

The Percheron Stud-Book.

In view of the criticisms which have gone the round of the press relating to the standing of the Percheron Stud-Book, Mr. Edwin T. Blois, Chicago, Ill., sends us the following extracts from the proceedings of the great Percheron Exhibition recently held at Nogent-le-Rotrou, France, at which the French Minister of Agriculture and other notables from France and America were present. The occasion gave rise to enthusiastic demonstrations and a grand banquet at which rousing speeches were delivered, the dignity of the occasion being enhanced from the fact that Nogent-le-Rotrou is the grand business centre of the Percheron region. A correspondent of the *Hartford Times* makes the following allusion: "These great breeders and buyers of French horses are still 'divided in a bitter contest' over the question of the old Percheron stud-book and the new French stud-book. At present there is but one stud-book, the Percheron stud-book, which has been in existence between two and three years. No horse is eligible to registry in this book unless it has been actually born within the Percheron district, of Percheron sire and mare. Even if a Percheron mare should foal while outside the Percheron district, and the colt was known to be by a Percheron registered stallion, that colt could not be registered in the Percheron stud-book. Therefore, only horses actually born in Perche can have a regularly registered pedigree, for there exists no other French stud-book. This confines the buyers who desire to ship authentic stock to America to Perche, and gives to that region a fame beyond all the rest of France.

This has made the fortunes of Percheron breeders and excited the jealousy of the breeders of Normandy and Boullonnais horses, who now are beginning to be aroused in their interests. Finding that their clamoring to be admitted to the Percheron stud-book is of no avail, they are striving to start a rival stud-book. Hence the controversy.

The Minister of Agriculture completely ignored the new book and praised in high terms the wonderful improvement which the show demonstrated has been effected in the Percheron horse, especially since the breed has been kept within itself by the rules of the Percheron stud-book. This is a great victory for the Percherons. In this contest the fight is Perche against all the rest of France united. A good Percheron brings from \$1,000 to as high as \$9,000. The Percheron theory of breeding rests upon "in-breeding," as opposed to crossing. The Percheron stallion is often bred to his own dam or sister. While crossing will sometimes produce good colts, they claim that a horse which has been the result of long-continued in-breeding in the same family has a greater power of transmitting his good qualities to his progeny. Hence the noticeable improvement in the Percherons since the stud-book confined the breeders to the narrow limits of the Perche. And, further, it is claimed that there are certain chemical properties in the soil of the Perche which, taken into the system of the horse through the pasturage, produces bone and muscle, and that a colt born of Percheron parents and not raised on Perche pasture, while it will be superior to all other draught horses, will not equal one raised in Perche. Probably a thousand stallions will go to America from France this season, which will bring in America not less than \$1,500,000, and by far the greatest portion come from this little region of Perche.

The following account of a prolific Welsh cow is taken from the *Agricultural Gazette*, London: "She had her first calf as a two-year-old; at the age of three she gave birth to twins, and again as a four-year-old cow she gave birth to twins. She is now in her fifth year, and only the other day was delivered of the most uncommon number of three at one birth. All were calved alive, but one succumbed soon after. It will thus be seen that as a five-year-old cow she is now the dam of eight calves."

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