

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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IN THE DOMINION.

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HORSES.

A kind, quiet teamster can keep his horses in better condition than a rough, vociferous, noisy and unrestrained driver, and much less feed is required.

Quietness at their work is an important factor in the horse's welfare. They thrive better, and so are more easily kept, and are not so liable to some of the many ills common to their kind.

Light is necessary in the horse stable. Dark stables may cause defective eyesight, which detracts greatly from the value of the animal. See to it that there is plenty of glass in the stable, and that it is clean enough to admit light.

Some care should be taken in arranging the windows in the stable. The light rays should not be permitted to fall directly on the horses' eyes from in front. It is better to have the light come in from behind the animal.

The halter used on the colt the first time he is tied should be heavy and strong, and the animal should be tied comparatively short. A colt will always try hard to gain his freedom, and if he does so, he is very likely to become a halter-puller; but if he is forced to submit to the strength of the halter, he will always remember it, and yield to it readily. Thus, the forming of a bad habit is prevented.

The work horses should not be turned out these cool nights, and, as the weather is very uncertain at this time of the year, and cold nights and heavy rains come without warning, the colts would be much more comfortable if brought in from the field in the evening. If they are left exposed to this unfavorable weather, they often lose in flesh, and their coats become rough and staring. A little feed and a well-bedded stall will enable them to spend a much more comfortable night than if they were compelled to remain huddled up and shivering in a cold rain or in a very frosty atmosphere, with nothing but a fence or a tree as protection. Try stabling the colts at nights, and the results will surely be gratifying enough to insure the continuance of the practice.

The gains that a colt makes the first winter will be a very good indication of what the animal will be when mature. The youngster is the horse in the making, and the gains made by him are permanent. Large drafters cannot be made from starved colts. The only way to produce the big horse is to keep the colt growing from the time he is foaled. The first winter is very important.

It cannot be expected that a stallion, no matter how near perfect he is, will sire a colt which approaches perfection as nearly as he himself does when mated with a faulty, inferior mare. Breeders must always remember that the drag of the race is just as potent on the dam's side as on that of the sire, and if a high-class colt is to be expected, both sire and dam must be animals of approved conformation.

Rush of farm work in the autumn often necessitates the pressing into harness of all the available horses on the farm. It also often happens that a mare which is due to foal early the following spring is made to do work which is too heavy for her. The infol mare should receive regular and sufficient exercise, and there is no better method than by using her for the light work on the farm; but strenuous, heavy teaming and other very hard labor should not be done by her. It is too much to expect her to do as much and as heavy work as if she were not carrying a foal; and where she must do hard work, it will be done to the detriment of the development of the fetus or to the general condition of the mare herself. Heavy work requires all the energy of the mare, and often her own body is drawn upon to keep up the energy required for the work. While this is going on, nature demands from her sufficient nutriment for the development of the fetus, and these drains are too much for her constitution, which must eventually suffer, and, as a consequence, the mare and the fetus are both harmed.

Buy Thin Horses Now.

There is always a time to buy and a time to sell, no matter what the article is. It has been said that no man could make money by buying at a price which was all the particular thing was worth. To make money, buy when the market value is low, and sell when it is high. There are few branches of agriculture which lend themselves so well to these conditions as does that of horse-fitting. There is a time every year when horses can be bought cheap and often at a price much below their actual value. Following this comes a period when almost any kind of work horse will sell for more than he is really worth.

With the horse, the season for the farmer to buy is in the autumn. Scarcity of feed and lack of sufficient work to keep them earning their living, makes many owners anxious to dispose of their surplus horseflesh. Many also need the money worse than they need the horse, and thus they are led to price the animal very low. They do not look ahead and reckon what the same animal will be worth, and how readily he may be sold at a high figure a few months hence, when the snow has vanished from the fields and the warm sun and soft southerly winds of spring have chased the frost from the land, making it imperative that the soil be worked and the seed sown with all possible haste. During this latter season horses are scarce and buyers numerous. Work is plentiful, and the need of power is urgent. Horse-power is yet, and will be for years to come, the most common power used in farm work; and when work is pressing, up go prices for this class of stock. In view of this, it is always safe to buy heavy horses in the fall, provided the price is right, which is usually the case, and feed them during the winter, giving them good care, so as to bring them out in the best condition for sale in spring. Horses are very often thin at this time of year, and this is used by buyers as a means to lower the price. Fall is a poor time to sell drafters, but it is a good time to purchase animals to fit for reselling.

Conditions should make it very easy for the average farmer either to fit his own horses for sale, or, where he buys others for this purpose, to make a good profit. The only drawback is lack of feed, and this should not often be experienced on a well-regulated farm. With corn and alfalfa, clover and timothy, the various cereals and other grasses, to say nothing of roots, the farmer should be able to feed all his stock well, and should generally have feed to spare. True, the diet of the horse is somewhat limited, yet quite a variety can be employed, and the specific errors most useful for horse feed can be saved for the other classes of stock being fed on the remaining crops, which, if grown in right proportion, will make a good variety for their ration. The winter is the season when the labor shortage is not felt so severely as in summer, and if a few horses are purchased to feed, the labor can be had at a reasonable price; and, besides, this helps to

give employment to the hired men during the off season. Besides giving them employment, it is a work in which most men take great interest. Horses are usually the favorite stock on the farm, and nothing gives an attendant or owner greater satisfaction than to see the animal responding to good care and feed, and gaining rapidly in flesh. It is interesting work. Not only is it interesting, but it is profitable. Horses often sell at nearly double the price in spring, after fitting, that they were purchased for in low condition the fall previous. Surely there is a profit in buying and fitting such horses, and surely there would be profit enough to warrant the owner fitting his own animals, rather than disposing of them in the fall and letting someone else make the profits. There will always be horses to buy in the fall, and those who have the feed and stable accommodation can do no better, provided they are good judges of horses, and conditions governing the buying, feeding and selling of them, than buy a few to feed during the winter. The good horses are the kind to buy. Scrubs or unsound animals are not desirable.

Origin of the Percheron Horse. II.

THE THEORY OF CHARLES DU HAYS.

For a century the Percheron type has not undergone many changes. According to the fluctuations of the fashion, we have produced big or medium horses, dapple grays or blacks, but the foundation of the breed is kept intact. Such as we see it to-day, such it was a hundred years ago. A fact, however, must be mentioned for its importance. Charles du Hays, the most authorized and remarkable writer that occupied himself with the breed, described to us, about 1880, three models of horses: No. 1, light Percheron; No. 2, big draft horse; No. 3, medium Percheron. No. 1, that he qualifies as light Percheron was only a Percheronized mongrel, that has completely disappeared. His No. 3 was the old Percheron, with a tendency to the big horse. His No. 2, that he calls big draft horse, is the only one that is left and that we know to-day. It is, therefore, only of him that we shall talk. Though praising him on the good qualities of his book, we cannot pass without mentioning the contradictions raised in the country between the affirmations of Charles du Hays and the denials of the Percheron Studbook. The former says that the Percheron breed underwent at a certain time a degeneration, of which the causes are easy to explain, and of which here is a short estimate.

The Perche is not extensive; the quantity of horses produced is, in consequence, very limited. As it is only the light-draft breed against which there exists no recrimination, the vogue for Percheron horses became so great, that the Provinces of France and of abroad, especially Prussia, wanted to create a draft breed, of which the services were becoming necessary. They hastened to the Perche, and in a little time the best representatives of the breed were gone. First of all were sold the best types; they began by the males; the sale increased; they sold the females, and then the colts. As the number of horses diminished, the demand for them increased, and unscrupulous breeders did not hesitate to sell at Percheron fairs Brittany horses that came straight from their province. To this fact we must add another. As long as the Post service was flourishing, the Percheron was the most sought after of all the French breeds; but the application of steam opened a new era, and the post and coach horses almost disappeared. Luckily for this breed, it answered soon for a new purpose. The service of Parisian omnibuses was founded, and equipages for the castles were needed. For this, quick horses, but with enough strength to transport heavy loads, were needed. To keep these new and important customers, the breeder hastened to produce a heavy horse. From them he looked for the biggest mares he could find, and during that time the stallion (a great deal sought after) was sold at a very big price.

So, if we believed M. du Hays, the actual Percheron horse would have degenerated. He insists, in fact, very much on this point, as he consecrates several chapters to this: "Degeneration of the Percheron Breed," "Causes of the Degeneration," "Start of the Degeneration." He mentions the ways which seem to him the best to render the horse its old value: Establishment of some Government stables, of a Studbook and Racing Association.

In answer to these critics, we can show, firstly, that the Percheron horse has never degenerated, and, secondly, that we could re-establish the breed if it was weakened by other means than by crossing with Thoroughbreds. Besides, they did not