HORSE

New Records Made in 1910

This has been a remarkable year in harness racing, one of those record-smashing years that seem to come periodically to rebuff our theories that the speed limits of trotting and pacing have been reached and that racing henceforth shall be a sort of mark time performance. The season started with some unusually fast work and almost every week some new time has been hung up, and some new aspirant for the premier honors of the harness world have clipped seconds or fractions of seconds from the few that lay between Dan Patch's wonderful time of 1.55 and the record closest to his. Dan's mark was made against time with every condition favorable. It was a remarkable performance, but for endurance and a terrific pace under rather trying conditions, the time made a few weeks ago by Minor Heir in a special race was more remarkable. He paced a mile in 1.58½, doing it by quarters in 29¾, 29¾, 29 and 30 seconds. Minor Heir's performance is pretty fair substantiation of the principle that speed is bred in the race horse, and that unusual performers do not simply "happen." His sire had a mark of 2.05¾; a brother of the sire, Prince Regent, had a mark of 2.16¾, and as a four-year-old his owner refused $50,000 for him. He is from an inbred Wilkes mare.

Then comes Colorado E, setting a new mark of 2.05¾ for two-year-olds, and The Uhlan, who stepped off the mile a few days ago at Cleveland, Ohio, in 1.58¾. The last sensational time to be made was in the Kentucky Futurity, at Lexington, when Justice Brooke negotiated the mile in 2.09½, clipping a second and a quarter off the mark made by Electioneer in 1891, and making a new record for two-year-old stallions.

Four sires are represented by two new 2.10 trotters each this season so far. Peter the Great, 2.07¼, has Peter O'Donna, 2.08, and Miss Stokes (2), 2.09¼; The Bondsman has Colorado E. (3), 2.05¼, has Margate, 2.08¼, and Maud Cæsar, 2.09¾, while Sidney Dillon has Lou Billings (3), 2.08¾, and Helen Stiles, 2.09¾. A few years ago it was a great honor to a sire to be in the list of 2.10 sires at all. Now, the strife is to see how many 2.10 trotters can be placed to the credit of a sire in a single season.

National Horse Breeding

State aid has been promised for horse breeding by the department commissioners as the result of a conference with the officials of the British board of agriculture, and of the Irish agricultural department. It is understood that a good case has been made out for a grant of a substantial sum, and the amount will probably be £50,000 a year. This is a big increase over the miserly pittance of £5,000 at present allotted for this purpose. The proposals include the payment of a considerable amount in premiums every year to owners of approved stallions on condition that the latter travel the country, and that tenant farmers and others are allowed their use for stud purposes. Payments will probably depend largely on breeding results, though in certain cases such payments will be increased by a fixed premium. The highest premium will be £150 per annum, and £75 will be allowed for "half premium" stallions. This part of the scheme will absorb £13,000.

Farmers are to be encouraged to keep suitable brood mares, and aid will be given to purchase. The sum suggested is £10,000. Owners of stallions will be helped to keep their stock at home, as the boards of agriculture are of the opinion that the drain on the country's supply by foreign exportation has been too great.

The subject of light horse breeding has for some time caused considerable concern to the army authorities and to the agricultural community. Heavy horse breeding has displaced light horse breeding in many districts, and purchases for export have further depleted the supply. Foreign army buyers have been especially active of late in securing promising animals at every opportunity.

The new proposals have excited considerable interest amongst breeders, and the opinion is upon the whole decidedly favorable. It is freely conceded by people well qualified to know that great benefits will be derived by horse breeders. Farmers will think more of light horse breeding than they have done in recent years. To supplement the proposal some plan whereby the government can buy direct from the farmers is necessary, so that the middleman, who takes a substantial share of the profit, might be eliminated. The scheme is to be pushed forward so as to be in operation for the breeding season of 1911.

F. DEWHIRST.

Winnipeg Exhibition Futurity Races

Entries for the Selkirk Futurity and the Fort Garry Derby closed finally on October 15. These races are to be run in 1913. Foals entered are named for the race in the year of their birth, and each succeeding year the colts must keep their standing by an increased fee, starting at $5 forfeit the first year, and running to $25 the year of the race. A large entry is thus secured, which allows a very large sum to accumulate as entry fees, all of which is cumulated for the purse. Thus in some of the popular futurities annually promoted over American tracks, purses of from ten to fifteen thousand dollars are secured.

The Exhibition Association opened their lists for their first Futurity last year to be raced in 1912. The harness classes to be raced in two sections, for trotters and pacers, the association guaranteeing a purse of at least $1,500 in each class, and $1,000 for the running event, the Fort Garry Derby. The plan was received so enthusiastically that this year they opened the Futurity for 1913, and it is hoped to make the race a classic for the local track.

Windows in Horse Stable

The windows in a horse stable should be so arranged that the horses are not required to stand for hours with the full glare of the sunshine in their eyes. They should be in the south wall, preferably, but not if the stable has been so arranged that a row of stalls faces directly on the south wall. In laying out a stable, it is well to keep this fact in mind and so plan the arrangement of stalls that the horses will stand tail to or side to the south. Then that wall may carry enough windows to light practically the entire building. Preferably the light entering a stable should fall on the horses from the rear.

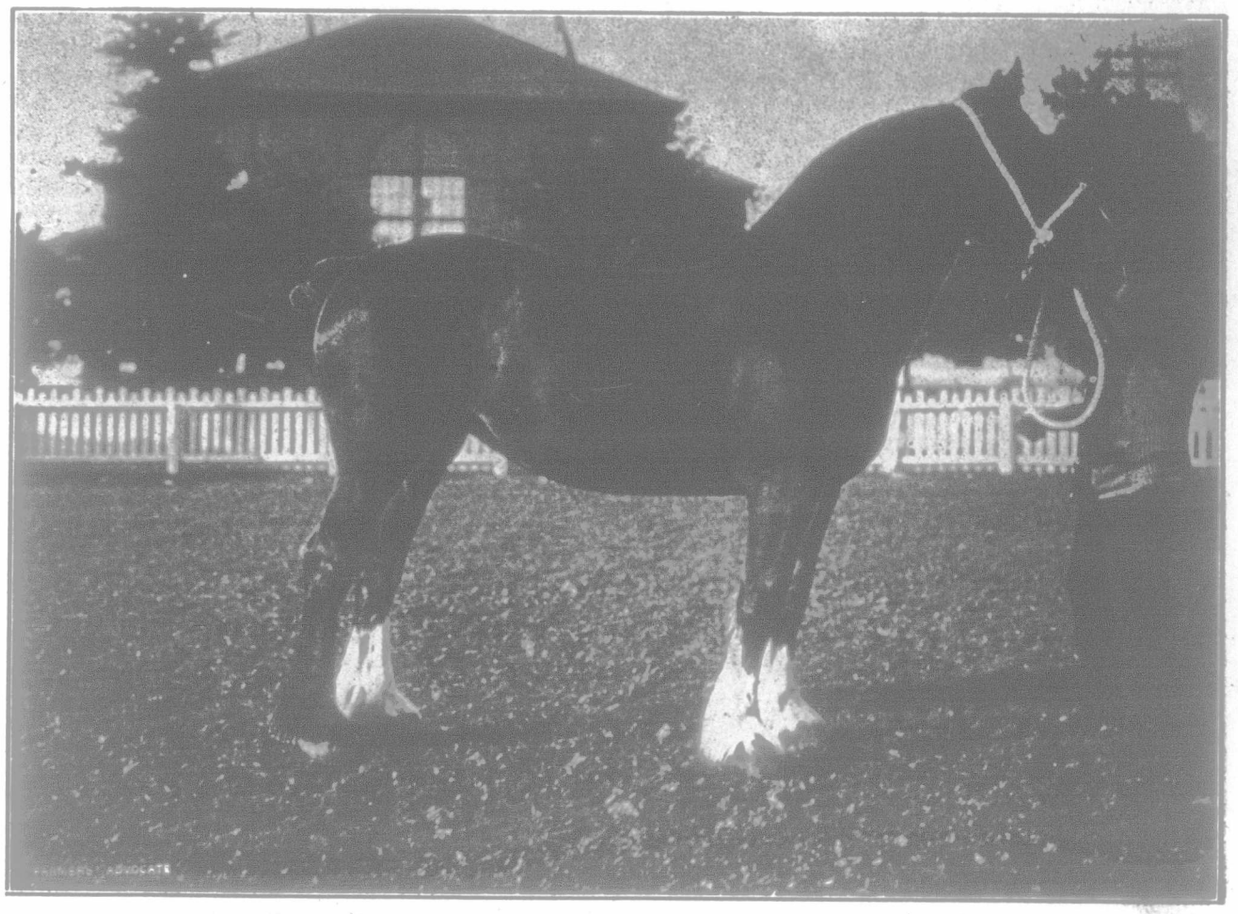
The windows should be of a fair size. The average horse stable window is too small. The size will depend somewhat on the thickness of the wall. A brick, stone or concrete wall, 12 or 14 inches thick, requires larger windows than are required in a board wall 2 or 3 inches thick. Windows set the long way up and down admit more light than windows of the same size placed with their long axis horizontal, because more light comes from the upper portion of the sky. Windows extending from near the ceiling towards the floor light the stable better than windows extending from near the floor up.

Windows of the size ordinarily used in dwelling houses are the most convenient size to use in the horse stable. If the top is at the ceiling, the sill will be up four or more feet from the floor, and there is not much danger of the lights being broken. If there is a bar or two across the lower half offers efficient protection.

Cost of Horse Labor

Bulletin No. 117 of the Minnesota State Experiment Station contains some interesting data on the cost of maintaining farm horses and the cost of horse labor. The average cost of maintaining a farm horse is placed at $80, made up of interest on investment, depreciation, harness depreciation, shoeing, feed, labor and miscellaneous expenses. Feed cost varies with the market price of feeds and runs from $36.54 on a large farm in 1906, to $68.96 on an average-sized farm in 1904. Maintenance cost since 1907 are not given. The annual depreciation is figured at from $5 to $8, which is low, considering the price of horses and the fact that the average life of a farm horse does not exceed ten to fifteen years. Figuring that a horse is worth $225 at four years of age, and that on an average he has twelve years of working life ahead of him the amount chargeable to depreciation should be $18 per year at the least. Labor in looking after the horses also runs into quite an item, averaging $16 per animal per year. The average annual cost of keeping a horse on a large farm was found to be $65.23, and on a small farm $75.07.

The cost of horse labor on the basis of the above costs for maintenance is approximately 8 cents per hour. On a small farm it was found that the annual working time of a horse was 1,025 hours, and on a large farm 877 hours. On this basis horse labor on a small farm cost 8.31 cents per hour, and on a large farm 7.46 cents per hour. The large farm comprised 1,820 acres, and the small farms from 100 acres up.



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