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JULY 5, 1917

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE.

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THE HORSE.

When a Horse Transport Sinks.

All the sufferings of horses in the war have not taken place on the field of battle. They, too, have gone down victims of the Hun undersea craft. In 1916 the "Georgic" was sunk with 1,200 horses on board. The Germans shelled the ship and finally torpedoed her. Dr. O. E. McKim thus described, in the New York World, what happened:

"After the torpedoing... very soon the seas were piling over the well-deck of the hatches. So heavy was the backwash that every once in a while a horse would be picked up bodily by it and swept into the ocean, right over the bulwarks, which were at least 8 feet high. You may get some idea of what sort of a sea was running when you realize that twenty-five or thirty of the animals were carried clear off the 'Georgic.' They swam round and round in the icy water, some of them for hours. A splendid chestnut struck out straight for the raider. I recognized him as one of my pets. So close did he get that I could hear his breath coming in rasping sobs. You have seen a man tired from swimming approach a raft and have heard him pant with relief as he was within reach of it? This is exactly how the chestnut was panting—almost sobbing for breath. It was exactly like the swimmer reaching for safety just before he is spent. I could not stand it. Rushing to the German commander, I begged him to shoot the animal rather than leave him to struggle his life away trying vainly to claw up the side of the raider as he was. The commander took careful aim with his Mauser pistol, which had an adjustable stock that made it capable of being used like a rifle, and fired. It took four shots to end the poor creature's misery. Another grey horse which I recognized swam for probably an hour and a half round the 'Georgic' before the water closed over his head. I love horses—always have. It was terrible."

More Good Horses Needed—Must Use Better Mares.

It seems that horse-breeding conditions are none too satisfactory, even in the Old Land, if we are to judge from some articles published in British agricultural papers. We hear complaints in Canada of the scarcity of really good horses, and the comparatively large numbers of inferior animals. A writer in "The Farmer & Stockbreeder" has some things to say which indicate the same conditions in England where there is a scarcity of choice brood mares, especially of light blood. The writer of the article here quoted believes that the mare has more influence on the offspring than she is commonly accredited with.

"The question of horse breeding and of raising the standard of our horses is a very complicated one, and it would almost seem that the complications increased as the subject is discussed and the number of horses expands. How important it is that efforts should be made to place the industry on a more satisfactory footing is evident from a fact that came to my knowledge the other day. A gentleman, buying horses for the Government, passed in review four hundred horses of sorts. He bought four! It will, no doubt, be said that the gentleman in question was too fastidious. What is certain is that he has been amongst horses all his life. But to return to the question. The fact of a large proportion of undesirable points to the fact that good brood mares, or even passable ones, are likely to be too few for our requirements, at any rate at first, and the question which presents itself for solution is a difficult one. It is, of course, the ordinary light horse—the horse that has to stand the burden and heat of the day—that I am especially referring to, and the position seems to me to be something like this: If we could find the mares, we have the stallions, or at any rate sufficient stallions to give us a fair start.

"A very general opinion seems to prevail that the improvement of horses comes from the use of good stallions, and so it does in a measure; but that is only a partial truth. Here and there we come across a horse whose stock, no matter what the mare may be like, is all good. I have known two, perhaps three, such stallions in my time, but they are naturally scarce. Far more frequent is the horse which will sire good stock from one mare, and indifferent stock from another, both mares being to all appearances of equal merit. I have been told that thousands have been spent, and are being spent in providing stallions—a very limited number of thousands, by the way, compared with the sums spent on matters of secondary importance—and that all has been done that is necessary. The rest is only a work of time. But all practical men know that 'grading-up' is a slow process. When the big boom in Cleveland Bays was on, in the eighties, men sold high-class mares that should have been kept, thinking to 'grade up' from those which were left. It is only where men refused to part with their mares till they had some of the same blood to take their place that the high standard has been reached. Whether the stallion or the mare is the more important factor in breeding horses of high class will probably never be a matter of scientific certainty. The horse is generally supposed to have the most influence on the shape and what is known as the 'quality' of the offspring, and also to have greater influence on his courage. This, however, is perhaps more apparent than real, for it must be borne in mind that the horse, being generally Thoroughbred, is sure from that fact alone to have his particular attributes more

distinctly marked, and therefore more easily transmissible, than the more sluggish-blooded mare. It is perhaps more a question of pedigree than of sex, and what I have seen—it is not much, I grant—of the half-bred whose dam was Thoroughbred tends to confirm the theory.

"Never breed from an unsound horse or an unsound mare, says the theorist; and in great measure the theorist is right. Yet, follow his generalization to its logical conclusion, and there would have been fewer sires of merit on the Turf. And so one sometimes sees amongst the million of fresh particulars a common, insignificant mare breeding high-class stock. I can remember one or two such mares, but because there are a few such it does not necessarily follow that any mare may be mated with, say, a premium stallion with the certainty that she will breed a foal that will sell at a good price. It is just possible, of course; we have incidents such as those to which I have referred to fall back upon, but the gamble is too big, and the man who breeds from an inferior-looking mare without some reliable history to fall back upon, which will justify his action, is asking for trouble.

"The importance of pedigree in the brood mare cannot be overrated. And by pedigree in this particular I do not mean Thoroughbred pedigree, or any registered pedigree in particular. I mean established type, the result of generations of ancestors of a similar type and character. When there is this established type in the brood mare, the breeder can look forward with considerable more confidence to the result of his enterprise. It is this established type in the Cleveland Bay and the Yorkshire Coach horse which makes the crosses between the Thoroughbred and those breeds generally so successful—or, perhaps it would be safer to say that it is one of the principal factors of success. So it is of great importance to get to know as much about the pedigree of the mare, and especially as much about her female ancestors, as is possible. I think it is within the range of possibility that, if ever there is any accurate knowledge on the subject, it will be found that the female ancestors have most to do with this establishment of type.

"The Arabs for thousands of years have worked out the pedigrees of their famous breed through the female line. Many Cleveland Bay breeders have done the same, though without any special theory on the subject. I like to see a really good mare come in at the top end of the pedigree on both sides, said a well-known breeder to me once, and his preaching was followed by his practice with the best of results. Amongst Thoroughbreds we frequently see, when the horses are good performers, that one mare figures in the pedigree on both sides."

Showing Heavy Horses.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

Fitting and showing Clydesdales requires a great deal of patience and knowledge, also experience. In the first place, great care should be taken when unloading off cars to avoid accidents. At that time the horses are anxious and become excited. Travel them very slowly to the exhibition grounds, taking notice they are all going sound. Stable them comfortably, offer them water and a little hay, encourage them to settle down in the strange stable and see that they have a comfortable bed to rest on until the next meal. The large exhibitions continue a week or more. The animals are generally on the ground two days before judging takes place, and during that time the boys have located where all the best animals are, discussion takes place about the winners in various classes. Don't get discouraged whatever you fear. Show your animals, and if necessary to take a back seat in the prize-list look pleasant and feel you did your best. Before leaving home for the show, have all necessary trimming done to the legs,

especially getting the feet well shod, having the feet level and the horse walking and trotting close and straight. If possible avoid all this work on the fair grounds. You hear a great deal about fitting for the ring. It is no trouble to fit a good animal. He doesn't require much skilled labor, it is the faulty ones that require the time and skill. In the first place, you must know his weak points, and do all you can to improve these points if possible. Give plenty of exercise twice every day, feeding very little grain, increasing the bran supply. Allow a pinch of saltpetre once a day, this should keep their legs clean and free from swelling. Two days before judging the legs should be rubbed with some clear, pure seal oil mixed with some sulphur. This will make the hair silky and smooth, when washed, and dried with clean, white sawdust, doing considerable hard rubbing, attending to the ankle joints particularly, an hour before entering the judging ring. The mane should be rolled neatly, tail tied up, if animal is above two years old, using ribbons of nice color, plain and neat. Have the bodies of matured animals well groomed. I don't believe in grooming a colt, let them be shown with a good rough, healthy skin.

Lead animals into the ring with a good halter. Train them to stand squarely on their legs, walk and trot when required. The groom should have a keen eye on his animal all the time, never allowing it to stand twisted or in any wrong position. Keep a watchful eye on the judge when he comes your way, and make a special effort to have the animal standing perfectly, for many a prize is lost because a well-trained animal has a poor groom. If you are beaten, take whatever ribbon is handed you and look happy. Be a sport, go back again with a strong determination to be the owner of a winner. Sack. "HORSEBREEDER."

LIVE STOCK.

Bloating, Tympanitis, Hoven or Blown in Cattle.

This condition, known by many names, consists in distension of the rumen with gas. The most fruitful cause is a sudden change from dry food to an unlimited supply of green food of any kind, principally to the different varieties of clover, and more particularly when the clover is in flower. It frequently occurs from the voracity with which cattle that have been kept on dry food all winter consume green fodder. Hence it is more prevalent in the spring than at other seasons. It results from feeding too freely on green food of any kind, especially that upon which dew or rain is present, and more particularly when frosted, hence is not uncommon in the fall when cattle are allowed to consume clover, rape, turnip tops, etc., when frosted. Any food that readily ferments, if taken in sufficient quantities to temporarily check digestion, will readily form gases and cause bloating. It is often present during choking, the mechanical impediment being the cause, by preventing the escape of gas through the gullet. Sudden changes of diet of any kind may cause the trouble, or insufficient secretion of saliva may have the same effect. While some of the above-mentioned causes usually precede an attack, it is not unusual to notice a well-marked case for which no well-marked cause can be traced. Such cases are doubtless due to some unsuspected, and not well understood, temporary derangement of the digestive glands and muscles of the rumen. Any condition that causes torpidity of the rumen may cause bloating, even though no change of food or consumption of food of a dangerous nature has taken place. Torpidity of the rumen occurs in debilitating diseases, in fact, in most diseases of the ox,



Refreshing the Horses in Harvest.