

## Western Horse Industry

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country should bring their love for that breed and horses of that breed with them. The other is that for a time, at least, if not today, size and substance were sacrificed to quality by many Clydesdale breeders. Action, feet and pasterns were emphasized and scale and weight lost sight of. During this same period the Percheron breeders were busy remedying the defects in the horses of their breed, and with every passing year better and better representatives of the breed—particularly as to action, hocks, pasterns and feet—were arriving in the West. The natural result was that the breed steadily gained in favor with others than the settlers from the south until today it is firmly entrenched in the public regard and is receiving more and more recognition in the prize lists of our big fairs. So long as the existing ratio of farmers of Canadian or British origin to those of American birth prevails, however, it is scarcely likely that the Clydesdale will fall from its pre-eminent place in the popular regard, especially as more attention to size is now being paid by the breeders of these horses.

In addition to the two breeds named, we have the Shires and Belgians with a fair representation scattered throughout the country. The Belgians are popular in many of the districts largely settled with German-Americans and are another importation from the south, while the Shire is the popular draught horse of England.

It matters but little which of these four breeds a man elects to work with. The important thing is that he selects but one, and that the one he likes best. There is a brisk demand for good representatives of any or all of them. On the market the individual animal is considered more than the breed he belongs to, but good individuals can only be produced with any degree of certainty when the breeder confines himself to one breed. The relative popularity of the four breeds in question in Western Canada at the present time may be stated thus: Of say, 25 stallions, 17 will be Clydesdales, 6 will be Percherons, one a Belgian and one a Shire.

### Weight An Important Factor

One important point may be touched upon briefly before this article is brought to a close. We have spoken incidentally of the importance of size in draught horses. A study of prices at the leading horse markets on this continent will reveal the fact that the prices paid for heavy horses bear a direct ratio to the weight of the animals. This does not mean that quality and other points are not factors in determining the price paid for any individual horse, but that, other things being equal, weight is the ruling factor in making the price for a draught horse.

How can weight be obtained, if it is so essential to securing high price? Parentage and feeding are the determining factors. A big mare mated to a big horse is more likely to throw big, growthy stock than are a small mare and big horse, or a big mare and a small horse. This rule, like every other rule of breeding, does not always apply, but it is a safe one to work by in seeking weight. But feeding—both of the mare, before and after the colt comes, and of the colt during the first year of its life in particular—is at least as powerful a factor as is heredity in the making of heavy horses. The maximum weight of a draught horse, in the judgment of many breeders, is determined by the time the colt is one year old. No amount of feed and care after that age is past will greatly affect the size and ultimate weight of a horse that has been neglected prior to that time. Therefore the careful breeder who is after results and the big money feeds his pregnant mares and sucking colts as carefully and generously as any other stock on the farm.

In the foregoing a few of the salient economic and technical points connected with the horse raising industry as it now exists, and as it might exist in Western Canada, have been touched

upon in a fragmentary way. The subject both in its study and its actualities is a fascinating one, for is not the horse—next perhaps to some dogs—the most intelligent animal that man has been given dominion over? The possibilities of the industry are enormous, despite automobiles and gas tractors, and the demand for good draught horses is further from being supplied than it ever was. Cities, railway and lumber camps, and the newer farming districts, alike call for horses and will pay more than profitable prices for even such inferior animals of nondescript breeding as are too often offered. Can anyone doubt but that an interesting, promising, profitable and important branch of farming is being sadly neglected or inadequately developed by most of our farmers?

### NOW AND TEN YEARS HENCE

It seems that the West is to have a tariff commission as a result of representations made during the Premier's recent visit through that portion of the country. Farmers are naturally more or less apt to be free traders, especially when their chief market is abroad and they themselves need little protection in the home market. So we need not be surprised at the attitude of the grain growers in the new provinces who haven't yet exhausted the virgin fertility of their soil. But we think they are not looking a very long distance ahead. The prairie provinces are growing and it will not be long until the people there will want to have manufacturing industries. While they are working out their destinies satisfactorily on the farm, their children may have different tastes. Some will feel the lure of the town, some will have a genius for mechanical work and many will have a preference for the workshop. The country should be in a position then to care for this element in the population as it arises. The West needs manufacturing industries, with their offer of diversified employment, which the present fiscal system has the tendency to encourage, while any rearrangement of duties—which would satisfy the present generation of western farmers might have the effect of discouraging the development of manufacturing industries. We have a feeling that a well balanced tariff commission would not find good enough evidence in the West to make any such serious change. The present demand impresses us as being shortsighted, and so we believe it would impress any student taking the future into consideration. If things go along as they are, we venture to say that inside of ten years the sentiment of the West will undergo a radical change and there will be a rebound to the feeling which is now pretty well fixed in the East that the farmer is really benefitted by the tariff which favors manufactures, both in having a better home market and in having a greater diversity of callings for his sons and daughters to engage in. Out in the West they have great water-powers and they are discovering great sources of fuel supply. Wherever these are there exist the possibilities of manufacturing enterprise. We may therefore expect to see these possibilities developed in the West where things seem to proceed with astonishing speed. It will not be long until the value of the present tariff will be better appreciated there than it is today.

NOTE—The writer of the above article makes much of preparing a place for the future generation. When economic conditions are made right the farm will be far more attractive than now. Certainly there will be industries in Western Canada, and they will be needed. They will grow, however, without protection, but because of the demand for their products. Every industry can be made to stand upon its bottom as well as the farming industry. —Ed.

Hon. James Drummond McGregor, of New Glasgow, has been appointed Lieut.-Governor of Nova Scotia, in succession to the late Lieut.-Gov. Fraser.

The Saskatchewan Farmer is the name of a new monthly agricultural publication that has recently appeared at Moose Jaw. The editor is Hugh McKellar, former deputy minister of agriculture in Manitoba.



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