, for reasons which cannot be mentioned here. The principal reason, however, is that they are most likely to increase in demand, while the light breeds, especially the light drivers, will be displaced. Whether we can add to the number of our present breeds profitably, is not an easy question to answer. It seems to me a risky undertaking to attempt to originate a breed of strictly farm horses; at best, it could only be an approximation. The ideal horse for one farmer is not the ideal for another. Circumstances alter cases too much in this particular, and, as I said before, I think it better for him to take his chances in the open market, where he is reasonably sure to get what he wants, from light to heavy, if he will pay the price.

Perth Co., Ont.

J. H. BURNS.

What is the American "strenuous life" but a headlong rush for the grave?

A Two-class Horse-breeding Policy.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

The questions published in your issue of Feb. 15th, re horse-breeding, open a very wide field for discussion, a field in which probably no two men will quite agree, and for this reason I think every farmer reader of "The Farmer's Advocate" may expect to profit from the discussion which should follow their publication. It is a subject in which I am very much interested, and so, though comparatively young in the business, I would like to give some of my ideas along this line.

I have no hesitation in saying that the farmer who intends having horse-breeding as one of his side-lines, should breed just as nearly as possible to the market requirements, and then if he should be so strangely fortunate as to produce only animals which he considered "too good for a farmer to keep," he will have little difficulty in procuring useful farm horses which the dealers will not touch. It is not these serviceable workers, belonging to no particular class, which are in such keen demand, but the first-class animal of some decided type. I can, however, see no necessity for the progressive farmer selling a valuable animal which suits his needs just because it also suits some other fellow's. I heartily agree with an elderly farmer's wife whom I heard tell a buyer who was tempting her husband with a big price for one of his horses, "I can just ride behind as good a horse as you, Fred, and I'm going to do it; go on home, John." Then, let the farmer breed for the market, and if he does not have enough misfits to supply his own needs, let him use some of the good ones; they will require more careful handling, but will do the work equally

from 2½ to 3 years old, and we find that, if well fed and not overworked, these colts are benefited rather than injured by the work. They also become well used to harness, and, after seeding, will do the summer driving, while the older horses are busy on the farm. Then, if you wish to sell your colt in the fall, he is thoroughly broken, and will sell much more readily than if unbroken.

On most farms in this part of Ontario will be found at least one team of what might be called heavy horses—horses weighing from 1,450 to 1,700 pounds—also a team of what are frequently spoken of as drivers—that is, a second team, which may vary anywhere from a stout road team to a pair weighing 2,500 pounds. Then, my idea of the farmer's breeding policy is, breed your heavy mares to a Clydesdale, as this is the most popular draft breed in Canada, and gets, I believe, the best draft horse, both for the farmer's use and for the market or city trade; and also breed your light mares, but do not try to get a farm or delivery horse by mating them with a draft stallion, but breed either for a carriage horse by mating with a Hackney, or for a saddle horse by mating with the Thoroughbred.

Undoubtedly the Hackney is the most popular of the light breeds in the Dominion to-day, and, I believe, justly so; but I also believe the Thoroughbred ought to be much more popular than he is. One of the most common classes of brood mares on Ontario farms to-day is a solidly built general-purpose mare, weighing from 1,250 to 1,450 pounds, and many of them with considerable hair or feather on their legs. Such animals, when kept regularly trimmed, are very presentable driving horses, and are frequently used for this purpose. This class of mares is usually bred to a light horse, and too frequently to a Hackney.

The result of this cross is almost certain to be disappointing. The progeny often has first-class action or possesses some other valuable characteristics, but usually has enough irregularities to make a poor market animal. On the other hand, if a man has a mare suitable for crossing with a Hackney stallion, he is the horse deserving the preference, because he is the type of light horse in greatest demand to-day. The question, then, is: What type of mare is suitable for mating with a Hackney horse? My answer is, any medium-sized, clean-limbed



Shire Mare, Sussex Bluegown 40352.

Champion mare at London, England, Shire Show, 1906.

well, and will develop better horsemanship, and also give more pleasure to the driver.

The second question asked, what breed of horses will, when mated with the general run of mares, get the largest proportion of useful farm horses, struck me as being somewhat in opposition to the first, for if a farmer were breeding with the sole object of getting useful farm horses, I should say, from my knowledge of the general run of mares, use the French or German Coach horse; but, on the other hand, I would not recommend this horse, because I think chances would be much poorer for getting a marketable animal than by the Hackney or Thoroughbred cross, and the marketable animal is what the farmer should aim at.

The line of breeding which farmers should adopt most extensively is largely influenced by varying circumstances. For instance, if the breeder is not a lover of horses, and breeds them just as he would hoe roots, purely for the money there is in them, let him by all means confine himself to heavy horses, for he will never expend the trouble and care necessary to make a success of raising light ones. On the other hand, if a man has that inherent love for a horse, I see no reason why he should not raise the lighter ones, which are much more interesting and equally profitable. Some heavy-horse men may dispute that they are equally profitable, but any regular observer of market prices, as given in "The Farmer's Advocate," will have noticed that prices for drafters and carriage horses run about the same, each, of course, having ups and downs. Then, while the draft colt is earning his keep on the farm, the light colt is earning his both on the road and on the farm. Every spring we work light colts during seeding time which are

mare, and particularly if she has one or more crosses of Thoroughbred blood, or possesses some good roadster breeding.

Another question which grows out of the above is: How shall we mate these general-purpose mares? Many of the heavier ones, if bred to a heavy Clydesdale stallion, would produce stock perfectly suited for heavy farm work, or for light dray work in the cities, and this class is always in demand, and commands a good price when matured; and where such animals can be produced, they are quite the most satisfactory, because, in breeding these mares to any light horse, we are much more liable to meet with misfits of various sorts. Then, if we wish to breed them light, there are two alternatives—either accept the cry so frequently heard from road-horsemen to-day, and "breed to the Standard-bred with high action"; or, breed to the Thoroughbred. The get of either horse, when well trained, finds ready sale at a profitable figure, but developing either the speed in a road horse or the saddle gaits in the get of a Thoroughbred, is a difficult task, and requires more time than the average farmer can afford to expend. Of these two crosses, I would recommend the Thoroughbred, for several reasons. They are, as a rule, larger, and undoubtedly will stand more farm work, and usually just as much road work, and when the time comes for marketing, the saddle horse will be the easier to dispose of at a satisfactory price, because there is a constant demand for saddle and combination horses, which is almost entirely supplied by the farmers, while the road horse comes more into competition with the produce of the large breeders, who have purer blood to work on, and also spend more time and money developing speed, etc., than the farmer can afford to do.