

Stock.

The Shire Horse.

This horse will henceforth be less known under the name of the English cart horse, the name of the English Cart Horse Society having been changed to that of the Shire Horse Society. The Shire horses are steadily but boldly coming to the front in England, and are becoming successful rivals of the Clydesdales in Scotland. The heralds of such booms usually have some motto to proclaim, and the one in this case seems to be, "No feet, no horse." They contend that the principle of judging a horse by his top is fallacious. The opponents of this horse have insisted that his weak point lies in the lack of pedigree. It is true that many of the race do not possess pure ancestral blood, but this does not alter the fact that the cart horse proper has a pure and direct line of ancestors. It has also been said that the breed has no distinctive name, and too much discount has been made on this account. This statement fails to establish the impurity of the lineage. What its faults may be, it certainly has none which have been attributed to the Clydesdale or the Percheron. For heavy work and long endurance it is hard to find fault with the Shire horse.

Hints on Horses.

BREEDING.—Before selecting a stallion for the mare, the first reflection should be—What am I breeding for? It may be that the anticipated foal is intended for general work on the farm,—perhaps for a local or a foreign market; then the requirements of these markets should be discussed. If there be any such thing as a general purpose horse, it is found in the Canadian animal. It is hardy—especially on the feet, where some breeds are unsound; it is long-lived, easily kept, medium weight, a capital roadster, makes tolerably good speed, draws well, and is capable of much endurance. To these qualities a good sire should add a mild temper, a proud spirit, and a symmetrical contour. In selecting a stallion, not only the purpose for which the progeny is required is to be taken into consideration, but also the faults of the sire and dam, and, if possible, any defects that may have existed in the ancestors. Any hereditary taint in the parents or their kin is almost sure to be perpetuated. It is an injurious practice to allow the dam to be served before she is matured. The result is not only ruinous to the mare but also to the offspring. Both must suffer, it being unnatural to expect that the food can supply nourishment for the complete development of both mother and young. Besides, her conformation grows unsightly, and the foal becomes dwarfed. The

early maturing qualities of the breeds will determine whether the first foal should be dropped when the dam is three or four years old. A year spared now will add several vigorous years to the latter end of the mare's life, as well as being conducive to the welfare of all her progeny. On the other hand it is equally absurd to expect thrifty foals from mares which have become disabled by age or ill-usage. Such foals are subject to rickets and many other infirmities, and may do for cheap nags about the farm, but are useless for the market. It is impertinent to expect that the strong points of the sire will make up for all the defects of the dam. To put small mares to large stallions has proved to be an injurious practice; it is much more desirable that the reverse should be the case. Although in-breeding is not desirable, it is not so injurious as generally supposed, especially when there are no prominent imperfections in the parents, or no predis-

regarded as certain."

THE STALLION.—Practical horsemen have so many different methods of feeding and exercising their stallions that the only infallible direction we can give is: Use your own judgment. Each groom would treat different breeds of horses differently, according to their varying traits of character and other conditions. Yet there are certain general principles which govern all cases. The stallion should be kept in a fair condition at all seasons of the year, but don't stimulate the system by over-feeding. He should attain the vigorous period of maturity before he enters actively upon the duties of life. He should have plenty of exercise, be kept clean, have ready access to good water and wholesome food, and be accommodated in a well ventilated and well lighted stable. It may appear irrational to say that he should not be blanketed in winter, but if his apartment is comfortable, he is much better without a

blanket, for any covering which is not evenly distributed over the whole of the body and limbs, is more injurious than beneficial, except when the horse is perspiring freely, and then the blanket should not be put on until he commences to cool. A change of food can scarcely occur too often. If it were possible to know when the stomach had the proper amount of distension, how much of each ingredient of the food was required to produce growth, repair waste, and supply the desired quantity of heat, fat, and mechanical work, then there would be no particular necessity for a change of food; for all the organs would have a natural and uniform amount of work to perform; but in the present state of our ignorance in this respect, a change of diet is necessary to give partial relief to



THE SHIRE OR CART HORSE.

THE PROPERTY OF POWELL BROS., SPRINGBORO, CRAWFORD COUNTY, PENN.

position to disease. The period of reproduction varies considerably; but the period of the first foal will be a guide to future periods. After conception, rest the mare for a while, but afterwards it is better to keep her constantly employed at such work as will be required of her offspring, being cautious not to strain her with heavy work. As it is important to know whether a mare is in foal, let us quote what the best authority has to say on the subject:—"After the first service of the horse, and before the next trial, on examining the vagina, or bearing, if conception has not taken place it will be of a fresh, bright, or florid and moist appearance, with a clear drop appearing at the lower part, and which, if touched, will incline to extend; but if conception is present, a different appearance of the surface of the vagina will be presented. It will be found dry, and of a dirty brown or rust color; and a dark, brown looking drop will replace the former clear drop. When these latter appearances are present, pregnancy may be

overburdened organs, and to stimulate others which have had undue rest. Some contend that the stallion should be fed equal rations all the year round, no extra food being given during the travelling season. This might do with those breeds which have a tendency to keep in a uniform condition under most all circumstances, or when the drain on the system, whether by service or by exercise, is constant. A great error is almost habitually committed in not giving the stallion constant work or exercise. Like the mare, he should be engaged in that kind of work which his progeny is destined to perform, and when exercised, he should be turned into an inclosure and be allowed to exercise himself in his own way. If the drain on the system occasioned by service is equal to that caused by exercise during the other seasons of the year, then by all means feed regularly; but as this is rather an unnatural supposition, it would be advisable to feed extra during the service season. It may seem rash to say that stallions should