

EDITORIAL.

Whence Comes the Modern Hackney?

As early as the year 1303 the name Hackney was fully adopted into the English tongue. The names Nag, Hackney, and Roadster were at that time synonymous terms. They seem to have been used indiscriminately by old writers in the sense of a riding or road horse for general purpose as distinct from the war horse. The French word, *Haquenee*, implies a common horse for all purposes of riding, whether for private use or for hire, generally an ambler or pacer, as distinguished from *palfrey* and the "great horse." The former of these were called *pad nags*, and were likewise *pacers*.

Says an old writer: "Hackney, in the general acceptance of the word with the sporting world, is a horse superior to all others upon the score of utility, being rendered subservient to every office of exertion, speed or perseverance, or in other words, to all the *drudgery* and *labor* of his situation, from which his contemporaries, the racer, the hunter, and the charger, by the *imaginary* superiority of their qualifications and pampered appearance, are always exempt. It is the peculiar province of the Hackney to carry his master twelve or fifteen miles in an hour to covert (where the hunter is in waiting), and sometimes to bring back the groom, with greater expedition, whose engagements may probably have occasioned him to be much more in haste than his master. It is in the department of the Hackney to encounter and overcome emergencies and difficulties of every description; his constitution should be excellent and his spirit invincible; he must be enabled to go five and twenty to thirty miles at a stage, without drawing bit, and without the least respect to the depth of the roads or the dreary state of the weather; and if he is not equal to any weight in these trying exertions, he will be held in no estimation as a Hackney of fashion."

In 1495 an effort was made, in England, to improve the breed of road horses, by legislation. An act was passed to prohibit the transportation of horses and mares beyond the seas without the King's special license, owing no doubt to the high estimation in which the English horse was held in other countries. By this measure, care was given to quality rather than quantity in breeding. In 1530, and again on several subsequent occasions, further acts were passed to increase the penalty for removing out of the realm any horses, mares, or other stock, without the King's special license given under the Great Seal of England. Later acts were passed with a view to establish a uniformity of type and to prevent the use of anything but desirable stallions.

One Thomas de Grey, in the reign of James I., published a treatise whose title is "The Compleat Horseman and Expert Farrier." This work became so popular that within sixty years of its first issue, four reprints were necessary to supply the demand. This reputable writer, referring to the Hackney, says: "If we regard the spirit, vigor, and doings of a horse, no nation or soil produceth a more active than this our Island of Great Britain." Great stress was laid by this author on the need of stallions being "rightly bred," which he says may be known by their "mettle, spirit, shape, color, action, marks, and the like, while both mares and stallions should be young, handsome, of size neither small nor too large, long-legged or under-bodied, but well-knit, limbed, and jointed." The result, he contended, will be "beyond all peradventure that there shall result horses fit wherewith to serve the country upon all occasions, as also their owners and friends, and acquire to themselves no small honor and commendation both from the Prince and Weal Public." He says further, "that if a horse be of a good color, well-marked, and rightly-shaped, and right also by sire and mare, it will be seldom that he should prove ill, unless his nature be alienated and marred, either in backing and riding, or else that he be otherwise wronged and most shamefully abused by the means of a hair-brain negligent, or inconsiderate rider or groom."

Another English writer, William Cavendish, in a treatise respecting the riding horses of the Seventeenth century, says: "Certainly English horses are the best horses in the whole world for all uses whatsoever, from the cart to the saddle, and some are as beautiful horses as can be anywhere, for they are bred out of horses of all nations. . . . In Cornwall there are good nags, and in Wales excellent good ones, but in Scotland the galloways (Hackneys) are the best nags of them all."

The modern Hackney horse may be said to have been the product of the Eighteenth century, as was the horse which we now speak of as the Thoroughbred. Singular to say, there was the most complete similarity in the mode in which these now diverse varieties were compounded, the only difference being that a developed running habit was found in the mares, whence our Thoroughbred horses sprung; in the others the habit of trotting had been so deeply impressed by centuries of use that it could not be conquered. Two advertisements, to be found in the London Gazette, show that at the beginning of the century the two paces which had been alternately in favor yet existed. The first advertisement, in the year 1700, spoke of "a dark iron-grey horse which paces altogether." The other, in 1701, of "a bay mare which trots altogether."

The county newspapers are found occasionally to furnish information as to the process going on for converting the old English Hackney horse into the modern variety. In May 2nd, 1741, one speaks of a very large bay stallion, exceedingly strong, height 15.3, his sire a fine, strong hunter of Squire Pulteney's, near Beverley, Yorkshire, and was bred from a mare of Farmer Bell's, upon Yorkshire Wolds. From that time forward there was a regular succession of advertisements, which demonstrate what was done by way of improving the original breed of English horses owned by the gentry and farmers in many parts of the country.

Up till about 1800, different breeds seemed to have been mixed, but the good effect of a happy combination continues to the present day, and gives to the world the types of horses variously known as English Hackneys, Roadsters, and Cobs.

It may be taken as a fact that a horse known as Shales, or Shield's horse, was the first noteworthy trotting Hackney stallion of the modern type. His sire was the Duke of Ancaster's Blank, registered in the Stud Book as bred by Lord Godolphin, foaled in 1740. He was rich in Arab blood. It is recorded that the stock from this horse were esteemed excellent road horses, able to carry weights, and very fast trotters. In 1782 he was justly esteemed the best stallion known to get good road horses, and out of well-bred mares he got capital hunters. So writes Mr. H. F. Euren in the historical introduction to the first volume of the English Hackney Stud Book from which we quote.

Another celebrated Hackney progenitor was "Pretender," who was generally allowed to be the best stock-getter in the country in his day, and his performances equal to those of any horse in England. When five years old he trotted sixteen miles in one hour, carrying sixteen stone. The amount of his three last covering seasons was £761 15s. 6d. His sire was Mr. Jenkinson's Fireaway, a chestnut horse that seems to have been a most impressive sire. A noted son of "Pretender," Bellfounder, was not the least famous in his day, as he made his mark for great staying and weight-carrying powers at a good trotting pace. This blood, we may mention, is found in the veins of Rysdyke's Hamiltonian, the king of trotting sires in the United States. Bellfounder, at five years old, trotted two miles in six minutes, and in the following year was matched for 200 guineas to trot nine miles in 39 minutes, which he won easily by 22 seconds. He is described as having small head and ears; full, prominent eyes, and wide apart; neck medium length, set well up from the withers; shoulders deep and oblique; deep girth and full chested; fore legs well apart; short-backed, round-ribbed, and very broad on the loin; hips wide and well-gathered in; long, full quarters to hocks and short to fetlocks; limbs strong and well-muscled, broad and flat below the knees and hocks; pasterns rather short; concave hoofs, and open heels. In height he stood 15½ hands. He was full of game and mettle, but very controllable. His knee-action was very attractive and high. He was remarkably honest and level-headed, as it was a very rare occurrence for him to leave his feet during trials of speed.

OUR ILLUSTRATION—NORFOLK COB.

Coming down to about the year 1830, the great Norfolk Phenomenon was then in his prime. He was got by the famous Norfolk Cob, a life-like representation of whom, in his prime [reproduced from an old steel engraving], is our frontispiece. His dam was got by old Marshland Shales. As his appearance in the portrait indicates, he was well worthy to rank high among the progenitors of the Hackney race. Norfolk Phenomenon was the property of Mr. Wright, Rougham, Norfolk, later coming into possession of John Theobald Stockwell, Surrey, by whom he is said to have been named. He was out of a Pretender mare by (Reid's) Old Fireaway; his grandsire, Young Fireaway, bred by Mr. Burgess, Well-Pen, Norfolk; great-grandsire, Old Fireaway, the property of Mr. R. West, Gaywood, Norfolk; great-great-grandsire, Fireway, from whose stock the original Fireaways are descended. Norfolk Phenomenon was a roan, bred about 1825; his dam was a very fast trotting mare, and never was beaten. She bred many valuable horses, eight of which sold for £1,080, exclusive of Phenomenon, which in his time stood first as a Norfolk trotter. He bore a remarkable resemblance to Mambrino, one of the first of that name from which many of our American trotters are descended. About the year 1838, one H. R. Philips purchased Phenomenon from Robert Ramsdale, of Market Meighton. Mr. Philips said he considered him at that time the best stallion in England, and he knew of no animal that begot progeny so good and valuable. He is described as a big-boned horse on short legs; height 15.2, girth deep, quarters symmetrical, legs flat, feet good; full of courage, and with wonderful action. He was afterwards taken to Scotland, where he trotted matches, being then nearly 30 years old, and is said to have died in Edinburgh.

Among other noted progenitors of the Hackney horse we may mention the celebrated and matchless mare, Phenomena, which was for years the admiration of the sporting world. She was under 14.2 hands high, was bred in May, 1788, at Melton Park, in Norfolk. Her dam was a half-bred mare, and Othello, her sire, trotted 1 mile 11th, 12th, on the Highgate Road, seventeen miles in 37½ minutes; he was afterwards bought for £800 guineas. Some of the mare Phenomena's performances may well be mentioned. When twelve years old she was matched to trot seventeen miles within an hour, on

a country road, which she performed with ease in 56 minutes. A few months later, her former feat being doubted, she was started again over the same distance, which she did in something less than 53 minutes, four miles of which was done under eleven minutes, when it was declared by the onlooking sporting gentlemen that she literally flew. When she was 23 years old she trotted nine miles in 28 minutes 30 seconds. Many more such performances by old Hackney progenitors could be cited, but sufficient has been given to indicate the sort of foundation from which the present popular breed of equines has arisen.

Mr. John Armstrong Storey, Shaftesbury Road, Hammersmith, an old Hackney breeder, writing in November, 1878, regarding the Norfolk trotters, says:

"As a breeder of that class of horse, during 40 years of my residence in Norfolk, I trust a few remarks from my pen will not be deemed presumptuous. The first point for consideration appears to be, 'What is a Hackney?' Doubtless it is the produce of Thoroughbred and old Norfolk strains of blood so blended and cultivated that an almost distinct race is established, combining all the desired characteristics of the two families in an improved model frame. The task is by no means an easy one, and may take years of study to effect, for continual disappointments will arise through a tendency to breeding back to one or other of the original stocks. Under the most favorable circumstances it must be a tedious process, as no horse can pass muster as a Hackney unless he can boast of three generations untainted by nearer proximity to either of the original roots of parentage. This rule, which has been accepted through all ages, I hold to be imperative as the safest and soundest definition of the Hackney strain of blood. It is necessary, in blending, to study closely the symmetrical points required. Perhaps they can best be defined as exhibiting the elegance of the Thoroughbred above the line, with the substance of the cart-horse beneath that limit of demarcation; but the shoulder must be deep and lie well back, with withers well upraised; the long arm, and full of muscle; the leg-bone short, flat, and largely supported with sinew; the fetlock short and strong, the foot circular and tending to be upright, the frog well-hollowed out and pliable; the thigh must be muscle itself, hock clean and accurately jointed, the hind rib being short, that he may the better 'Gang away and tuck his haunches in.'"

For centuries, then, Great Britain, the world's greatest fountain-head of pure-bred stock, has had a distinctive type of trotting horses, which for a hundred years past has practically been a breed, though not till ten years ago were the scattered historic records collected in the form of the Hackney Stud Book.

Judging Exhibition Grain.

SIR.—In the April 1st issue of the ADVOCATE I see an Eastern Ontario reader is aggrieved at not being awarded prizes for his grain at Toronto.

He intimates the man was judged (and secured the prize) and not the grain. He endeavors to prove this by stating that he exhibited against the same grain at Ottawa and obtained first prize, whereas the other grain captured the second.

As far as I can see, this proves nothing. For instance, some judges (say in Red wheat) prefer a dark red grain, whilst others prefer a light red or amber. Then, again, some test the weight, while others do not think it necessary to do so. Further, there is such a difference in the feeling of grain: for instance, if you have several bags of grain of the same kind, grown on different farms, and put your hand down in each bag, you will often notice a great deal of difference in the feel of it. Some will feel crisp, and others as if it were hardly dry. No doubt this damp feeling is caused from the condition the grain was in at the time of threshing. Grain should not be judged simply by the weight and color alone—there is the purity and cleanness to be looked at as well, which is to my mind very important. There are so many different points to be taken into consideration in judging grain, it is no wonder that judges sometimes hold a different opinion as to which is the best, especially when there are several bags of good grain to be judged. I might add that it is not a rare occurrence for grain of a previous year's growth to be exhibited, and it takes a good judge to detect this.

I did not exhibit last year, but in 1892 I showed Red wheat and White oats, and was awarded first prize on the former and second on the latter, in Toronto. I did not know the judges at all, so they could not have judged the man, but the grain. The next year it was exhibited at Chicago and took prizes, and is now on exhibition at the "Imperial Institute," London, England, which certainly makes it apparent that the grain was at any rate in that year judged fairly at Toronto.

Judges at exhibitions hold unenviable positions, and I think if we fail in gaining prizes which we consider we deserve, it is better for us to take it with a good grace, unless we can prove that the judges are not acting fairly. J. E. RICHARDSON.

"Creekside Farm," Princeton, Ont.
[P. S.—I must congratulate you on the great improvement of the ADVOCATE.—J. E. R.]

Volunteers might be written on the successful management of orchards, but the whole matter may be condensed into four words—Till, Feed, Prune, Spray.