

Quality in Horses

By Prof. E. J. Iddings

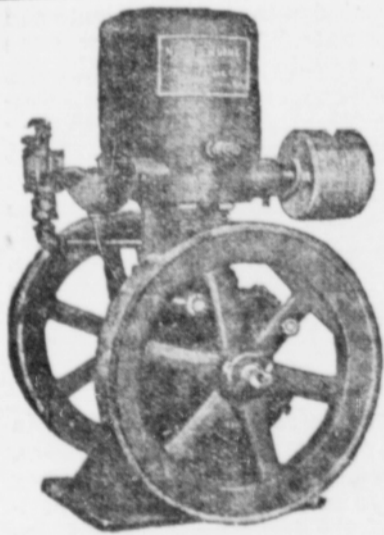
THE ANATOMY of the horse affords both the student and the breeder a more complicated field of investigation than that offered by any other domestic animal. Not only does the usefulness of the horse directly depend upon certain intricacies of conformation, but in addition there must be taken into account, in passing judgment upon him, his disposition and his intelligence, in which as compared with other farm animals he ranks nearest man. Finally, we want to know, just as we do in the case of a binder, mower, or automobile, the kind of material that has entered into the make-up of his various parts.

The interpretations generally given to the word "quality" are many and varied. Many have the idea that quality in livestock is somewhat the same as purity of breeding. Others use the word in describing the excellence of a group. According to this usage, by no means uncommon, a herd of animals of outstanding average individuality would be spoken of as having quality or being a herd of quality. The writer has frequently heard the term used by swine breeders who claim quality for their herds according to the usage indicated above. Other credit certain blood lines with the power of carrying quality, the idea to be conveyed being rather indefinite, but largely concerned with individual excellence. Another view commonly held is that quality has to do largely with over-finesness and delicacy.

All of the above carry a measure of the correct definition, but all of them are in many ways far from the truth. The phrase used in our introductory paragraph, "kind of material that has entered into the make-up of the various parts," is a rough, but correct statement as to the real meaning of quality. Johnstone in his "Horse Book," calls quality "Refinement of Fiber." If we secure soft, silky texture of feather in some breeds, it is because the cellular structure of the hair is refined. Quality of cannon, greatly sought for in all breeds of horses, comes with dense cellular structure and is evidenced by flinty bone, tendons well detached and freedom in all mobile parts from any tendency to roughness and meatiness. In other words, the best possible material and arrangement of the same is found, giving refinement in all tissues concerned in the structure of the part.

A foot of quality, essential in our best horses, is one of the fine cellular structure, lending hardness, denseness and toughness and capacity to endure wear and service.

The draft breeds differ much in



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weight, kind of feet and legs, action and quality and other essential features of animal conformation and function. Those of most bulky farm are as a rule likely to lack most in quality. Those strongly characterized by and highly commended for quality frequently and in fact more often than otherwise, have compensating weaknesses in another direction. The Clydesdale is the drafter of outstanding finish and quality as indicated by a clean cut head, graceful set of neck and shoulders, stylish outlines, flat, cordy legs and dense and tough structure of hoof. Many of the same things can be said of the Percheron. The compensating weaknesses frequently charged against these two breeds need not be here discussed.

The Belgian and the Shire are heavier, coarser breeds, excelling on the average in weight and substance, but with high quality frequently lacking. The American trade, however, is demanding more finish, more style and action in the breeds that are commonly faulted in this respect, and the breeders are catering to this demand. One of the outstanding prize winning Shires mares in the Northwest this year was one of medium weight, with flashy action and so flat and clean in her cannons and pasterns that many good horsemen said of her that she had a "Clydesdale bottom." Quality alone in this mare entitled her to consideration in any show ring. She was beaten but once during the season, and then had to go below a heavier, thicker, deeper and larger boned mare. The heavier mare in this case had to carry lots of quality in addition to her bulk and muscling or she could not have won in a close decision over the flash and finish of her clean legged rival.

The biggest question in the draft horse world today is that of weight versus quality.

COST OF SHOWING AT SAN FRANCISCO.

EXHIBITORS of livestock at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition at San Francisco next year will get exceptionally good treatment from the transportation companies. An agreement between the exposition management and the Transcontinental Freight Bureau provides that all animals shipped from the latter's territory for exhibition purposes and on which full freight has been paid shall be returned free of charge over the same routes. If the animals are sold while at San Francisco a refund of 25 per cent of the freight paid will be made to the exhibitor.

If animals are concentrated into train loads of ten cars or more each at some central point they will be run through to San Francisco on a special schedule under supervision of the transportation department of the exposition.

In order to protect the exhibitors of livestock and poultry from extortionate charges for feed the managers of the livestock department have arranged to supply all the feed, including silage, cabbage and roots. An estimate shows that the cost of keeping different animals for a month will be about as follows:

Sheep.....	\$ 5.00
Hogs.....	5.00
Beef cattle.....	10.00
Dairy cows in milk.....	10.00
Horses.....	12.50
Poultry.....	.20
Bedding for horses and cattle, a day.....	.80

These approximate figures will give the prospective exhibitor a basis for estimating very closely the expense necessary to make a show at San Francisco.

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secured. From the well-lighted, clean barn, clean and safer milk is secured. Not only is the barn cleaner and the cows cleaner in a well-lighted barn, but the cows are more healthy as well.

Dairy men can well adopt the sanitary suggestion of the United States dairy division in this matter. That suggestion is, "At least four square feet of window glass per cow." Window glass is almost as cheap as lumber in its first cost. No dairyman can afford to neglect to use plenty of it. Glass in the barn should be placed where it will do the most good. The south side of the barn is to be preferred and next to it the east or west side.

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