

TROTTERS FOR THE FARMER.**How He May Be Raised By a Man of Limited Means.**

There is no need to set out at length the fascination of breeding horses for speed. From the millionaire to the farmer all love the enticing pursuit. Yet nearly every agricultural journal from Maine to California forbids the farmer raising anything but a draft horse. "Leave the trotters and runners to those that can afford them," they say. "You stick to the work-horse, and if you do take up the others, woe unto you!" And then follows a long list of the probable results: gambling, extravagance, laziness, bankruptcy, poverty, Sodom and Gomorrah. Now all this is "important, if true." But it isn't true. Lazy men like to fish, but all fishermen are not lazy. Tramps pedestrianate, but all pedestrians are not tramps; and a good, square man that wants to raise a trotter can do so and remain a good, square man still. I am raising one myself, and I may be somewhat prejudiced. I am not going to attempt to defend those who raise the thoroughbred, or even to palliate their action, but I do defend those who raise trotters, and when I say trotters, I mean the standard-bred horse; those registered or entitled to be registered in the only registry for trotters in America, "Wallace's American Trotting Register." If he who causes two blades of grass to grow where one grew before benefits the world, surely he who raises a horse that will gain a minute in a man's life by conveying him more speedily from one point to another is a philanthropist.

Anyway if a farmer has a standard-bred mare, or even one with a good trotting-action, and prefers to breed her to a standard-bred horse instead of a Percheron or Clydesdale horse, why shouldn't he? Must he always plump along in the old farm-wagon to town and back behind the old plow-horses? Must he always take the dust of every Tom, Dick and Harry on the road? Must his boy when out with his sweetheart, behind sober old "Charley" mentally curse the farm as the fleet stepper of his town-bred rival flashes past him? Must it always be grind, grind, grind with the farmer—his nose to the grindstone eternally—no amusement, no pleasures, such as men of other pursuits have?

The farmer who has a mortgage on his farm, a chattel mortgage on his stock and farm-machinery, and a year's store-bill to pay is not the one whom my plea is for. It is for the farmer whose property is clear, who has plenty of fodder in the barn; whose wife has a Sunday dress, and has a piano or organ in

the parlor, and a hired girl to help her when she is not able to do the work alone. Even if there were no money in it (which I don't admit), such a farmer as the latter ought to raise a trotter for his own pet and for his own pleasure, as one of the just rewards for doing so much for the pleasure or benefit of others. Did the Almighty intend that only draft-horses should be raised? Did He put horses into the world solely for mankind to see how much money could be made out of them? Why does He cause the beautiful flowers to bloom, the song-birds to carol their sweet songs? To the enthusiastic horseman his horse is a beautiful object, that delights the eye more than any flower; his movements are graceful, his speed produces a thrill of pleasure, and no song of bird is more inspiring than the rapid pat, pat of his horse's feet as he flies down the road.

While the raising of a trotter occasionally for the farmer's own use or pleasure is justifiable, continuous and indiscriminate breeding of trotters by the ordinary farmer is going to the other extreme, and ought to be condemned in vigorous and unsparring words. Here comes in the question whether the farmer is able to sell his trotters to advantage. Few farmers are. It requires a knowledge of the trotters anatomy, training and pedigree that few farmers have the time or opportunity to learn.

But in case a farmer desires to raise a fast stepper for his own use or at least to increase the speed of what he has, he must have for a brood-mare one with no constitutional weakness that may be transmitted to her progeny. Second, she must have good trotting-action. The more speed she has the better, but she must have the action. Third, she must have good staying-powers. A trotter whose strength disappears after one or two short bursts of speed is of no earthly use to any one. Fourth—well there are a number of fourths, for that is as far as I will go—there are intelligence, beauty of form, ambition; but above all these I place—more trotting-action. If a farmer has a mare that conforms to these requisites I would advise him to investigate her pedigree, for it is almost a certainty that there will be found valuable blood coming in somewhere. I say valuable blood advisedly; for, while pedigree, alone will not make a trotter, it will often sell a trotter, and it behooves the farmer to increase the value of his property by every possible means. If the mare's sire is an unregistered son of a registered sire it adds

to her value. Ascertain, if possible, every drop of trotting-blood in her veins, no matter how slight, and do not give up your search at the first failure. Stick to it until you exhaust every means of information.

The only standard bred-mare I possess I bought on her good looks and trotting-action only, and paid \$200 for her, her owner, a very intelligent business man, assuring me that she was not standard-bred, being by Pottawatomie Chief, dam by Blind Eagle. Sure enough, the Trotting Register disclosed no such names; but subsequent investigation fully established the fact that Pottawatomie Chief was registered under the name of Monarch Swigert, and Blind Eagle as Grey Eagle. By Rule 7 of the National Association of Trotting-Horse Breeders, established December 14, 1877, my mare is standard-bred. This is the rule: "The female progeny of a standard horse, when out of a mare by a standard horse," shall be accepted as a standard trotting-bred animal.

Then comes the selection of a sire. When one has the world to choose from this is a mighty question, and even with five or six to choose from it is often a puzzler. A sound body, natural trotting-action, a great vitality and ambition are absolutely necessary. Then comes the question of pedigree. He must be registered, and the more trotting and producing-blood in his pedigree the better.

Other things being equal, get as much as you can of the blood of old Rydyk's Hambletonian. There are numerous advocates of the Morgan, the Clay, and the Mambrino, but the figures show that Hambletonian and his sons and daughters have brought forth into the trotting-world far more speed than any other family, if not of all combined. Hambletonian himself sired 41 performers in 2.30 and under; and not only that, but he also sired 107 sons who in their turn are sires of 567 performers. When any one in your hearing claims superiority for the Clays or the Morgans, you can set it down as the result of either ignorance or prejudice, and there is a great deal of prejudice among horse-breeders and trainers. Pay \$2.50 for "Wallace's Year Book for 1888." It will give all the information you need about trotters and their pedigree, and then no one can deceive you with a false pedigree for their stallion, as is often the case. If the stallion is registered he has a number, and so has his sire and the sire of his dam. Get their numbers and names and look them up yourself.