

AMERICAN HORSE BREEDING.

GRADUATING THESIS.

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The Horse has been recognized in all ages for which we have authentic history, as the most sturdy and esteemed servant of men, notwithstanding that it has not been under domestication so long as some of our other animals. It is associated with man by more points of sympathy than any other of our domestic animals.

Geologists have shown that the original ancestors of the horse occurred in America in past ages, but that these were all exterminated by some unknown cause. That our present horses are all descended from old world horses, which in turn are derived from the original ancestors of the horse in America.

The original habitat of the horse is not known, but it is true, that in the earliest periods known to history, they were found in the wild state in Europe, Asia and Africa, but they differed from one another in many particulars before they were subject to domestication and were broken up into the different breeds.

Those inhabiting unproductive regions where frequent changes of grazing grounds were necessary for existence were distinguished for spirit, action and endurance; of these the horses of Turkey, Persia and Arabia, present the most characteristic type. While those found in low flat regions abounding in nutritious herbage, were larger and more sluggish, and less graceful.

The first imported horses were brought to America by the early Spanish conquerors; they possessed much beauty of form and style, of which the Indian posies, mustangs and bronchoes, are direct descendants. These horses were noted for their remarkable endurance, and

are capable of severest work under the saddle.

The horses imported to America have played quite an important part in the industrial and commercial interest of the people of the United States. When the traction engine and steam plow became realities; when the cable and electricity displaced the horse from the street-car service; when the bicycle and the horseless carriage took their places among the necessities of life; men began to say the horse had about outlived his usefulness as a domestic animal, and many a ready pen predicted his speedy and practical extinction. This feeling finally became more than the hasty conclusions of a few correspondents. But as a matter of fact, after all of these predictions the horse is bringing more money today on the markets, than the records show for the past fifty years. While it is true that much of the ordinary service of horses is being better and more cheaply performed by machinery, the same is true of much of the labor of men. All this reduces the value of the low-grade individual, whether horse or man, but it does not threaten the extinction of either species; on the contrary, new demands are constantly arising. It is a fact, horses like men, are retiring from the cheaper service into better, and that from all sides the call is for animals of good form and action. The ill-bred mongrel is not wanted because he cannot do what is now demanded of the horse.

In the following thesis I will attempt to name some of the more important breeds in America and their characteristics, both in the heavy draft and the light horse types.

The Draft Horse.

The draft horse is heavy of body and is much shorter coupled than the lighter types. The use of the draft horse is to haul loads of greater or less weight, usually at a slow gait; of course the gait

depends upon the size of the horse and the purpose for which he is used.

The draft horse proper as a market class, is a little over sixteen hands high and weighs from 1400# to 2000#. The walking gait is the most important gait of the draft horse, and should be quite rapid in stride, with straight leg movement. By that I mean all the legs should move forward in a straight line, not any lateral movement or waddling. From the class of drafters there are many culls which are due in many cases to blemishes. These go to make up the classes known as the lumberman's horse, which are the largest horses that go on the market, but are sold at about fifty percent lower than the market class, because of defects which have been before mentioned.

The Percheron Horse.

This breed of horses was brought to a high state of excellence in the district which was once known as Le Perche, in the northern part of France, south of Normandy, which along with Eure, Loire et cher and Sorthé, are the original home of the Percheron, and nowhere else are they found more purely bred to the original type. It is from this region that we get a number of the French horse for the United States. The first importation that attracted much attention was about fifty years ago, into the counties of Union and Pickaway in the state of Ohio, where they were known only as French horses. But by a close study of their origin and history they have been designated as Percherons. However, there has been much disagreement in this country as to the proper name for these horses. Owing to the fact of early importations of French horses into Illinois and adjacent states that had been Normans, these horses had all sorts of names, Norman-Percherons, Normans, and French horses, which have been exceedingly confusing and unsatisfactory. Several attempts have been made to

compromise, but definite results were not obtained until the publication of a stud-book in France of Percherons, which the American Society adopted.

A large percent of the most noted Percherons have been traced to the great Arabian sire Gallipole, imported into France about 1820. It is the Arabian blood that the gray color is attributed to, and also their form, disposition and general characters, while the size is supposed to be from the old black horse of Flanders.

In the province north of Le Perche is bred a class of horses a little different from the regular Percherons. They are more sluggish with less energy and action than the regular Percheron. This accounts for the diversity in type of the supposed Percheron, which the importers have to contend with. In France the original color of gray is the most popular, while in America, black is the prevailing color. The best types of this breed will weigh from 1650# to 2200#; they have excellent conformation, action, endurance, and style, with amazing strength and a kind and docile disposition.

The Clydesdale.

This draft horse originated in Scotland by improvement from the old black horse of Flanders. This breed is reared in the south-central part near the Clyde river, from which they take their name. To the casual observer there is not much difference in appearance between the Clyde and the English Shire. The Clydesdale no doubt largely owes its distinctive characters to the native mares of Louarkshire, known as the Lochlyock stock. They were mostly brown and black color. The Clyde proper stands from 16 to 17 hands high and weighs from 1600# to 2400#. The head of the Clyde is long, usually with a straight, but sometimes a Roman nose; back is a little long, but the hind quarters are splendidly covered with muscle. Legs are well formed, clean

with a slight feather springing from the back tendon, and not from the side as in the case of the Shire. The Clydesdales were first imported into America about 1842, and the breed has been very popular ever since in this country. With the breeders the color of the Clydesdale has been an especially strong point, the prevailing color being dark with more or less of white markings on face, feet, and legs. Bays and browns predominate, occasionally though, you will find blacks, grays, and chestnuts.

The modern Clydesdale has large round, open feet, and wide coronets, with a growth of long silky hair from the knee and hock to fetlock.

English Shire.

Centuries ago heavy horses from Flanders were imported into England and crossed on the native stock there, and by the practice of selection, developed a class of slow, sturdy, slow-going animals, known as the English Shire or cart horse. With this draft breed, as the other drafters, the horses of Flanders seem to be the foundation stock. They have been reared most extensively in the counties of Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire, England, and with the able assistance of Robert Bakewell, along with his experience with other livestock, formed a breed of draft horses which have been famous the world over.

These horses should stand 16 hands high, or over, and weigh from 1800# to 2200#; they are slow of motion, but are very powerful, and are in demand not only in the midland country where they are reared, but all over the south of England. Most of the large cities use them for hauling heavy loads, but there has been a tendency in the last fifty years to breed for quality rather than for size, and consequently the rugged massiveness which characterized the breed, disappeared, making the Shire horse of today more active and alert,

with more finish and style. The importing of this breed has not been carried on to any great extent, not so much as the merits of the breed would have justified.

The Belgian Horse.

This breed is very heavy bodied, thick set, and short coupled, but a little sluggish in action. They have not been imported into the United States in very large numbers, but the breed is rapidly increasing in popularity. The first importations were severely criticised for their heavy thick legs, coarse bone, and lack of quality in general; recently there is a marked improvement in these respects. As a rule they are heavier than the Percherons.

The Thoroughbred.

Probably the oldest and best established breed of all horses of Europe and America, is the Thoroughbred. A distinctly British production, especially noted throughout the world for its speed and endurance. While at an early period in the breeding of Thoroughbreds, speed was not systematized until late in the seventeenth century; before that time they were bred more for size. As to their origin it is not definitely known, except that they came from the native horses of England, blending with the large animals from Normandy, Flanders, and Germany, and in later years with the more active horses of Spain, while there were also numerous importations from Egypt, Morocco, and Arabia.

For over 200 years horse racing has been a popular sport among the English. This accounts for the purity of breeding of this particular breed. The term thoroughbred has become confusing, as it is applied to all livestock which have been bred pure; this is not correct. A Thoroughbred in the strictest sense means a particular breed of horses, the Thoroughbred, a running horse.

As a rule these horses are too nervous, and excitable for ordinary use, and of course are illy adapted for heavy draft. But in speed, courage and endurance their superiors do not exist. These horses have played an important part in the improvement of the hack, carriage, cavalry, and the road horse of today. It is doubtful if a single great road horse has been produced without strains of the Thoroughbred in his veins.

Trotters and Pacers.

The trotter, like the pacer, is distinctly an American production, and is the outgrowth of commercial tendencies of Americans. These horses which are level-headed, are used for light business or for pleasure, while those having superior speed win fame upon the race course. As the Thoroughbred was the result of the inherent love of the turf and the chase, so characteristic of the people of Great Britian, so the American trotting horse is the result of fashion which has demanded the strongest and stoutest trotting horse in the world for driving upon the roads. It is true, trainers and breeders have done much in the United States to develop the trotting horse, but their earliest history goes back to England where the trotting instince was first encouraged. While of course the development of the breed has been accomplished by enterprising Americans.

Trotting was at first an unnatural gait of some individual horses, and has been built up into a breed by crossing of these horses. Mr. J. H. Danders says our American horses are largely permeated with the English Thoroughbred blood; many of the best stallions and mares have been imported into this country from England and their influence is seen on every hand; it enters into the ground work of all our trotting strains, while fifty years ago the American trotting horse as a breed was unthought of.

The English Thoroughbred.

Messenger played a principal part in originating the trotting breed and figures largely in the ancestors of all the greatest sires. In fact, a history of Messenger and his descendants would be a fair history of the eminent trotting breed of America. Messenger was foaled in 1780 and 1788 was imported to New York; he had been successful in several races and won the King's plate at five years old. He made season in the northeastern states until his death on January 28, 1808. He was a gray, stood 15 hands high, and stoutly built; his shoulders were upright, and he was low on the withers, with a short, straight neck and bony head; his loins and hind quarters were powerful and muscular; his windpipe and nostrils were of unusual size; his hocks and knees very straight.

The chief families of the trotters are:- The Hambletonians, the Mambrinos, the Clays and the Morgans, the Bashaws and Pilots, all more or less related and tracing their ancestry back to Messenger.

The Hambletonians.

These are descended all on the paternal side, from Messenger through his son Mambrino and Mambrino's son Abdallah, out of a mare of unknown blood, who in turn got the wonderful sire Rysdyk's Hambletonian out of a mare by Bellfounder. Through Rysdyk's Hambletonian on the paternal side we have the Volunteers, Sentinels, Happy Mediums, George Wilks Dictators, and all the various so called Hambletonians.

Mambrinos take their name from Mambrino Chief, who was got by Mambrino Paymaster, a son of Mambrino, who was the grandsire of Rysdyk's Hambletonian. The dam of Mambrino Chief was a mare of unknown blood. He was taken to Kentucky when ten years old.

The Clays trace their origin to the great trotting stallion Henry Clay, foaled in 1827 and got by Andrew Jackson, who was a

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grandson of imported Barb.

The Morgans are the oldest trotting horses; although they have not produced the fastest trotters their descendants deserve the very highest rank as good tempered, hardy roadsters, They are descendants from Justin Morgan who was bred in Vermont, foaled in 1793, and died in 1821. His blood was not positively known, but the Thoroughbred predominated. The popularity of this family is unbounded, and no blood except the Thoroughbred has been so highly esteemed in America. From him have sprung the Black Hawks, the Daniel Lamberts, Knoxes, Goldusts, and many other families.

The trotting horse appears now as a permanently established type. While in order that a horse may trot or pace he must have the proper physical conformation, the adaptation to the gait unless possessed of a nervous or mental habit impelling him to trot or pace, he will not choose and hold to these gaits, but all of these tendencies to a greater or less degree ^{are} capable of acquirement, and once acquired are easily transmitted; one great fault of the American trotter is the want of size. The buyer wants size for many reasons. In the first place it is one of the elements of beauty in a horse, and it takes sufficient size to make him useful as a road horse after his racing days are over.

American Saddle Horse.

The gaited saddle horse is purely and distinctly American, and was formerly produced almost exclusively south of the Mason and Dixon line. He is often referred to as the Kentucky saddle horse, but we must give Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia, and Missouri and other states, due credit for what they have done in developing the present breed, which are educated and accomplished, refined and polished, perfect in symmetry and conformation, high headed, high tailed, arched necked, fiery eyed, armed with muscle, bone and sinew, stamina and endurance.

The saddler is a roadster and a general all purpose horse, but is new to many people in the north west. The saddle horse proper is supposed to go the five gaits, walk, trot, canter, rack, and running walk; fox trot or slow pace, as a rule he has his choice of the last three gaits for the fifth gait.

The Hackney.

The word Hackney has long been used in England as a term synonymous with the word roadster in America. These horses being strong and active, and excellent travelers, were also much used for the saddle, covering in a day's time remarkable distances, the gaits being a trot and a rapid walk. The Hackney has been bred in northern England for over 150 years, and are products of the Thoroughbred and Norfolk County strains of blood. The step of the Hackney is rather short and quick, and good knee action, consequently plenty of freedom and liberty about the shoulders is necessary.

French Coach.

This is the Coach horse of France; the blood of the Thoroughbred largely predominates. The French Government began to improve this breed about 1780, especially for the cavalry service, by the introduction of the Thoroughbreds and the Hunting stallions from England; from that time down to the present, the French Government has continued its paternal supervision of the horse breeding interests of that country. Until recent years French Coach horses had attracted little attention at the hands of American importers and breeders, but later the demand for high stepping carriage teams caused a large number to be imported.

German Coach.

The northwest portion of the German Empire has been known for over two centuries for its highly developed trained trotters, the

German Coachhorses, which have been carefully selected and enhanced by a strain of Thoroughbred blood.

The German like the French Coach owe much of their rapid development to the government which lent encouragements to the breeding interests as early as 1735. There are only a few German Coachers in the United States, but they produce an unusually favorable impression; they mature very early, being fit for work in two years. The horses are nearly all solid colors, bay, brown, or black; the typical coacher should trot very regularly with free knee and hock action; his disposition spirited and intelligent.

The American Carriage Horse notes taken from Geo. M. Rommel.

The idea in breeding an American Carriage horse is to use American animals as foundation stock, which should be selected according to their conformation to the approved type, without regard to pedigree, except along broad lines; the trotting bred horses are to be used exclusively, but it may be found possible to use the blood of other breeds to complete the work.

The ideal for a horse of the Carriage type according to an American market standard, is one standing 16 hands high, and weighing about 1200#, in good condition with a clean cut intelligent head, neatly carried ear, full eye, wide nostril, clean cut throat latch, neck well arched, muscular and of good length, with the windpipe clearly defined; the withers high, body roomy with good depth of chest, good spring of ribs, and depth of flank. Back should be straight, strong and muscular, and closely coupled; tail should be set on high and smartly carried.

Quality and soundness are absolutely essential to the Carriage horse; action is of the utmost importance, and a certain amount of speed is of course desirable. Color does not seem to be a matter of

vital importance, though the markings of a carriage horse are important. If a bay, the horse should have black points, a certain amount of white is permissible, such as a stripe in the face, a white foot or two, or even four white ankles.

The Government has taken up the Carriage horse proposition in Colorado. It is merely to save the Carriage tendency in the trotter to the country. Thus far eighteen mares and one stallion have been purchased. Six of the mares were selected from a band of three-hundred in Wyoming. The original stock was brought from the east about twenty-five years ago, and consisted of standard bred and Morgan horses; the other twelve mares were purchased from M. H. Tichenor & Co., of Chicago, which were of similar breeding to the preceding six. The stallion purchased was one submitted by M. H. Tichenor & Co., Carmon 32917 American Trotting Register, bred by Norman J. Coleman, St. Louis, Mo. Carmon is by Carnegie 8405 a son of Robert McGregor; Carnegie was out of Annie Nutwood by Nutwood, her dam being Annie Watson by Vermont Boy. Carmon's dam was Monitor Maid by Monitor, a son of Merchant by Trogana. The dam of Monitor Maid was Clara C.

The mass of horses that supply the great markets and that do the labor of the world are produced, not at great breeding establishments where every circumstance favorable to the development is provided, but upon the farms of the country, under conditions good, bad and indifferent, but not by the great breeders of the world, but by the general farmers who are primarily grain raisers, who look upon animals as a means of marketing crops. The general farmer will always remain the greatest producer of horses, not only for the reason that white sheep eat more than black ones, but because the genius of the few really great breeders will always find its field in the production of sires and phenomenal individuals, while many of these same breeders

may be classed as farmers, they are truly horsemen. But the general farmer should succeed better than he does as a horseman. He would be helped by a better understanding of his advantages and disadvantages, leading to a producer more in line with his limitations. If a man be not a horseman, with a knowledge of and an eye for nice points, or if his attention be monopolized by other matters, there are two things he can never do. He can never be a successful one of their dams, and he can never be a producer of any class of horses that needs from birth up, that skillful care necessary to the development of track horses of the highest class. This will always be the exclusive business of horse geniuses, and yet no other class of horses has been so extensively produced by the class of farmers.

The farmer has a number of advantages for producing good horses: First, a large amount of cheap feed which puts this industry on the same basis as beef production. Second, abundant range for proper exercise of growing animals. Third, he himself an extensive user of horse labor, the market calls mainly for geldings.

The United States Government should take hold of this method of breeding up stock, not only horses but other stock as well, establish a breeding farm, elect good men to the positions on this farm, have them hold their position for life during good behavior, like our Civil Service men in the employ of the Government today. This would be about the only way they could do because an experiment along the line of stock takes the lifetime of anyone person to obtain definite results.

What would England, France or Germany have in the way of a distinct breed of horses if it had not been for the Government taking hold of this work? While it is true the Government at present is taking her first step in that direction by maintaining a Government

farm in Colorado for the breeding of American Carriage Horses; there seems to be a great future for these horses, in fact, all well bred horses are coming to the front as never before.

The horse raiser should fix his mind definitely upon the class of horses he proposes to produce, choose his stallion accordingly, and depend upon him for that quality that always distinguishes the excellent from the ordinary. He should not forget his own limitations, but remember where the professional horseman must produce the breeder, the racer, and the phenomenal individuals, the production of the great mass is from the farm, in which good profits can always be realized if the farmer keeps his head, and does not produce worthless stuff. Cheap horses are recruited with sufficient rapidity from the ranks above, both by age and accident, and we cannot afford to grow them as a business.