

The error is often made that to get a farm horse you must breed to that so-called, but indefinite, animal termed an

AGRICULTURAL STALLION OR GENERAL PURPOSE HORSE.

These are generally light draft horses made up from all sources, possessing no purity of blood, and, consequently, no pre-potency, and giving no reliability as to what they will get, frequently breeding back to something undesirable. There is no doubt that it would be a great benefit to this country if only pure bred sires were used.

The lighter type of Clyde, of which there are a great many, and are easily procured in the old country, and also the Suffolks and Percherons, will get light draft horses with moderate activity, and of much more satisfactory quality, than the nondescript general purpose.

There is not so much fault to be found with the quality of the heavier classes of horses in this country as with the light ones, which is of a sadly low standard.

The demand for them is good in all the grades, from the heavy large carriage horse down to the low, chunky, symmetrical, active cob. There is no better opportunity of improving our reputation as a horse country, than of raising the quality of our light stock. We want more good looking, symmetrical animals, and, above all, to possess more of that most essential element called *quality*. The majority of people don't understand what *quality* is, and it is not easy to give a very concise and comprehensive definition of it. It may be said to be evidenced by clean cut or well defined points, by fineness of the coat, pliability of the skin, which fits closely to the bones of the limbs, which have a decided tendency to flatness.

The original source of all this quality appears to be the Arabian horse, but we have directly got what exists of it amongst our horses from the

"THOROUGHBRED" OR "BLOOD."

as he is sometimes called, and which is simply the Arabian horse modified by climate, soil and management. The modification is a great improvement, as the Thoroughbred has more size, range, substance and speed than the Arabian. Now, in order that we can improve the quality of our light horses, we must go to the source of that quality, viz., the Thoroughbred. Nothing has brought the light stock of Great Britain and Ireland to such a high state of excellence as the large infusion of Thoroughbred blood they possess. We have had a few Thoroughbreds in this country, some good ones and others not up to the mark, but it is only in exceptional cases that farmers could be prevailed upon to use them. They generally imagined that if they used a Thoroughbred on their common mares, they would be breeding race horses, which is, of course, a great piece of absurdity. In the majority of cases only very small mares were used, and often old, broken down cripples, and, consequently the size of the progeny was too small, and in some cases unsound. But when good-sized, sound mares were used, the get have brought the highest figures. Of course, a suitable "Thoroughbred" to mate with the common mares of this country must be one of good size and substance, and free from hereditary disease. Many such horses can be got in the old country and in the States for very moderate figures.

Half-breds can easily be produced if proper sized mares are used, weighing from 1,100 to 1,250 pounds, and there are many that have used such horses on their farms that consider them the best general purpose animals that can be procured. So that, apart from their high value in the market, they can be made profitable use of.

It is next to impossible to procure a good looking

CARRIAGE OR SADDLE HORSE

in this Province, and it costs as much to look them up as half the purchase money.

Many people imagine that such a class of light horses as has been spoken of can be produced by stallions with trotting blood in them, but nothing can demonstrate the error of such a conclusion more forcibly than the wretchedly low standard of the carriage and saddle grades of horses found in the United States. The only quality they possess that is desirable is ability

to trot in many cases, but for style at a practicable road gait, and for all-day staying power, they cannot even compare favorably with half-breds for roadsters. Trotting horses are very seldom good looking, nor do they possess much quality, so that they have not got what is required to make them suitable to cross with the common mares of this country, and, being made up from mixed sources, they do not possess much impressive power. Breeding for trotting speed is a matter of much speculation and the work of a specialist, and it seldom pays the farmer to indulge in it. Of course there are a certain number of people that want speed beyond everything else, and are willing to pay for it, but they are limited in numbers, and farmers have not time to develop what frequently takes a long period of education to bring out and make worth much money.

In the course of forty or fifty years there may be a trotting breed of some purity, but it will take time to bring it about, as it has done in all other breeds of horses.

What we would most like to impress upon the minds of the members of the Dominion Farmers' Council, is the urgent necessity for introducing a larger infusion of Thoroughbred blood into the light horses of this country, for it will not only result in pretty immediate benefits, but it will have a lasting and favorable effect.

It is certainly most unfortunate that we have not got a sufficient number of suitable horses to supply the demand opened out for us from the British army, and no less a judge of the circumstances of the case than Colonel Ravenhill attributes their scarcity to the fact that we have used Thoroughbred sires so little.

Some of the leading horse breeders in the neighborhood who were invited to be present expressed their regret that they could not attend. However, the paper elicited a lengthy discussion, and although some of the farmers and horsemen present were interested in different breeds of horses, yet they admired the calmly deliberate, thorough and impressive manner with which the paper was written.

The only noteworthy points brought out in the discussion were: (1) That farm work done by colts was a fine thing for the boys, and old mares were a fine thing when the teamsters were old men; (2) Farmers had to be guided to a large extent by the mares they had on the farm, the selection of the stallion being controlled thereby; (3) The specimens of thoroughbred stallions usually found in this part of Ontario were too small for the purposes indicated in the paper.

A motion of thanks for the instructive and unprejudiced paper was passed, and the secretary was instructed to forward a copy of same to Prof. Greenside.

ROYAL RAILWAY COMMISSION.

Under the head of new business, several members spoke of the Royal Railway Commission appointed by the Dominion Government, which is now travelling the Province taking evidence as to the grievances against railways, with the view of discussing in Parliament the propriety of establishing a permanent commission for the regulation of railway freights. It was brought out in the discussion that this Royal Commission was composed of lawyers and railroaders, that the railway companies brought witnesses who were unfavorable to the establishment of a commission, that these witnesses were afraid to speak the truth for fear the railway companies would go against them in the matter of rates, and that little or no attempt had been made to get evidence from farmers or others who were unfavorable to the continuance of this monstrous injustice.

Vice-President Anderson denounced the rail-

ways and the Royal Commission in the most vigorous terms. He doubted that an independent commission could be appointed to regulate freights, for the railways could control the Commission as easily as they could control the Government, but some change was absolutely imperative, and hardly any change could be for the worse. No harm could accrue in trying a commission. The enormous capital wasted in building independent lines of railway, which moneys came out of the farmers' pockets by bonuses and taxation, should be looked into, and some attempt must be made to prevent these railways amalgamating into gigantic corporations and monopolies for the purpose of crushing the farmers to death. Our money was wrenched out of our pockets and used for our own destruction, and yet we tamely submitted to such degradation. He therefore made the following motion: "That this Council considers the Royal Railway Commission to be a farce, an insult and a fraud upon the farming community, it being already well known that the most peremptory measures should be taken to secure justice to the farmers in matters of railway freights."

The motion was duly seconded and carried.

President Leitch spoke of the great national expense incurred by the wanderings of the Royal Railway Commission, and, as an extensive shipper of cheese and apples, related several obstacles under which he labored owing to unjust railway rates and regulations. Farmers in his section could make money by raising apples, were it not for the uncertainty of railway freights; the best apples were often wasted on this account.

After further discussion, it was thought that the railway magnates would be successful in their designs unless this Council or other farmers would make a supreme effort to send independent witnesses to be examined before the Royal Commission. It was thought desirable to make the best out of a bad thing.

W. Weld stated that Mr. Valancey E. Fuller, of Hamilton, was endeavoring to gather witnesses from Farmers' Institutes, and he has arranged for a special sitting of the Royal Commission to be held in Toronto, in May, for the purpose of examining farmers. He (Mr. W.) asked if it would not be well for the Council to send witnesses or delegates.

W. A. Macdonald said he had written to Mr. Fuller, asking when the Royal Commission would sit to take the evidence of Institute representatives. The reply stated that the sitting would take place on the 13th and 14th of this month, and that the Council should send witnesses; but we did not meet till now, and, besides, the Royal Commission sat and adjourned for want of witnesses.

After further deliberation, the following resolution was carried: "That it is desirable in the interests of the farmers that the Royal Commission should sit in London for the taking of evidence, that the Council will endeavor to obtain as many witnesses as possible from western sections of the Province, that W. A. Macdonald be appointed to meet the London City Council and ask it to co-operate with the Dominion Farmers' Council in procuring a session of the Royal Railway Commission in the city of London, the date of the sitting to be hereafter fixed, and that copies of this resolution be sent to the Secretary of the Royal Commission and to the Hon. John Carling, Minister of Agriculture."