



The Breeder and Grazier.

The Suffolk Punch.

Among the several valuable breeds of farm horses in the British Islands, the Suffolk has for a long time occupied a distinguished position. He is descended from the Norman stallion and the Suffolk Cartman, and from his compact, punchy appearance has been commonly designated the Suffolk Punch. This breed, like most others, has undergone considerable changes, particularly during the present century. Animals, it is well known, are much affected as to size, form, power of endurance, &c., not only by the crossing of different breeds, but also by climate, pasture, and modes of feeding and general management. The horse of the hills, however active and hardy, is never so bulky as those of the plains, and this holds true, in a great measure, irrespective of differences in breeds. Warmth and shelter, together with a constant and abundant supply of rich, succulent food, are essential means of producing early maturity and a maximum development of the different races of domesticated animals.

An able writer (Culley) of the latter part of the past century, remarks in reference to the Suffolk horses of that period:—"Their merit probably consists more in constitutional hardiness than fine shape, being in general a very plain horse. Their color is mostly yellowish or sorrel, with a white ratch or blaze on their faces. The head large, ears wide, muzzle coarse, fore end low, back long but very straight, sides flat, shoulders too far forward, hind quarters middling, but rather high about the hips, legs round, and short in the pastern, deep barrelled, and full in the flank. Here, perhaps, lies much in the merit of these horses, for we know from observation and experience that all deep-bellied horses carry their food long, and consequently are able to stand a longer and harder day's work." This old type of the Suffolk was of moderate size, standing from 15 to 16 hands high, threw its whole weight into the collar, had firm action and step, an excellent traveller on the road before a heavy load, and possessed great powers of patient endurance. Youatt, in his valuable work on the horse, observes:—"The excellence, and a rare one, of the old Suffolk—and the new breed has not entirely lost it—consisted in nimbleness of action and the honesty and continuance with which he would exert himself at a dead pull. Many a good draught horse knows well what he can effect, and after he has attempted it and failed, no torture of the whip will induce him to strain his powers beyond their natural extent. The Suffolk, however, would tag at a dead pull until he dropped. It was beautiful to see a team of true Suffolks, at a signal from the

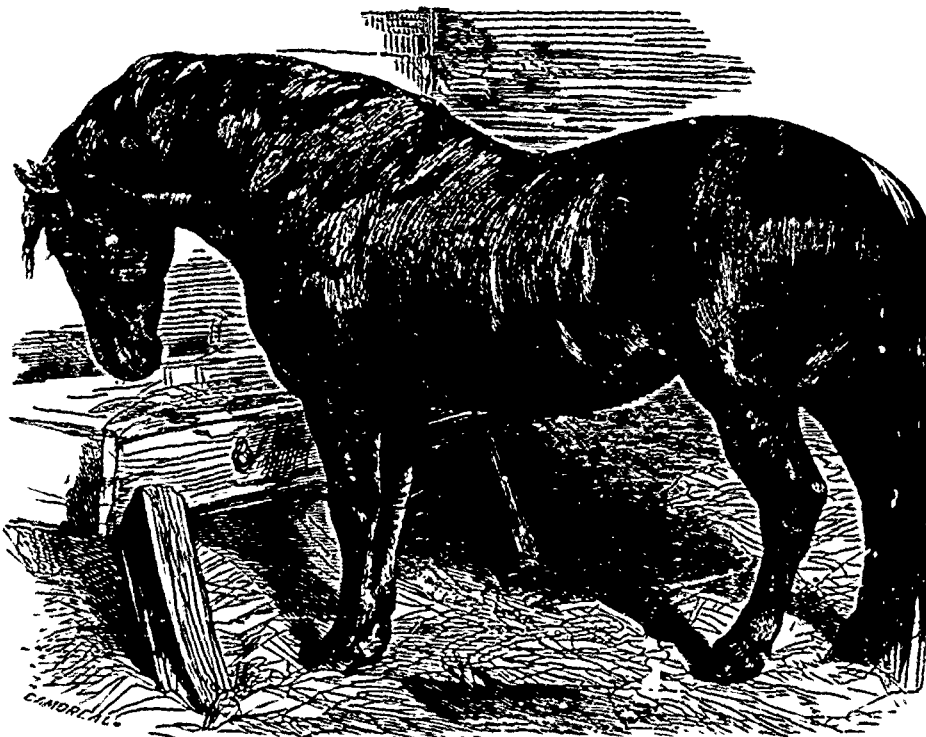
driver, and without the whip, down on their knees in a moment, and drag everything before them. Brutal wagers were frequently laid as to their power in this respect, and many a good team was injured and ruined. The immense power of the Suffolk is accounted for by the low position of the shoulder which enables him to throw so much of his weight into the collar.

The modern or improved Suffolk Punch differs materially both in appearance and action from his progenitors; and what he has lost in hardihood has been fully compensated by superior symmetry, lighter and quicker step, cleaner and more wiry legs, with a low, powerful shoulder, that admirably adapts him to the purpose of heavy draught. These changes have been very gradually brought about during the present century by crosses with other varieties, more particularly those of Yorkshire and Durham. By this mixture individuals have been improved in figure and action; but that uniformity of the breed, which enabled the breeder to reproduce with certainty the characters of the parents in the progeny, has been to a certain degree taken away, with something, too, of the hardiness and peculiar temperament of the older family. Fashion and taste have had, perhaps, more to do with this change than considerations of utility. The dun color

stallions have been imported, and their stock, we believe has given general satisfaction. The Oxford Agricultural Society at Woodstock, had, a few years ago, a fine stallion of this breed, and the results are said to have been very encouraging, and from a communication which appears in another column, it will be seen that an animal of this breed possessing a good pedigree, *Royal Prince of Wales*, is owned by the Messrs. Underwood, of Cobourg. We think sufficient experience has already been had to show the desirableness of paying more attention to the extension of this valuable breed of horses in Canada. We require for farm purposes, strength, agility and power of endurance. The large British breeds are generally too heavy and slow for our purposes; the renowned Clyde is often objected to on this account, though it must certainly be acknowledged that the Clydesdale constitutes a race possessing, in a high degree, many excellent properties. It is often found that short-legged, firm compact horses, do their work better, and last longer than larger ones, particularly if they have a clean flat bone and plenty of muscle. It is well known that cart horses of great height and weight generally have round bones; but round boned horses of any breed, are often gummy, and are apt to get

greasy; besides which, it induces softness, frequently accompanied by a want of hardihood and power of protracted endurance. It would not perhaps, be saying too much for the Suffolk Punch, that for compactness and strength of muscle, a willingness and ability to labour, docility of temper, and the power of endurance upon ordinary food and treatment, he stands unrivalled.

The illustration accompanying this article, is taken from an engraving drawn by that well known artist, Mr. Harrison Weir, and represents a Suffolk horse that won the highest prizes at several of the principal shows in England, in 1859. It will afford the reader a correct idea of the present general appearance of this improved and very useful breed, the characteristic points being well exhibited.



is in less request than the darker brown or bay, although the former is characteristic of the hardiest breeds of horses in Europe. Of recent years a considerable demand has arisen for Suffolk Punches, for the purposes of the dray and waggon. Many fine teams of this variety are to be seen in London, where, amid the tumult of the crowded streets the massy forms and bright manes and tails of the horses present a striking appearance. "The modern Suffolk Punch is certainly superior to the Black Horse in activity and endurance, and it is at least equally well suited to the continued services of the dray; but the demand for large horses has the effect, as in the case of the black horses, of inducing attention to size rather than the useful properties. Sometimes the Suffolk Punch has been crossed with horses of high breeding. In this way good horses may occasionally be produced adapted to the chariot and the coach; but unless a breed were found as in Cleveland, by profemic intermixture, no permanent supply of superior horses could be calculated upon from this source."

The Suffolk Punch is not so generally known in Canada as it ought to be; a few good specimens of

Dogs.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—Your correspondent "Rover" has reminded me that I had intended to write you concerning dogs. While I am a great friend to the dog, I have too much evidence that very many dogs are fond of sheep. So much damage is done by dogs among sheep, that many suffer severely by their havoc, and some have abandoned this branch of agricultural industry. It would be interesting to know how many sheep are destroyed by dogs annually in this Province. Farmers should have the power to destroy any dog trespassing on his premises, if not within call of his master. Or a tax might be levied by statute for purposes of revenue of the Province upon every dog, say one dollar yearly. This, perhaps, would have the effect of preventing the raising of worthless dogs, while the valuable breeds, such as "Rover" refers to, would be taken care of.

Wolford, April, 1864.

C.

NOTE BY ED. C. F.—Very sensible suggestion.