

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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DOMINION.

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tendance at and extend the public interest, in its annual gatherings, and to this end the encouragement of the formation of local associations which would send delegates was emphasized. Would it not help matters to hold the convention each year in a different place—as used to be done—thus arousing local interest in one district after another? And would there not be a better chance of good attendance in a smaller place? In our experience we have noticed that a large city seldom bestows much attention on agricultural matters.

The Beekeepers, besides having an interest in the exhibition, desire to avail themselves of the free return rates which the larger excursion affords, but we are misinformed if they would look with favor upon a proposition to make the capital a permanent convention ground.

And, since the point is raised, is it desirable, on the whole, that all these important Provincial bodies should meet simultaneously? It is true they have been enabled to get slightly cheaper railroad rates, and there may likewise be a little force in the argument that some men are interested in the programmes of two or more of these conventions. On the other hand, we feel confident in asserting that these meetings would receive ampler justice from the press, hence fuller interest from the public, if they were not thus bunched. It has been urged that meeting at the same time and place would prove a convenience when matters arose for joint conference or action, but it seems to us the necessity of any such action that could not be equally well accomplished by means of delegates is slight. The idea of the big joint-show and all-round hurrah for chrysanthemums, apples, cabbages and bees appealed this year to the enthusiasm of those interested, but on sober second thought, is this wholesale centralization wise?

HORSES.

Draft Horses Best for the Farm.

Farmers usually breed that class of horses best adapted to their environments and in greatest demand at the nearest market. Sentiment and qualifications enter into the problem of horse-breeding. One farmer has an innate fancy for harness horses, while another breeder's sentiment favors the heavy-draft animals.

As a commercial proposition, the general farmer finds it more profitable to breed the heavy-draft classes. In light-harness horses there are many prizes, but in the heavy-draft industry there are few blanks. The light-harness animal, if scarred with a bad wire mark, finds its value depreciated 50 per cent. The heavy-draft animal is less liable to injury or blemishes, and when slightly disfigured by accident its usefulness or value is but little diminished. Comparatively few drafters are sold in the open markets that are absolutely sound and free from blemishes, while a blemished roadster is difficult of sale, except at a very ordinary price.

There is practically only small expense attending the breaking of a draft animal for market, while the roadster, to command the top price, needs to be mannered by a professional or expert trainer. It often occurs that after a harness horse has attained the age for useful service the expense account for breaking and conditioning for market exceeds the price the animal will command. Not so with drafters, which, after they have reached their three-year-old form, can be harnessed by the side of steady workers and earn their keeping in useful service, and when sold there is no excessive commission to be paid to middlemen.

The demand is more uniformly steady and broader for heavy-drafters than for harness offerings. The farmer, owing to the increased demand for heavy business horses the past decade, has found a market for all the good drafters he can raise. There is such a wide difference in the value appraised for a roadster that the farmer finds it difficult to make sale of his drivers at nearly their commercial value. The good harness horse is a medium-priced animal until it has passed through the schooling of a professional stable, when it is ready to be negotiated at a sensational price to some wealthy fancier. The breeder of a good driver cannot get as nearly the intrinsic value for his roadster as a farmer can for his draft animal. Fancy dictates the price largely for the former, while industrial use fixes the standard of value for drafters. While a few breeders with special qualifications and fancy for harness horses may succeed best in raising drivers, the great mass of farmers will realize greater profits in raising commercial drafters.—[Drovers' Journal, Chicago.]

Wintering Young Stock.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

You ask me how I winter my colts and young horse stock. Well, I don't tie them up in a warm stable, nor keep them in a box stall in a hot, stuffy atmosphere. I keep them in a well-ventilated and well-lighted box, where the temperature often goes down away below zero. But they have plenty of dry, clean bedding and all the feed they can eat. I think the secret in keeping colts healthy and growing is in feeding them well in the fall, and in keeping them dry. By the time my colts are ready to wean they have learned to eat ground oats, and just to keep them mellow I give them a little bran and flax seed as well. They then have all the outdoor life they want during fall and winter. For roughage they get a little wild hay and some oat-sheaf. I always keep a close eye on my colts. I like to see them take on a heavy coat of hair, and to make this I feed them well, for it takes a lot of feed to grow a crop of hair and undergrowth of wool. Then I keep them in health by feeding a little salt, bran and flax with the regular feed that every colt gets. But the main thing is to keep them in airy, but not drafty quarters, where there is plenty of sunshine and dry bedding. During the winter we often have to handle them to keep their feet in shape, and at such times I notice their condition. If I can feel a layer of flesh on both sides of the backbone and extending down the ribs, I know they are coming along all right. But when the backbone gets bare and there is nothing over the ribs but a dry hide, I know that fellow needs more feed or some tonic. When one can keep the baby flesh on a colt the first year, he is bringing him along all right, but if it gets off the chances are that the colt will develop into a lean hard feeder. J. S. C.
Sask.

Horses for Breeding.

The different importing establishments have been busy the past few months selecting and bringing out principally Clydesdale stallions. Most of them, however, include a few fillies and generally a Hackney or two. Competition in the horse importing business has made it necessary that the very best stock be selected, and of such horses the farmers of Western Canada are good purchasers. With the Clydesdales there seems to be a demand for but the one type, namely, the flat, clean-legged horse, well up off the ground, and with a neat, smoothly-turned body. The low, short, hairy-legged Clyde is a type of the past. He did much to lay a solid foundation, but he also created a lot of prejudice against the breed. For massiveness and extreme weight the Shire now seems to have a pretty clear road for distinction. In some quarters Clydesdale men openly contend that for draft purposes their seventeen and eighteen cwt. horses are plenty heavy enough, and that with the more general use of horses in teams the exceedingly heavy drafters will not be in demand. Probably there is some truth in this contention, but we in Canada cannot afford to neglect the importance of weight in combination with quality and action. If our horses get too big we can very easily reduce them in size, but we need to keep tight hold on all the scale we have. It is manifest that with the heavy farm machinery we have to use, a horse with the best combination of substance and action is the best horse for farm work, and when there is plenty of weight such a horse is always ready sale.

The Hackneys that are being imported are scarcely so uniform in type as are the Clydesdales. There are the big, strong-boned horses, and the finer-boned, lighter-bodied type. Both are useful, and it is only a matter of choice which should have the preference, when other things are equal. The main question is to get a good horse into each neighborhood, and to get him early when there are plenty to pick from, and he may have time to get accustomed to his new surroundings.

Horses in Different Districts.

"One thing that strikes a person who is called upon to ride horses in all parts of the country," said a traveller and a horse fancier, not long ago, "is the uneven distribution of good road horses in the lively barns. I can always tell when I have got into a district where Thoroughbred stallions or a good class of Standard-bred stock has been kept or bought. Sometimes one gets out behind these rough-gaited pacing or trotting horses, and it grieves me to see them try to strike a gait. At other times, when I pick up the lines and the team starts off straight in a line with that easy, frictionless motion that you all recognize in the true Thoroughbred, I know there will be no let-up, and no whip required. But it's strange, though, that so many people think a Thoroughbred can do nothing but run or canter. Perhaps this is because the Thoroughbred has them all beaten in the saddle, and, according to my opinion, for breeding good, steady, all-day road horses, the Thoroughbred with a good middlepiece has the best of it there. You have all admired the light Western bronchos, and therein is the best demonstration one could get of the influence of Thoroughbred blood on rough, common horse stock. Years ago there was nothing on the range but these runted ponies, and they, by the way, were largely descended from Thoroughbred stock. Now, after a few years of a sort of a system of breeding, they have produced as good light horses for road and saddle work as can be found out of doors."

Dangerous Blanketing.

It pains one at this season to see the thoughtless way in which many drivers expose their horses. Often they throw a blanket loosely over the animal's back and walk away with a Good-Samaritan feeling, thinking how considerate they have been. If the horses have been wading in water, mud or slush, and have splattered their bellies and chest wet, it is all the same—a mere rag on the back, not pinned at the breast, and reaching, perhaps, hardly to the flanks. About as likely as not, too, the team is left partially facing the wind, which blows in gusts under the blanket, and is more dangerous than it would be if striking the uncovered body. A protected animal may suffer severely from cold, but its system instinctively braces itself to withstand the rigor. A partially-protected animal or person to some extent relaxes unconsciously, and a draft under the fluttering blanket is all the more disagreeable and dangerous. Indoors or outdoors, beware of drafts, and in buying horse-blankets get them long and deep enough that they can be pinned in front and will hang down to protect the flanks and belly from searching winds.

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