

The War and the Horse.

By G. T. BURROWS.

The surprise of the whole continent of Europe, right from the moment of the many counter-declarations of War, even unto the time of writing this article, has been the wonderfully varied, and of course necessary, use found for the horse in every branch of the service put into the field by each contesting army. There were those who said the next war, be it ever so humble, would be a war in which motor transport would hold sway. Fortunately for the Allies, the second phase of the European war has spent itself in an area, where although motor transport and armored motor cars have had their fling and proved a great service; cavalry work on a considerable scale, and horse haulage have also had to be relied upon to a large extent. In a land of dykes, ditches, canals and "heavy" earth, the motor for cross country work is still a problem; and that is where horses, both heavy and light, on each side of the contesting forces have had a big showing.

England, when her expeditionary force was being sent abroad, was cleared out of every useful type of horse she possessed. Shires and Clydesdales of brilliant breeding were taken for the transport of heavy artillery and ammunition. Shires and Clydesdales, three parts bred, i. e., alike light in the leg, but possessing powerful bodies and hind quarters were taken for artillery work in the field. This type we over here call heavy vanners, and they are good chunkily built animals—very likely, I should say, equivalent to the best of your grade Shires and Clydesdales. They are not top heavy, however, for although cleaner limbed than the Shire they have enormous leverage. These war horses have gone in droves from the parcel delivery firms of Britain.

For cavalry the ideal horse is a "blood like" looking horse, half or three parts Thoroughbred, stands 15 hands $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches high up to 15 hands $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches. No horses are suitable for cavalry remounts which stand over 16 hands high. What is called the mounted infantryman's horse is a

thick-set, 14 hands 1 inch to 15 hands 1 inch animal, standing on four good, short, strong legs, yet "nippy" on his feet and able to move freely. The artilleryman's horse should be 15 hands 2 inches to 16 hands. The ideal cavalry hunter, of which quite 15,000 head have been willingly yielded up to the Government by the sporting gentlemen and tenant farmers of the country. For whatever branch of light horse work an army-horse is required, the war office and the Remount officers buying in Britain have not lost sight of the outline of the English hunter—built on short legs, short cannonbone, shoulders that will bear some weight and much pressure, a strong back and well ribbed up. The more good blood—i. e., Thoroughbred blood, found in the horse's veins, the better.

At one time in England for general utility army-horse work, a French-Canadian cross was very popular, but their chief fault was a shortness of rein.

Lightness of bone, especially below the knee, is not required by the army buyers, and loose-rumped specimens always get "The knock." After mettle and shape comes action, and in all remounts true action is absolutely necessary. Any horse that cuts or brushes his fetlocks cannot be regarded as safe. The stamp of horse most suited for military use will always be the type that will rule the business market, and it is simply impossible to overstock the market with that kind of horse. It is so in peace times; it is doubly so to-day.

It has been my good fortune to see most of the different types of national horses engaged in the present conflict. Our own I have described to you. The country has had three different calls made upon it for horses of all types, and at the moment we have buyers in Canada picking out bunches of "breedy" looking light horses and "hefty" looking vanners. Pervers at home have gone for the best each "Call." For the Shires and Clydesdales they have gone up to £60 apiece; for the heavy vanners £40; for the best grade riding horses, i. e., cavalry, up to £70 have been paid, but that has been for a potential

officer's charger; for ordinary cavalry work £40 has been a general price, though I have heard of hundreds of cases where clean sweeps have been made of hunting stables containing £150 to £250 hunters, and they have all come in the melting pot at £40 a time, their owner swallowing any smart he may feel and arguing with himself that "it might have been worse"—which it would have been on the Continent itself. Countless thousands of horses of all kinds have been bought at £40. It is not much, but under the pressure of the surrounding circumstances men have willingly let their horses go and have gone after them, so to speak, to enlist and fight.

Horsemen in England this time have proved veritable "bricks." I reckon 2,000 well-known monied hunting men have joined the army as mere privates; countless thousands of yeomen and their sons, born horsemen, all of them, have heard the bugle call. Many prominent masters of fox hounds who are also army men have taken with them three and four spare horses, for they have realized that the average "life" of a cavalry horse at the front is considerably less than three months. The "life" of a haulage horse is considered six months, and I found tears in my eyes one day when I watched a bunch of 300 railway horses, heavy vanners and jolly good types of Shires in their own way, marching off, with their docile old heads tied together, two by two, and their big, bright eyes looking out upon a strange world of ships and sea and eternal kha'di. None of them will come back. It is a certainty that none of the haulage horses sent to France and Flanders will ever reach their old homes again. What per cent. of riding horses will get back it is impossible to estimate. Staff officer's mounts stand a better chance of escape, but horses actually in the fighting take, every moment, an opportunity of being killed. Letters home show that many officers met their fate when upon their second horse in one day's fighting. Communications from actual cavalymen prove that in some cases they have lost three horses in a day. When one realizes that a "Black Maria," i. e., a German 8-inch Howitzer can deliver a shell, which when it strikes the ground makes a hole big

