

Canadian Horse Records.

BY A CLYDESDALE BREEDER.

The Chicago Review has been kicking up considerable dust in showing up our Dominion horse registers, and with a good show for damaging this trade for Canadian breeders across the line. The largest class of our Canadian breeders and importers are as whole-souled and enterprising men as can be found in any country. And when we combine this with the fact that they have a knowledge of their business, and have united with this square dealing, we find they have succeeded in winning a trade that has been very remunerative. Just as it is in any other production or manufactured article, in which a high degree of success has been attained, there are unprincipled parties lying in wait to palm off a spurious imitation, and rob those that have borne the heat and burden of the day in the work of establishing the reputation which Canadian stock has gained. In the trade with draught horses, this has been notorious. A few years since, breeding stock, bred in draught lines, was in such demand that anything was saleable, and our neighbors across the lines, who are always open for a deal, were wont to visit Ontario and take over everything in horse shape that had the slightest pretensions to draught type. Like the coin of the realm that has the true ring, horses that were properly bred and good individuals were of too high a standard of value for these scalpers to deal in, so they had to have recourse to other records, such as the Goderich Draught Horse Stud Book.

Here the matter did not stop, for a great many American friends are not gifted with too much practical judgment, and have therefore demanded records for all breeds of farm and stock animals, whereas our farmers in a quite conservative way have produced animals that filled the bill to the utmost, except in the line of breeding. The Canadian Draught Horse Book, which admits horses of mixed Shire and Clydesdale blood, which, outside the allowance of the mixture of these two breeds, is as select as any. The difficulty is that the Agriculture and Arts Association, through the Secretary, Mr. Henry Wade, is doing all the work, which has made it difficult for men without much knowledge of breeding to distinguish which of the stud books the certificate represents. It has been all right on the score of economy to have the recording for the different breeds of horses conducted in one office, but when the same signature is attached to all certificates it is sure to be conflicting, and lead to mistakes, as well as misrepresentations, and consequently have a bad effect on the standard of all our stud and herd books.

A pure-bred stock record is like the status of a bank, the public require every reliance in it or it is worthless, and is sure to lead to disaster for those having any connection with it, should confidence be lost. When the standing of any institution is questioned, there are plenty standing by delighted to add fuel to the flames, and the only safeguard against attack is to have every record upon a proper basis. The Clydesdale Stud Book of Canada has the highest standard of any published. The Dominion Shorthorn Herd Book is higher than the English or American. Both of these are well patronized, and are in the most flourishing state possible. And to have reflections cast from small side issues, like the Canadian Draught Book and the Office

Record, is most vexing to those who have a large amount invested in stock recorded in our two standard books. That this matter will have a certain amount of effect on all none can doubt, and the sooner an effort is made to shake clear of these second-rate concerns, the better it will be for our whole breeding interest.

While on this subject we have our doubts about centering the records of each and all of the breeds in one office. A thoroughly competent registrar for any one breed, or line of breeding, requires to be well posted in details. Therefore, when we find a man qualified by a knowledge of every line of breeding in horses, cattle, sheep and swine, more brains will be required than falls to the lot of an ordinary mortal.

At all events, it is in the interest of each separate breeding interest to stamp out from our midst anything that offends. A little leaveneth the whole lump. A large share of American breeders would gladly stop all intercourse between this country and the United States, especially just now that heavy horses are not in such demand, and many importers and breeders overstocked; and the next thing that will happen, our certificates will not be recognized at the lines, which will put a stop to a most advantageous trade, as the duty would be charged on many of our best bred horses.

System in Horse Breeding.

The manner in which much of the breeding is carried on throughout the country is why so few sections have made a success of any particular line. A few years ago some few localities in Ontario confined their operations almost exclusively to the breeding of draught horses, and did not dabble much in any other line. Consequently they succeeded in producing horses that were in demand from all over this continent, and a proportionately rich harvest was reaped through the high prices they obtained for their stock, as buyers knew just where to find what they wanted. It is system alone in breeding any sort of stock that will give success—the proper mating in order to accomplish certain results. If draught mares with size and substance are on the farm, don't breed them to roadster stallions in hopes of producing a driver nor *vice versa*. And again, the haphazard, go-as-you-please method of crossing from one sort to another never attained anything. The improvers of every breed of farm stock have kept a model in their mind's-eye, and never faltered until they originated the characteristics they intended to produce, and not only acquired a reputation that was of immense benefit to themselves, but also handed down to posterity an incalculable advantage to those following them.

Horses are for utility or pleasure, and in the latter case large profits are to be obtained. As our cities and towns grow more wealthy there will be an increasingly large class of buyers whose first object will be to possess horses that will make a display on the street. Everyone sees them, and the gay equipage will ever be found indicating the luxurious home. Horses of gay carriage and handsome appearance will be found indicative of ambitious proprietors who are anxious to bring themselves and their wealth prominently before the public, and are conscious that where one pair of eyes may happen to see the costly residence hundreds will see the highly appointed carriage with its high-stepping pair. Breeders, however, must recollect

that more skill is required to produce the style and quality that is in demand which brings the large prices for horses that are for luxury and pleasure. Just as it is in manufactures or any other production of art that requires the skill which few attain, it is the very scarcity of the product that enhances the value. The casual observer cannot help reflecting, when observing the numberless good mares that are to be seen in our market towns every day, that are just what is required if properly mated. Yet it is not unlikely but these fine, well-formed mares will be bred to a useless stallion whose best point is a well burnished coat, or his best breeding is in the imagination of his loquacious groom. Farmers should remember that a bad cross put in cannot possibly be removed, and it is well to stand and consider before a rash step is taken in breeding a well-bred, handsome mare. Wherever size and beauty of form are combined in any of the light-legged horses a good thoroughbred cross can hardly be wrong, both for the produce or to assist after breeding, should the produce be a filly; and wherever there is quality without sufficient size the best coach horses obtainable are without doubt what will at once increase the size and add beauty to the form. The breeder should, however, be cautious how he mates a mare that has not plenty of quality with a horse of this breeding, unless he is of the most refined type. Carriage horses of to-day are not required the size that were in use some few years ago, but good manners are always at a premium. Then, again, we have numbers of mares of trotting blood and good form that would be much improved by a dash of hackney breeding. This would give them the action that is necessary if long prices are to be looked for. Horses for street display are more likely to be produced by this breeding where the mares are of good size and are of good breeding. Gentlemen's drivers are usually produced from roadster sires where beauty of form, soundness, and utility have not been sacrificed for speed. Breeding for speed among trotting bred horses has produced innumerable weeds useless for any purpose, and the exceedingly small chance of breeding a horse that will pay as a racehorse is more uncertain than drawing a winning ticket at a lottery, where mares of the most approved strains of blood are in use. Then what results can be hoped for when mares of a low grade of breeding and destitute of quality are mated this way? The fact is that fashion has much to do with the breeding of trotters, and even horses with good performances, a little out of certain lines of breeding, are not in the same demand as formerly, if anything can be judged by recent sales of trotters in New York. The danger in horse breeding is, as in many other pursuits, that whatever happens to be in demand all flock and run in that direction, and mares are crossed with horses totally unsuited; disappointment follows, and a given breed condemned. It is those who go quietly on in one line that achieve success, and a good horse is always saleable, whether he be draught, carriage, saddle, or roadster, but none of these can be produced by the haphazard methods generally adopted. Whatever line of breeding is followed, see that the stallion is recorded in the stud book of the breed he is a representative of. Every horse that is fit for a stallion should show a certificate number, and without this you may put him down for a scrub, and not unlikely his owner for a fraud.