

# VERMONT FARMER

ROYAL CUMMINGS, Proprietor.  
T. H. HOSKINS, M. D., Editor.

NEWPORT, SATURDAY, JULY 15, 1871.

VOL. I, No. 32.  
Terms, \$1.00 per Annum.

## Vermont Farmer

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY  
AT NEWPORT, ORLEANS COUNTY, VT.

ROYAL CUMMINGS, PROPRIETOR,  
T. H. HOSKINS, M. D., EDITOR.

TERMS:—One dollar per annum, payable in advance. All papers discontinued when the time paid for expires.

Advertisements inserted for 50 cents per inch, first insertion; 25 cents per inch, each subsequent insertion. Twelve lines of this size type make an inch.

When a blue cross is made against this paragraph it denotes that the subscription expires the next week. We shall be pleased to have it renewed, and give thus much notice in order that the subscriber need not miss any numbers.

### WHAT BREED OF HORSES SHALL WE USE?

A Paper read before the State Board of Agriculture, at Brandon, June 8, 1871.

BY COL. E. S. STOWELL, OF CORNWALL.

When I received the invitation of your Secretary to prepare a paper to be read at this meeting, I thought for several seemingly valid reasons that I could not accept it, that it was out of my line to even attempt written essays, and with the hurry of the season upon me, was not to be thought of.

But I did think of it, and with second thoughts came the conviction that it would be ungenerous shrinking from known and presented duty to refuse my mite, though small, towards the advancement of practical agriculture and stock breeding in Vermont; the more when gentlemen whose interests did not seem to ally them so intimately to the business as did mine, were willing to devote their time and thoughts to its proper advancement and support. I consented, therefore, to write, but what should be my subject?

I presume that the Committee of Arrangements have given invitations to men in different branches of agriculture, stock raising, &c., with a view to getting a variety, and that probably one of my two specialties would be acceptable from me. But which? Would it be that the poor despised slaughtered Merino sheep, that so many thousands have hated bad enough to kick, and would even go out of their way to do it, (I don't know why unless the sheep bit them,) had, suddenly, under an awakening sense that just one sheep too much had been killed, that just one wool skin too many (with its three year's growth of wool) had been imported, (fleeces taken in that way cannot be duplicated,) and that there was a probable lack of raw material for textile fabrics in America, not alone, but in South America, in Australia and in Continental Europe besides;—could it be, I say, that under these influences the Merino sheep had arisen in the scale of valuations until the people again wanted to hear what their special lovers and breeders, and may I not say without egotism, improvers, thought of their prospects? Nay, not yet. Large bodies move slowly, and the old smarts are not yet healed; only a few discern the light in the east, the sure forerunner of the day, and the people are not quite ready to hear sheep presented again.

Ah well! then it must be somebody has told somebody else that I love horses. I do, Mr. President. I do, my friends. The noblest animals of God's creation! His second

best gift to man! And I always have, (I pity the man who don't,) and I have always made them, their history and their breeding, a special study, and I propose to give you in this paper my views of what kind of horses our farmers of Vermont should breed for most and surest profit, and how under existing circumstances to secure them. Perhaps I can make myself best understood by first using the negative, and stating what we ought not, because we can't afford to breed.

1. We can't afford to breed the class of horses we have been breeding—Morgans, Black Hawks, French or whatever blood they may be, of from fourteen to fifteen hands in height, and weighing from 800 to 900 pounds, for the reason that they will cost the grower at four or five years of age more than they will bring in any market available to us. I estimate it will cost \$50 per year to grow colts as they should be grown, at the least, and we all know that from \$150 to \$200 is a good average price for this class, and they are but little sought for at that. Horse buyers in Vermont are, and have been for several years, like angel visits few and far between, not because of lack of buyers, but because we have not the class of horses that the market demands. Our horses are too small and too light boned, and too much pinched up.

2. We can't afford to raise the heavy draft horse, or the Suffolk Punch, Percheron, Norman, &c., for the reason that the richer fields of the west can grow them so much faster and cheaper than ours, that we shall find ourselves perpetually behind and undersold. They require rich feed and in unlimited quantities—whereas our Vermont fields are sometimes limited in their supply. However, the demand for such horses is good and prices fair, and to western growers undoubtedly of slow and sure profit.

3. We can't as farmers afford to breed the small trotting horse. This statement I am aware will meet with some questionings, but I speak advisedly and believe the experience of many thousands of horse breeders, reluctant as they may be to admit it, is proof. The Rev. Mr. Gurney of Maine says that although it is claimed that the breeding of trotting horses distinctively as a source of profit in Maine is a failure, yet when speed is connected with other qualities for general use and taste, such as size, color, style, &c., there is no doubt about its value and the profitability of the business of breeding horses. (This is not strictly a literal quotation, perhaps near enough to get the idea.) The percentage of trotters is exceedingly small even in the best of families, although it is evidently increasing. Some writers say five per cent, others less, make trotters of special value; at the best 5 trotters, 95 not trotters in the hundred. The breeding of the five is remunerative to the breeder, if he is at the same time horseman enough to develop his colts and show them to advantage, otherwise some lucky dealer gets the profit of the breeding in the fast colts, for as it has been previously shown, small horses without speed cannot be bred with profit, and he that bears the labor and expense with hope of gain finds in the end nothing but loss, except the consolation that he has raised a good horse and a trotter.

These are some of the negatives, perhaps sufficient for the occasion—the darker shades of the picture. Are there no light ones? I believe there are, gentlemen. A good sized, rangy, stylish, open gaited and enduring horse of a good color, bay for instance, from 15½ to 16 hands high, weighing 1000 to 1150 pounds, will always bring a good price, and can just as well be bred and bred fast as smaller sizes and indifferent colors.

I was taught in my early days that the true theory of breeding was to cross a large rooky, strong boned, coarse mare with a smooth, stylish, trappy little horse. Mr. Bonner's mare Peerless by American Star from a Messenger mare, Mr. Smith's mare Nonesuch by Lambert from Mr. Baldwin's Black Hawk

and Henry mare are examples, and in the days of Black Hawk that system gave very satisfactory results and I have no doubt a more uniform class of horses than if bred the other way. We recall some few thus bred of excellent stamina and generous proportions, as Plato, Addison, Pathfinder, Rockwood horse and his renowned son Gen. Knox among stallions; Belle of Saratoga, Lady Sherman, Lady Litchfield, and Boston Queen among mares. Black Hawk found many good mares in Vermont, descendants of Hambletonian, Aurelius, Henry, St. Charles, Liberty, &c., and these were their produce and the product set all the world agog; for the beauty, symmetry and general usefulness of Black Hawks bred from such mares was a wonder to all; but as those old mares have passed away and the stock of Black Hawk interbred or bred to smaller Morgans or French, results have been to decrease size and bone, and spoil the business and our reputation, fastening upon us a small sized, chubby, rugged, little horse to be sure, but degenerated in size and without the power of recuperation, unless by slow and tedious process of careful and discriminating selections of proper animals of the species for long series of years; too long, I think, for Yankee patience to endure. With sheep in flocks of hundreds, ten years experience is more than a lifetime with the number of mares that we individually are able to keep. My experience in sheep has taught me that *likes don't produce like exactly*, but intensify characteristics and especially peculiarities. Now then if we breed small horses the product is smaller. The Mexican mustang and the Indian pony are examples of continued degeneration in size. These small, hardy little fellows are descended no doubt from those horses of Cortez considered by the Aztecs half man and real Centaurs, and there is no reason to believe but they were of full proportion when imported, for how else could they have carried the mailed warrior and in addition their own stout covering?

If breeders would provide themselves with such mares as were in the days of Black Hawk, small fast stallions would produce equally good and better stock than was produced then. But will they? Is it not the tendency of nearly all to breed from what they have, especially if rendered unserviceable by hard work or strains, even if small? I think it is, and you no doubt agree with me, and it is not so very destructive after all as we have sometimes thought, if care is used not to breed from horses having hereditary ailments, provided a judicious choice of stallion is made, for it is no doubt true the close built, sound, swelled muscled little Black Hawk or Morgan horses, have as much true stamina as any in the world. I remember the remark of a gentleman last summer, one evidently traveled and observant, and withal a true lover of the horse. Sitting upon the Addison House steps, in Middlebury, on a public occasion, he watched the teams come in from the country. Looking up, he says: "No where have I ever seen horses come into a town hitched to heavy buggies with two, three and even four loaded in, that would take their loads up such a hill as that, at such a rate of speed without hitching, bobbing or jumping; and those sturdy little fellows don't seem to know that they have any load behind them at all. These are qualities, gentlemen, that we cannot afford to lose, and it is not necessary we should. In the last few years there has been a growing opinion in the minds of the most intelligent horse breeders of our land, that the old theory of large female, small male, though good in practice must give place in a measure to the absolute facts as they are developed from day to day and year to year; that the fastest and best horses, those showing the best staying and enduring qualities, are being produced by breeding the small, fine boned, enduring,

cheerful, courageous female to the coarse boned, larger sized, heavy trotting horse; the produce taking their bottom, their nerve, and their indomitable courage from the dam, and their square trotting, long, low, sweeping stride from the sire.

Such has been the result in Kentucky from crossing that coarse old horse, Mambrino Chief, with their fine boned thoroughbreds, and Lady Thorn, Mambrino Pilot, Bay Chief, Bold Chief, Ericson, Woodburn Pilot, Claybrino (two of our Stock Farm horses,) and many others well known to horsemen are the products. Mambrino Bertie just purchased by Mr. Bonner, that prince of horse buyers, trotted last year, a two-year-old, in 2:40½. Such has often been the result, in Orange County, N. Y., only more so, crossing Rysdyk's Hambletonian, that double son of old Messenger, and who doubts but he is a coarse horse, if any, let them look at this his faithful likeness, [showing print] and note his big head, long ears, high hip and tail, and heavy boned, crooked and almost curby jointed leg, and be convinced.

This horse, crossed with American Star mares, that fine old descendant of the four miler Henry, has produced as many, perhaps more exceedingly fast, staying horses than any other. Hiram Woodruff says, "the Messenger cross gives the Stars size, strength, and bone, and counteracts their hereditary tendency to contraction of the feet." We may say that any cross that would produce a Dexter, George Wilkes, Major Winfield, Aberdeen, Startle, Socrates, and so on to almost unlimited numbers, was a good one; but when we consider that these crosses not only give us large a per cent. of fast trotters as any other, but also to the every day breeder a sure thing in size, style and good, slashing, open gait, so that led out at four years old to the halter by any farmer's lad that could run fast enough they would easily bring highly remunerative prices to the breeder, not only for the five in a hundred, but for the 95 withal. We have reached the point long aimed at, a class of horses in which each and every one will be worth all he costs. A class of fast horses suitable for the road in light or heavy hitch, for the wagon or the plow. Who does not know that for every sixteen hand bay colt, of good form and gait at four or five years of age, there will be plenty of purchasers at from \$300 to \$500 each? And has not the experience of gentlemen that have bred thoroughbreds to Abdallah and Mambrino Chief in Kentucky, American Stars to Abdallah and his renowned son Rysdyk's Hambletonian in Orange County, N. Y., demonstrated the fact that the greatest and best results may be expected from thus breeding the light, fine, cheerful, staying, Black Hawk Morgan or Ethan Allen mare, to the larger, coarser Messenger or Bashaw (which is almost identical, as the dam of young Bashaw the progenitor of all the race of Bashaw trotters was a Messenger mare,) stallion, or indeed to any coarser trotting stallion of good blood and action, as is shown by many later performance? Even this spring I have in mind two prominent examples. Thomas Jefferson, by the larger, coarser, trotting horse Toronto Chief, dam Gipsy Queen a fine thoroughbred Glencoe and Wagner mare is thought to be the most promising young stallion in America, winning every race he started for last season, and but a few days since at Fleetwood in 27, 28½ and 29, and at the same meeting a six year old mare Heathcubloom, by Duke of Wellington, a large, coarse Messenger horse, out of a small thoroughbred mare called Heathcubloom owned by Mr. Griffin of Middletown, Ct. (I have often seen her and many of her colts at his farm.) This mare at her first appearance in the three minute class wins in 2:33 and was sold for \$10,000.

These examples I have presented to show that we in Vermont, with our sturdy, little mares can hope to produce by breeding to