

All the reading that comes in is the almanac. No songs to learn, no books to read, and what is there in life? Visitors may come, but what is the conversation? Hens, horses, cows, turkeys, cows, horses, until one wishes anything for a change.

Perhaps one will ask, is not this a higher moral standard than the cities? This may be true, but it is not the point. The standard is not to be "as good as," but it is to be the best. It is useless to ask anyone to endure the life some of our young men and women on farms are called to bear. Establish the home, place education within reach of all, create some enduring attraction, and the problem of keeping boys and girls on the farm will be easily solved.

Farmers in this Western country will one day hold the high position they do in the Old Country. Bankers may handle money and store it; tradesmen may handle goods and make a profit; but the man who creates a new dollar is the farmer.

In comparing the success of country and city boys in reaching high positions, the balance is with the country boys. Recent statistics compiled in the United States show that out of 25 presidents, 23 were country boys. Out of 45 governors, 41 came from rural districts. Of the cabinet ministers taken into the reckoning, some 126 in all, 111 were boys reared on farms.

It is interesting to read the opinion of J. J. Hill, of Great Northern fame, on the subject of country environment. He says:

"My present home is on a farm, and my principal reason for making my home there, rather than at some of the lakes or in the city, is that I have three boys of my own, I am trying to give a fair start in life. I believe there is no end of arguments that living on the farm gives the best chance for a growing boy. While my making the farm my home sometimes works an inconvenience to me, I realize that the benefits to my children are worth the inconvenience to me of getting in and out between my office and the farm."

There is no greater asset for any young man than an idea. Give him a vision of the great things that can be accomplished upon the farm, of the riches in soil regeneration, of the glories of animal production, and perfection, of the abiding interest that attaches to alfalfa and trees—all these visions are lying around him, like the chariots of old on a thousand hills. The eyes that could behold them would brighten, and the ideas streaming forth from the glorification would so enthrall the profession of agriculture to place farm life in the position it should be. There is no nobler life in the industrial world than that of the man who does things upon the farm. The home should be the feeding ground for these ideas.

Alta.

W. McD. TAIT.

THE HORSE.

Get a wide whiffletree made for the in-foal mare.

The demand for horses in Great Britain was never keener.

Drivers should remember that "whoa" means to stop, and train their horses accordingly.

Remember that a good gelding is likely to prove more profitable than an inferior stallion.

The English Shire, judging from illustrations of prize-winners in this issue, still carries plenty of hair.

Gradually increase the grain ration to the working animals until they are on full feed just as spring's work commences.

If the colts' feet have grown out have them properly trimmed. Bad conformation often results from neglect in this particular.

Let the in-foal mare do a share of the spring's work. Properly handled she will be the better of it, and so will the foal. Give her the double-tree advantage.

The breeder should read the enrolment certificate of the stallion he uses, but should not be blinded by it. Look over the horse. If he is not right do not use him.

Leave the colts in the paddock or farm yard as many hours each day as possible. The weather is now, for the most part, moderated to such a condition that the colts are better out than in.

It is not long until June. Is the paddock prepared for the stallion to take exercise, or how many miles a day is he led? A good breeding season depends more than many think upon the regular exercise of the sire.

If two or more in-foal mares are kept in the

same stable and one should abort, isolate her and thoroughly clean and disinfect. Whether or not the abortion is contagious it is dangerous, as the odor accompanying it often causes other mares to cast their foals.

Not for several years have the horse market conditions been such as to show so wide a difference between the big, heavy, sound, draft horse and the commoner, lighter, coarser-limbed type. Competition must eliminate the inferior animal, and it is plainer than ever before that only the best is to find ready sale at the most profitable prices.

The Foot.

That trite old axiom, so often heard, about the relative value of the foot to the horse will not steal into this short article. True, it is that a horse must have good feet, but they are only a part of a wonderfully developed anatomy which requires proportion, symmetry and quality in all its parts before the unit, known as a horse, is complete. Some breeds of horses have been so envied that quality of foot and limb was a prime requisite to their existence. Others have been bred for weight, and with it has come a corresponding decrease in that fine texture of bone, so desired by all horsemen. The result is there is no perfect breed of horses. The foot is not the foundation upon which to build a perfect breed, but if such a fantastical accomplishment is ever attained one may rest assured that the feet and limbs will be right.

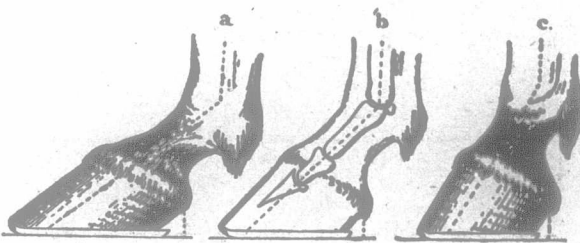


Fig. 1.—(a) Side view of an acute-angled fore foot; (b) Side view of a regular fore foot, showing a desirable obliquity, and (c) Side view of an upright or stumpy fore foot.

In figure 1 (b) may be seen the coffin bone, which is the lowest of the series of bones comprising the limb. Above it may be seen as well the coronary bone; the small cannon bone and the lower end of the cannon bone proper. Above and around the coffin bone are the sensitive laminae, which consist of thin plates of soft tissue. A knowledge of the presence of this tissue would dissipate the idea in many a horse-man's mind that hoof is one solid piece of horny matter, and by so doing elicit more intelligent care for that part of the horse's anatomy. In

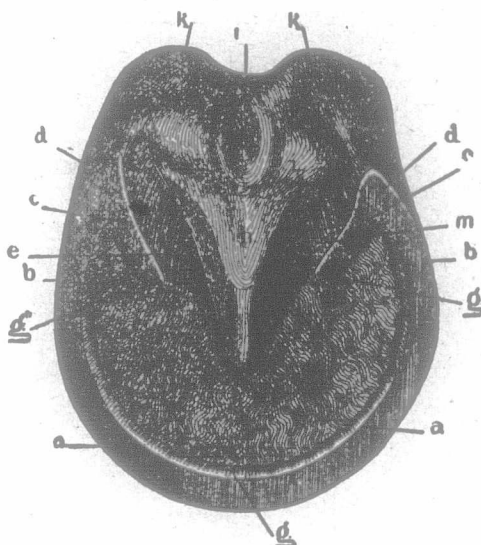


Fig. 2.—Ground surface of a right fore foot; a-b, the side walls; b-d, the quarters; c-c, the bars; d-d, the buttresses; e, lateral cleft of the frog; h, body of the frog; k-k, horny bulbs of the heels.

order to receive the downward pressure of the column of bones and destroy the shock, a thick pad of tissue, called the plantar cushion, is placed beneath the coffin bone connecting it with the sole of the foot. These tissues and bones with some cartilages make up the interior of the horny box known as the hoof.

Size, shape, quality and placement are the important points not to be forgotten in a judgment on the horse. The horn of the wall should be thick, hard and tough, and ebony-like in appearance. The quality of the hoof can usually be told by sight, but the color is not a safe criterion upon which to decide. Some claim the black hoof better; some the white, but most horsemen are agreed that a striped hoof is superior to any solid color. The surface should be free from wrinkles, ridges or cracks, but a hoof will often show concentric rings which should

never be marked or uneven. Viewed from the side the front wall of the front foot should form an angle of about 45 degrees with the ground, but the hind foot is a little deeper and stands at an angle of about 55 degrees. The whole foot should be round, and the heels wide and of good depth. In draft horses shallowness at the heels is too frequently a characteristic. The hind foot is meant for propulsion, while the front foot must withstand considerable concussion.

The sole should be slightly concave and the frog should be large, healthy and elastic, for upon it rests the responsibility of protecting the foot and limb from severe concussions. Avoid horses whose feet are small, brittle, flat in sole, shallow of heel, spongy and weak. They can never do good service, for they are defective in a very important part of the mechanism of the animal.

Army Remounts.

Thoroughbred sires are being distributed throughout the country for the purpose of rearing a type that will serve as a good saddle-horse for the remount demand. It is rumored also that Hackneys and Standard-breds are likewise to receive the approbation of the Dominion Government to promote this desired end, and there is a probability that some breeders might, in a moment of weakness, use a light sire in order to obtain one of these high-selling horses. It must be borne in mind that the heavy-draft horse does not possess the life and stamina required in order to qualify for the army, and, as a natural consequence, the heavy type of mare with the cart horse blood in her veins will not transmit the correct form and characteristics to an offspring. The result will be an undesirable, of little value for any purpose.

The blood of the Arab horse is, to more or less extent, present in all our breeds of horses, and the amount of it is a good criterion by which to judge the value or suitability of an animal for the saddle. The Thoroughbred, as produced in England, is of the race course type, and must be crossed with a little weight and substance to get an animal that will carry a man of 180 or 200 pounds. The Thoroughbred, of course, is the sire that should be used to get a remount, and he of all horses resembles most the Arab in saddle characteristics. France and Hungary lead in the right type of army horses, and there the Anglo-Normand, a dual-purpose animal, is in prominence. In Hungary particularly, the Arab, Thoroughbred and Hackney have been combined into a satisfactory saddle-horse, but the Anglo-Normand is still in evidence. The Hackney is not, properly speaking, a saddle-horse, but some infusion of this blood has brought good results both in riders and drivers. Bellfounder, the sire of the Charles Kent Mare and grandsire of Hambletonian 10, was numbered 55 in volume 1 of the English Hackney Stud Book, and to him is given much of the credit for the speed of the Hambletonians. In the days of Bellfounder, however, speed was an important feature, but in the time which has intervened some of it has been replaced by action of a different nature. Whatever the development of the Hackney has been throughout these years, they are still capable of imparting valuable blood to the army remount horse.

The saddler is not necessarily a pure-bred horse capable of imparting valuable blood to the army but a Thoroughbred stallion crossed with our ordinary farm horse of the cart-horse type will not give a remount of value, and if they are not valuable they are a particularly useless piece of property. What is required is the general-purpose stamp of mare not unknown to Standard-bred and Hackney blood. She, crossed with a Thoroughbred of the right kind, should produce a saddle-horse fit for service.

The colt which is to do his first hard work during the forthcoming seeding period should be given a little extra consideration. There is always a good deal of work at this season just previous to the opening up of spring, and it would be advisable to place the colt or colts at light work each day, keeping them accustomed to the harness and also keeping them exercised and gradually working them up to such a condition that they will stand the more strenuous work of cultivating the soil. The first day or two on the land they should not be rushed, in fact none of the horses should be pushed to their capacity, until after a few days of lighter work have been given. Very often the spring opens up warm, and the horses, with their thick coats not shed, suffer greatly from the exertion to which they are not accustomed. We have known of good work horses being injured to such an extent by early spring over-work that their efficiency was reduced for some time afterwards, and in some cases we have heard of death resulting from this cause. Colts are more likely to be injured than the old horses, and, therefore, should be given the lighter end of the work. Give them the easy end of the whiffletree, and rest them frequently and for short intervals.