

saddle, and he was very fast, both as a trotter and as a pacer.

Much has been written in controversy about the blood of the Canadian pacer in the trotter, but doubtless this honest, level-headed horse has nicked well with the thoroughbred blood of Messenger, Mambrino, and others that have helped to found many of the trotting lines of breeding. A few friends, and those interested, are now getting together data, and intend, if possible, to establish a record for the French Canadian horse. If more care were practised in their breeding and selection, there is plenty of material to form a distinct sort, and they would furnish us with a hackney or road horse second to none. It is claimed by those who have made a study of these sorts, that the Norman horse is alike the founder of the French Canadian and the more modern French Coacher. Those brought to Quebec at this early date, receiving too often short rations in a vigorous climate, by inbreeding he has been reduced in size, while the Norman horse, of sunny France, with abundant feed, a warmer climate, and careful crossing, has been built up to the beautiful horse he is to-day. However, they both retain the splendid constitution and vigor, as well as the active movements of the old Norman war horse.

It is now many years since France first established her government studs, and through this management the French Coacher of the present has been produced. With the Norman horse for a foundation, and by selecting thoroughbred blood from England, and judicious crossing of these sorts, a horse has been produced that, for coach or carriage purposes, stands among the very first. The French Coacher, like his English cousin, has undergone changes through the lapse of time incident to the requirements of the country. What establishing the faster mail coaches and advent of railways in England, so has peace and war done for this class of horses in France, as he has alike been required for cavalry remounts, and to draw the carriages of the opulent in the cities. For this last purpose the handsomest horses were in great demand, and to the late Emperor belonged horses of the most lofty type and brilliant action that could be obtained, and private individuals vied with one another in obtaining for their stylish turnouts horses of the highest standard that wealth could purchase. The war, for a time, put an end to all this luxury, and a horse for cavalry remounts was in greater demand, and less size and a more activity was the order of the day.

The French Coacher now stands about 16½ to 16½ hands; in color he is brown bay and chestnut. He is a thicker and better muscled horse than his English namesake, and has more attractive action. Quite a number of these horses have been brought into Ontario of late, but we have not yet been able to find how they are crossing with our mares, as the produce is not of sufficient age to judge.

The French system of government inspection has much to recommend it, and doubtless France would be in a different position as regards horse-breeding, if the money thus expended had been withheld.

In Canada, establishing studs through government aid, would interfere with individual enterprise, and never could be made a popular move; but, if a system of inspection and license were adopted, it would have the effect of en-

couraging the bringing in and retaining the best horses, and would serve to check the use of horses without any pretensions to breeding, and which are the greatest detriment to our horse-breeding operations. We have something like 120,000 brood mares in Ontario. If these could be raised up to \$150 per head this would be \$12,000,000 of wealth alone, and this only represents one-quarter the number of horses. By raising the standard of excellence in our mares, and importing and retaining only the best stallions, how quickly we would double our wealth; there would at once be a direct demand for more than we could produce; we would also have horses fitted to do the work required of them for the different departments, and the work would be better performed.

#### Berkshires vs. Yorkshires.

BY N. BENJAMIN, SHAPTESBURY, DORSET, ENG.

I have read the correspondence in your excellent magazine on Yorkshires and Berkshires, &c., and have been surprised at the misrepresentation of Berkshires in the letters of Mr. William Davis, also at his bitterness of style. I had thought it as well though to leave the subject to breeders on your side of the Atlantic until I received your April number and found Mr. Sanders Spence had at last sent you one of his productions. I am not writing to find fault with white pigs, because large and middle whites are very useful breeds, but they require a healthy district and plenty of straw for bedding, whereas, Berkshires will get their own living and thrive on cold clay soils, and on farms where there is very little or no bedding, and where white pigs would almost starve. I wish flatly to contradict the statements of your various correspondents that Berkshires are short in the back, too fat, too coarse in the shoulders, too light in the hams, over done with offal, merely fit to raise stock suitable for mess pork whose destination is the pine woods, where lumbermen can eat blubber, that the best bacon curers have quite thrust them aside as totally unfit for the bacon trade, &c. Now such vile assertions as these are libels of persons who do not know what Berkshires are, or are the wild, unscrupulous and vindictive outbursts of prejudice. Berkshires are long, are not coarse in the shoulders, have excellent hams, less offal than any other breed, and cannot be excelled for quality and texture of meat. The best curers in this country do not object to them, Messrs. Oake, Woods & Co., of Gillingham, who stand quite at the top as curers and who have on several occasions won medals for bacon at the London Dairy Show, and who are purveyors to H. R. H. the Prince of Wales (by appointment), kill a great number of Berkshires, and one of the firm (the chief partner) recently told me that he was quite convinced there was no better breed than properly fed Berkshires to meet the requirements of the trade. Messrs. C. & E. Sanders, of Mere, Wiltshire (also winners of a Dairy Show medal for bacon), say Berkshires are by far the best pigs they ever kill because they cut considerably more lean than any other breed. Mr. Henry S. Rickley, of Corebridge-on-Tyne, used to kill all whites, but sometime since he tried Berkshires and was so pleased with the result that he has for some years kept a pedigree herd of them and has advocated their spread in his district. He tells me his customers are so pleased with the quality of the meat, that he finds it difficult to sell bacon from any other sort. A nobleman in the north of England, who has an annual sale of

Christmas fat cattle, sheep and pigs, has gone in for pure Berkshires, and his agent tells me they are so much sought after at the sale, on account of superior quality, that they fetch such fancy prices (they weigh from 300 lbs. to 450 lbs. each, at the sale). London salesmen also say the longest, leanest and best quality pork they get sent them is invariably Berkshires. Ask Mr. I. Jiggins, 15 Central Meat Market, London; Messrs. Barker & Co., or almost any of the others who sell large quantities of pork. Messrs. Harris & Co., of Calne (the largest curers in this country), recently issued a circular to their customers describing the kind of pig they required. They said their best bacon came from the counties of Hampshire and Wiltshire, and the worst from Dorset and Somerset. Quite 75 per cent. of the pigs in all four counties are Berkshires. Why then is the bacon not so good in the two latter? Because in Wiltshire and Hampshire, the farms are large corn farms where pigs run in straw yards and fields until they are large stores, worth from 30c. to 50c. each, eating roots and unground grain, they are then put up to fatten for five or six weeks and come out good long lean meat; whereas in Dorset and Somerset the case is entirely different, the farms are mostly dairy farms, and the pigs are fed on trough food consisting of whey or skim milk with meal right from the birth, as a result when killed they cut more fat and consequently are less suitable for the requirements of the bacon trade than their more properly fed Hampshire and Wiltshire brethren, this in my opinion proves that feeding has a very great deal to do (irrespective of breed) with the satisfactory production of bacon. Most curers in this country give a bonus of 2s. 6d. per pig on all that cut the required thickness of bacon down to back, and sometime since five pigs from the same sow as one of my best known show sows went for slaughter three of them got the bonus. At the last show held at Gillingham, Dorset, the bacon curers of the district offered prizes for pens of pigs suitable for the trade, and Messrs. Harris's representative was the judge. In the class for pen of ten pigs the first prize was won by Berkshires and white cross, and the first prize for pens of five by Berkshires. There were pure large whites in both classes, and in both they were unnoticed. Only last week at the Somerset Agricultural Society's Show, held at Wellington, prizes were offered "for pen of pigs most suitable for bacon factory purposes, such pigs to be well haired and not over-fattened, over seven months and not exceeding nine months old, to measure not less than fifty inches from point of snout to root of tail, and to be between seven and nine scores in weight." There were seven entries in this class, and the first prize of £10 was awarded (by four judges) to the only pen of Berkshires in the class (they were pedigree animals exhibited by Mr. Fricker, a well known breeder and exhibitor). The second prize of £5 went to a cross bred pen (Berkshire and black), reserve number to a cross between Berkshire and Tamworth, the other four pens were of the large white breed and all were highly commended. Berkshires are very long if worthy the name, and cannot be excelled if properly bred, but they as well as other breeds require careful selection to keep the correct style, and type, and uniformity of character. No body would expect to find an animal fed up to winning form at a show of importance a suitable pig for the bacon trade. Let its breed be Berkshire, Tamworth, White or any other breed, neither would a Devon, Shorthorn, Hereford or Scotch ox, or a Southdown, Shropshire or Hampshire down sheep, good enough to exhibit successfully at Smithfield, be considered the desideratum of beef or mutton by practical butchers. All such animals are too fat for general use, and are simply fed to show what specimens of the various species and breeds can be brought to, at the same time no sensible person would condemn the standard breeds of cattle and sheep because the winning specimens at the shows were too fat for the meat trade. The same common sense way of looking at the show pigs should certainly obtain. I am sorry to have troubled you with so long a letter, but I really think it about time somebody should contradict the libels on so good a breed as the old Berkshires, which is my excuse.