

## SPECIAL DEPARTMENT

EDITED AND CONDUCTED SOLELY BY

JOSEPH CAIRN SIMPSON.

STRIVE FOR THE BEST—I feel that however many times the above side-head may be placed before the readers of papers which advocate live-stock production the space will be well occupied. Though it should be kept standing from one week to another all through the year, and for that matter all the years, the room will not be thrown away. In a line by itself, and without further comment, it would scarcely fail to awaken enquiries and lead to valuable results.

There is no department of stock breeding which is more susceptible of improvement than what is now denominated light harness horses, that appellation covering so many uses that it has a wider range than any other. Primarily, the production of fast trotters and pacers, though in connection therewith such a number of others, that with the exception of race horses, horses for heavy draft, and ponies, it will not be far out of the way to include every variety in domestic life, and also army purposes. A wide range and it would seem that if a person were to endeavor to breed horses which would be adapted for all these uses, he would require an immense establishment, wide areas, stallions and broodmares without number. A valid objection and yet there is a chance to combine several in the object without a big farm or a large stock. Thus fast trotters, roadsters, carriage horses, animals for use on the farm, business horses, and even saddlers may be looked for from the same sires and a few dams, if these have been judiciously chosen. As an illustration let us suppose that a person engaging in breeding horses which have a good chance to prove fast trotters, and failing in that will be of a stamp which will fill some of the purposes above mentioned, and that so well as to return a good profit on the investment. That the intention is to breed on a moderate scale though sufficiently large to keep a stallion. The first thing will be to select a sire and in securing that important part of the equipment the greatest care should be observed. Now that there has been such a drop in the price of stallions, a suitable horse can be obtained for a sum which will come within the limits I have marked, viz., an amount which will not be so great that the venture will give reasonable hopes of being a paying one, if very fast trotters do not result. The first requirement would be individual excellence. High form, fair size, not less than 15½ hands, good color, brown or bay for choice, dark chestnut after these, solid color though a star and one or two white feet would not disqualify: in these respects a horse which if castrated, would exactly "fill the bill" for a premium carriage horse, or a roadster for a gentleman to drive.

The minimum weight, when carrying a good coating of flesh, eleven hundred pounds, with plenty of range and style. High form means that there should be good points all through and harmony of proportion, tersely stated a handsome horse, exciting general admiration as well as favorable criticism from experts. The more trotting speed the more desirable the animal possessing the higher rate if not deficient in other particulars, but that should not be considered equivalent to more important considerations. If the horse had been trained for any length of time 2:30 would be the slowest rate approved, though action should be held of more importance, and given preference over one which was ten or fifteen seconds faster if that requirement were inferior to the standard selected. While both parents influence the progeny I am of the opinion that the male, in a majority of cases, has the greatest effect on the action and therefore while seeking for the best on both sides, it would be an indispensable requirement in the stallion, nearly as important as form, one of the vital points in making a choice. There are various opinions regarding action and that which one may approve another condemn. There is one feature, however, which will receive general approbation, that being "square trotting." People differ in detail, argue heartily in regard to knee and hock action, long and short stride, but the nearest I ever heard faulty approved, was some thirty years, when the speaker, it was simply John Turner, before the title of General was conferred, when he said of a mare with anything but a square-gait trot he would buy her at a fair figure. But he gave me the information that he had known such to make fast trotters when the fault was remedied, and had a good deal of confidence in working a cure on her. He bought her the winter following, I believe, but as she was only known to me as the "Captain Spalding mare," her subsequent history is beyond my knowledge.

Even granting that a "foul-gaited" trotter can be developed into one with speed enough to win money it would be a serious objection to a stallion, especially as a prospective sire of such horses as I have in my mind, and hence good natural action, the kind which does not require long schooling to perfect, or the use of any of the various appliances now so much in vogue, to remedy, should be the choice. While not rating hoots among reprehensible artificial appliances for so far as the present knowledge of training fast trotters goes, they are indispensable adjuncts in the course of the education of fast trotters, and there is little question that the great improvement in these equipments in the past twenty years has had a good deal to do with the wonderful progress that was made under like conditions.

Before the era of kite-shaped tracks, small wheels and air-filled tires is what is meant by like conditions, and to improved guards against injury a due portion of the praise must be given for the lowering of records prior to these later aids.

For very fast trotting and that kept up from the beginning to the ending of a mile the action of Arion could scarcely be improved. Just enough to give a good stride without any greater effort of the muscles than was necessary to accomplish the result. Fore foot striking the ground at its furthest reach, neither dwelling or coming back at the critical moment. Fore and hind feet in unison in as regular cadence as the beating of a pendulum adjusted to a length which would correspond to the time of the stroke. Like a majority of the Electioneers the feet are carried true and straight without swing, gracefully and easily, however high the speed. But a one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollar horse, or even, as the times now are, a ten thousand horse, are too expensive for this imaginary stock farm, unless the fees for outside mares would pay for a portion of the investment and therefore it is useless to consider that class in this connection. Still Arion can be used for an illustration and there is little question that some

people will be horrified, not a few amazed, when I say that for all the perfection of action, undeniable good breeding and high form, were the choice between a counterpart of the champion two-year-old which could trot a mile in 2:30 and five or a few more seconds slower, both having the same amount of training, my preference would be for the slower, provided however, that he had the good points which the other possessed and others better adapted for the production of one class of stock which is relied upon to carry the place along. For instance, I find this paragraph "going the rounds":

## A RARE KIND OF HORSE.

Place \$1,000 in the hands of an intelligent buyer, says a writer and tell him to secure a horse for you standing 16 hands, weighing about 1,100 pounds, standard color, handsome and stylish, good disposition and fearless, with courage, endurance and action that will allow him to road naturally twelve miles an hour and pull you, with a companion, down the road better than a 2:50 gait, and your buyer, if an honest man, will bring you back your money and say it is impossible to find such a horse. Such a horse is the gentleman's ideal road horse, a type for which there is an enormous demand and no apparent supply.

The hitch-up would have been in better shape to put in the lead of the string, the horse on which the greatest dependence was put to square the accounts. Then apparent incongruities would be reconciled, and a better understanding of the scheme I have in view. And then, too, in place of a short essay or two, which I supposed was only necessary to explain the position, the questions involved are of so much importance that several will be required to elucidate them satisfactorily.

One would naturally suppose that the stallion would be the first thing to secure as the most important actor in the equine drama, and it is sure that he will be of great consequence, though with others not far, if at all, behind. In fact, there will be so many prominent figures in the play, every one of them demanding attention, that the only way to present them so that they can display their proper character, will be to present an act weekly, or it may be that one scene will occupy the whole of the stage for that representation, though I hope that in these days, when breeders are harassed to a greater degree than they have endured in bygone years, the play may be instructive and perhaps pleasing.

Therefore, the *dramatis personae* will include *homo* and *equus* the main scene will be the farm—I like that word better than ranch—the fields, paddocks, buildings, track and kindergarten, with quite a collection of minor adjuncts, thoroughly indispensable in a well managed place.

SAN FRANCISCO TURF GUIDE.—In these days when the study of form enters so largely into the pleasures of race-goers, the little hook which bears the above title is almost indispensable. Form is a word of various meanings when applied to horses, and the fashionable world has caught the idea, and got one sensible thing, at least, mixed up with the "heap" of frivolities which are the delight of the four hundred. In this case it means the form shown in races—public form is the technical phrase—and hence when the performances of the 365 horses which are grouped in the pamphlet are tabulated so that the position of each can be noted for every eighth from start to finish, there is good data for the calculation. The knowledge gained by careful study is far superior to "tips," which are given for a consideration, though my advice is not to place too much dependence on either, when it comes to wagering on races. Luck, with a big L, is the main dependence, though good fortune and knowledge are trustier combinations than either alone. The book, however, is valuable apart from speculation. There is a fund of information conveniently reached which would entail a great deal of labor to obtain it from general sources. A few minutes were all that were needed for me to find data on a question that I was interested in securing, and that is only one item of many.

There was a good deal of merriment among the knights of the reportorial pencil (that is to distinguish them from the "pencilers") over my backing a colt, of whom I knew nothing, for the sole reason that I owned his dam a good many years ago. He won, so that sentiment proved to be a successful tip on that occasion. But that was not the only guide. She was a rare-good-one at the distance her son was to accomplish. Still sentiment may lead to luck, and had that been the prompter support of the old stock would have been fairly remunerative. With the help of the San Francisco Turf Guide in the 290 races tabulated, there are 39 races won by horses which had a strain of the blood I had owned. Either sire or dam, or grandsire or grandam, further removes were not considered, and for the few horses which they represent it must be admitted a good showing. It will not occupy much time, with the help of the Turf Guide, to make out a full history, the number of starters, races run, etc. Since the races which are published, in that there was one day when the "old stock" won four of the five races divided, which is ungod good, and exceedingly gratifying to a person who cherishes the memory of horses which have been in the family with great fondness.

JACK GAMBIL.—"Billy L., in that mile took a record of 2:18½. He was raised at Seward, Neb., and is a son of Platte, by Gustavus, dam by Jack Gamble, a registered thoroughbred horse." That is part of a paragraph in Western Resources and recalls a horse which I saw run in St. Louis. As he was named after our old friend who died a few weeks ago, and he spelled his name Gambil that should be the orthography of the son of Wagner and Helen Faucit, by imp. Tranby. There was another Jack Gamble, by imp. Glencoe and he too, probably took his name from the same man. Both are spelled in the Stud Book Gamble, and as among many of the anecdotes the death of the old pioneer has evoked, is one bearing on the orthography of the surname it is difficult to say authoritatively which is correct.

Many years ago Col. Jack was on a visit to New York, and when he stepped up to the desk he requested the clerk to enter on the register Col. A. J. Gambil, California. "How do you spell it?" was the response, and the reply "You have got me there, Sonny. Spell it any way you please." The Wagner horse must have been the sire of the dam of Billy D. inasmuch as the Glencoe was debarred from having progeny.

And that is a reminder of the Mrs. Partingtons of a man, who unlike Col. Jack, was inclined to pose as a man of learning, though he could beat him easily in misapplying words. Talking of a man who had few good qualities he said: "That he could have a seat in the legislation if he chose, and in

that case would have a law passed that would stop all such men from perpetrating their posterity in the country." Had he meant what he said in place of the intention to say perpetuate it would have been a good stroke of wit, but the outburst of laughter that followed might have convinced him that the mirth was too hoisterous for even a good joke.

For a fund of solid sense and genteel behavior outside of the luck of education, Col. Jack was far above the average run of men. He had seen the world from many points of view and one of his mental calibre in the early days of California, was in a school which was a potent educator. At times it seemed as though he "put on" a part of his ignorance of the vernacular, as another anecdote will indicate. A Southern Californian was extolling the country for horse-breeding, and I had raised the Colonel's ire by saying that it in time would rival the best blue-grass region of Kentucky and Tennessee. That was my first summer in California, having visited the Star and Garter with a company from San Francisco. At a former visit I had acquired his friendship by admitting that Betsy Malone was at the head of the heap and Miss Foote the greatest racer of her size that ever was foaled. More than that I brought to California two great-grandsons and one granddaughter of the mare which had won twenty-one races, nearly all of them at long distances, the only race she lost owing to a fall. Then I was acquainted with many of his old friends in the South and Southwest and could tell him of the running of his namesake, "as game as a pebble" if not so speedy as some of the others. "The grandest quality in man or horse" was his answer, "and I had horses of the genuine old racing stock in my stage that would swim the Mississippi with a Concord coach behind them, or jerk it across breaks in a corduroy road that would swamp a hull-team".

The lower country man claimed that alfalfa was the best of all green feed for racehorses, far superior to blue-grass. "Better than blue-grass!" roared Col. Jack; "better than Tennessee blue-grass!" in louder tones, "your — Asphaltum pastures are no more to be compared to that than a gourd vine to a hickory cut on the Hermitage." While the laughter was at its height he turned to me and in an under tone, "I had him there on that asphaltum."

When the Duchess of Norfolk was running on the Bay District Col. Jack was there and I told him she was of the Betsy Malone tribe, through Charmer, which he also knew very well. When Emperor of Norfolk, The Czar, El Rio Rey and Yo Tamhien followed in such a marvellous succession of great racehorses he was overjoyed, and only a short time before his death I met him on Bush street, and gave him a history of my late journey to Nevada, and that the last of the family, so far as could be told from looks, was the best. "Nothing like that old Tennessee blood," was his reply, "and when it runs back to the greatest of the band, like thirty-year-old Tennessee whiskey, the flavor is never lost."

A GOOD MANY LEFT.—Western Resources publishes a paragraph that Salisbury, Hickok, Goldsmith and Kelly "will bring across the Rockies about all the good campaigners on the Pacific Coast." While the stars of the first magnitude will make for the land of the Rising Sun, accompanying them will be some which could find plenty of business at home. The home army of pacers need not fear any opponents, and were the best of the Eastern-bred, and the cracks from this coast, which have gained renown in the East, to join in the battles here they would realize that they had a good fight. Apart from Hulda and Directum, McKinney, Klamath Ottinger and others would try the mettle of the best of the crusaders, and then there are some dark ones which are likely to be lively disputants before the season of 1894 comes to an end.

When the entries for the fall meeting of the P. C. T. H. B. A. are published (this is written the day before closing), it will be plainly shown that there is no lack of good horses which will stay at home.

A GOOD RULE.—I think that it was "Iconclast" who proposed that when a converted pacer was entered in trotting races having time as the standard of eligibility, that five seconds be added to his pacing record and that made his gauge. Whoever was the originator the idea is sound, and rule to that effect be a valuable addition to the code. The converse was also proposed than when a trotter was changed, five seconds should be taken off his record and that is also fair. It is certainly not fair to allow a horse that has started in many races won in fast time, an old campaigner, perhaps, to come into the green class merely from having changed from one of the harness gaits to the other. The plan mentioned above will remedy the end without doing injustice.

JOSEPH CAIRN SIMPSON.

EYRAUD, by Eros, out of Whip, by Whippleton is to be sold at H. W. Crabb's sale. "He is the fastest colt of his age ever handled in Napa county," is the verdict of all who have seen him.

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