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THE EVOLUTION OF IRISH HORSE SCHEMES

Perhaps the best feature of the recent meeting of the Council of Agriculture in Dublin was a discussion on Irish horse-breeding, the subject being introduced by Prof. Campbell, of the Department, who had prepared a valuable memo, explaining in great detail the history of the schemes adopted during the past nine years. Three kinds of effort are comprised in the scheme at present in operation: (1) The annual registration of stallions; (2) the purchase by the Department of suitable sires and their resale to farmers; and (3) the granting of service nominations to mares. Considerable modifications have been made in the schemes from time to time, the most important undoubtedly being in 1906, when the registration of cart-horse stallions (e. g., Clydesdales and Shires) was discontinued, except in special and clearly-defined districts. Concurrently with this step, the half-bred stallion of the hunter or Irish draft type was first recognized, and the attention of the Department was forced to this class of sire by reason of the difficulty of getting a sufficient number of suitable Thoroughbreds at possible prices. A census, taken of the country in the year 1906, revealed the disquieting fact that, of 2,300 stallions at service, little or nothing was known of fully 2,000. The owners of these were then asked to submit them for examination, but only 367 were put forward, and of these only 12 were considered sufficiently good for registration. What the Department now appear to be striving for is a list of 1,000, instead of 300, registered stallions, and their policy is to secure this without resorting to either the Clydesdale or Shire breeds, as the reputation of the Irish horse rests largely on its freedom from cart-horse blood. Rather do they recognize the necessity of finding sires of the same type and blood as the ordinary horse of the country. Plenty of good half-bred colts are raised in Ireland, but the Department are faced with the difficulty that, under present conditions, "the value of a first-class horse is higher as a gelding than as a sire." In order to insure that the best shall be retained for breeding, two methods are in the official mind. One is being carried out, and consists of the purchase by the Department of promising colts which would otherwise be castrated as likely hunters, and their rearing on the Department's farms till three years of age, when they are sold to private owners. The other scheme is to subsidize breeders by offering them substantial prices for suitable entire colts submitted for purchase as three-year-olds. This is the French method, but is not favored for Ireland.

In order to meet the requirements of those who specially go in for harness horses, the Department propose to introduce, as an experiment, some Normandy sires, which they state are somewhat similar to the native Irish type, but more "harnessy." The Hackney has long since been emphatically pronounced against, but, judging by opinions so far expressed, the public do not seem to be greatly enamored with the suggested resort to French sires.

To strengthen whatever scheme may prevail, the need for licensing all stallions standing for public service is being more clearly realized every day, and the Council of Agriculture have resolved to ask the Vice-President of the Department (who is quite sympathetic) to secure legislation to deal with this pressing matter. It is not sought to treat owners of existing low-grade sires too harshly, but rather to give them every facility to get better ones. The Council were inclined to accept only Thoroughbred sires serving Thoroughbred mares exclusively.

The registered sires are also to be overhauled. It transpired, in the course of the discussion, that each Committee has been asked to express an opinion on the fruitfulness and the soundness of the progeny of their local registered sires, with a view to the elimination of all that may not be giving a good account of themselves.

"EMERALD ISLE."

Canadian farmers have never been favored with more prosperous times than now. Prices for nearly every line of agricultural production are encouraging, while some are almost fabulously high, the better grades of them, at least. Cost of production, while also enhanced, has not increased in proportion to the possible returns. The margin between cost of production and selling price was never before so wide. High prices, however, are but an aggravation to him with nothing to sell. More hogs, more cattle, more sheep, more horses, more poultry, more clover, more corn, more silos, more alfalfa, more roots, more soiling crops, more orchards (and better care of them), more intensive crops—those that yield the large returns! But will not increased production lower prices? Not disastrously. Increased production is necessary to supply increasing demand. Particularly is this true of the better grades of produce. Labor? Aye, that is a problem, but not insurmountable. Management will solve it. Labor-saving methods, liberal wages regularly paid, and steady employment by the year, with good treatment, will gradually attract a class of labor that will be a credit and blessing to the farm.

HORSES.

Training the Colt.

(A DRIVER.)

The colt should know its master; also, the master should know the colt. He should be handled sufficiently, and in such a way as to thoroughly overcome all shyness, and to lead him to feel that man is his friend. When this confidence has been once established, the training will be more easily and successfully accomplished.

Give the colt its name, and teach it to come when called, by providing a little sugar or salt, allowing the colt to lick it from the hand.

When about a week old, get it to lead in the box stall, the trainer standing on the near side, with the left hand over the face; the right hand should be on the top of the animal's neck. Now, gently push the colt away from you until it will lead. When the command, "Whoa!" is given, hold the colt still until it is again told to come.

In haltering, which may be done any time after the colt is two weeks old, approach him gently from the near side, holding the halter in both hands, allowing the colt plenty of time in which to smell it. When all fear is gone, hold the halter up in the left hand, and, with the right hand over the colt's neck, reach the strap, and quietly and quickly draw on and buckle the halter. Provide a suitable rope, ten or twelve feet long, attach same to the halter-ring, and tell the colt to come.

Teach it to circle, going first to the near, then to the right. Lead it into a narrow stall, run the rope through the ring on the center of the manger a couple of turns, giving the colt about three feet of a tie-rope. Hold the slack rope in the hand until the colt ceases to pull back. This will usually not take more than fifteen minutes' time. Now tie the colt securely and leave it alone for an hour or two, when it may be allowed loose with the dam. It has learnt that it could neither break the halter nor get away. The foal, once haltered, taught to stand quietly and to lead kindly, is given its liberty for the next two years, with the exception of being handled and led by the halter occasionally.

When two years old, commence training in the harness. At that age the colt has less strength than when older, has not the disposition to resist so readily, and will acquire its lessons more easily. Taking the single harness, put the backband over the right shoulder, and enter the stall on the near side, allowing the colt time in which to see and smell the harness. Now gently put the backband over the back, fondling the colt while you get the crupper and breeching in place. Next, adjust the breast-collar, bringing the traces back, and making them secure in the breeching. Now put on the bridle, with check in place, and lead the animal out into an enclosed yard after it has learned that the harness will not hurt it. Let it be at large for a couple of hours.

Next day, harness the colt again, bringing the drive lines back through the shaft loops, and have a lead-rope twelve or fifteen feet long, having one end of it run through the near ring of the bridle, under the jaw, and fastened in the right ring.

Holding the rope in the left hand, get the colt to circle the near way until you can keep well behind him. Now take a line in each hand and commence to drive him, tapping him gently with the whip when required.

After getting the animal to drive nicely with the lines, teach it to back. The trainer should stand facing the animal, and, taking a ring of the bridle-bit in each hand, as he gives the command "Back!" he should gently press back on the bit, repeating as often as is necessary, until the colt will back promptly at the command. This accomplished, gently stroke and pet the animal, giving it a slice of apple or carrot, or some sugar, after each exercise as a reward for obedience.

When hitching, I face the cart into a stone wall or a building in which there has been placed a ring for tying purposes. When the colt has been securely tied to this, I gently pull the shafts up, meanwhile speaking kindly to the animal. I first hitch the traces, then the hold-backs, and while the colt remains tied I push the cart up gently, and then pull it back again. This is repeated two or three times, and then the shafts are brought first against one side, then the other. Unfastening the rope, I turn the colt around, and lead it off, meanwhile standing on the near side, with the lead rope in the left hand, and the lines in the right, the latter resting on the shaft to steady it.

When the colt will go so that it will drive off when the command is given, exercise it for not more than two hours during the first few days that it is hitched. I never break a colt to drive with a loose line, but I train him to be a fast walker, a stylish mover, and a well-mannered horse, which will very much enhance his value. My training along this line of amusement I owe to my father. I felt that I had been fully rewarded for my labor and pains, when the different judges of our agricultural fairs, held in Goderich and Dungannon, presented me with the first prize for best lady driver for four years in succession, at each place. (MISS) ANNIE W. GREEN.

Huron Co., Ont.

Remedy for Tail Switching.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

I noticed in your last week's issue someone asking a remedy for tail-switching. I have found the following method to bring good results: Take two straps, about one inch wide, that will reach from the crupper to the breeching. Have loops made in both ends of these straps, so that the crupper can run through one end; the other end is for the breeching to be slipped through (the latter loop should be large enough to permit the strap to slide on the breeching easily). Have two small straps, with buckles attached; sew one small strap on each of the larger ones crosswise, about six inches from the top of the loop through which the crupper will run. Place one on each side of the mare, and buckle the small straps around the bone of her tail, under the hair. With this appliance, she can move her tail, but not far enough to allow her to catch the line.

Seeing that the mare is a young one, and that, therefore, the habit likely won't be of long standing if the above appliance will be put to use for a



An Educated Driving Horse.