

MOORE'S RURAL NEW-YORKER

AGRICULTURE HORTICULTURE RURAL LIFE EXCELSIOR LITERATURE SCIENCE ARTS NEWS

TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.]

"PROGRESS AND IMPROVEMENT."

[SINGLE NO. FOUR CENTS.

VOL. XII. NO. 14.]

ROCHESTER, N. Y.,—FOR THE WEEK ENDING SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 1861.

{WHOLE NO. 586.

THE HORSE CONGRESS.

In these latter days, when the powers abroad desire to put in practice a new dogma in the science of government, an International Congress is called, and the idea promulgated; when two or more of these same nations, adopting the bayonet as their platform of principles, have depleted the treasury, destroyed the national credit, carried sorrow and desolation to the hearts and firesides of thousands, and wish for a dignified mode of backing out, then a Peace Congress is sought as the means of exit. "Brother Jonathan," however, has hitherto reversed this order of affairs. Our doctrines were born, bred, and sent out to the conflict of thought by the "sovereign people," and when anxious for a "wordy war," the Representatives gathered in the city of "magnificent distances," and sounded the slogan. It has become fashionable to hold meetings with this special designation upon matters, important or unimportant, (the latest application has a Southern prefix,) and as we "may as well be out of the world as out of fashion," we bring before RURAL readers one worthy of scrutiny and careful consideration.—A Horse Congress, with Delegates from the Four Quarters of the Globe.

The central figure, at the upper portion of the engraving, is a true representative of the *Shetland* race, unquestionably the most remarkable of all European ponies. These are to be found in all the northern Scottish isles, but the most diminutive, and at the same time the most perfect, are natives of the extreme northern isles of Yell and Unst. The average height of the Shetlander is nine or ten hands, and none are considered truly bred which exceed eleven hands,—three feet eight inches. Many are found which do not exceed thirty or thirty-two inches, and are, consequently, inferior in size to some of the largest Newfoundland dogs. The hardiness of these little fellows is remarkable. HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT says, "out of many hundreds which we have seen,—sometimes in droves of fifty or sixty at a time, traveling down from their native moors and mountains, the raggedest, rustiest, most comical-looking little quadrupeds ever eye dwelt upon, driven by a gigantic six-foot Highlander, perched upon the back, perhaps, of the smallest of the number,—we never saw a lame Shetlander." In their native isles they run as wild as the sheep, never herded, sheltered, or fed; picking up a livelihood from the tender shoots of the heather, and the coarse grasses growing among it. Even when domesticated they fare but little better. Oats are unknown to them, and a few bundles of meadow-hay, or barley straw, is a perfect banquet. Their speed is not great, but they will cover considerable ground under a load of 150 to 200 pounds. With a great hulking Highlander on his back,—apparently better fitted to carry the pony, than the pony to carry him,—he will accomplish fifty miles between sunrise and sunset. The colors of the Shetlanders are generally black, dark brown, and a sort of rust-colored sorrel. Whites and grays are exceedingly rare, and blacks are considered the best of the race.

The *Scotch Pony* is first cousin to the gentleman we have just described, and is his neighbor, on the left of our engraving. This pony is an enlarged pattern of the Shetlander. He preserves the general form, the close barrel, strong loins, stocky air and build, but he has a larger neck, higher withers, and finer hair in the mane and tail. His ordinary height is from eleven to thirteen hands. The Scotch pony is the

second step to an English boy's education in the art of horsemanship, as they often possess a fair turn of speed, can leap very cleverly, have all the endurance, with greater strength, greater quickness, and

more showy action, than their smaller countrymen. The *vis a vis* of our Scotch friend is a genuine *Canadian*, as his countenance readily indicates. In this country they are often classed among the pony

trough-bred, is undoubtedly of French Norman origin. His characteristics are a head rather large, but lean, bony, and well formed; very broad forehead, ears well apart, and carried loftily; small, clear eye, and courageous aspect; bold, up-

standing, but thick crest; a broad, full chest, and a strong shoulder; a stout, strongly-framed barrel, (somewhat flatsided is very apt to be a fault in this point); excellent loins; muscular thighs; flat-boned legs; and feet, for toughness and hardiness, not to be equaled. Immunity from disease of the legs and feet, is a marked quality in the French Canadian, even when ill-groomed, ill-shod, and subject to every hardship. An intelligent writer, well versed in the peculiarities of this particular race, states that "there are numbers of horses in Canada which, under a mass of shaggy hair, never trimmed, and rarely cleaned or dried, possess dry, sinewy legs, on which the severest service never raise a wind-gall. The prevailing color of the Canadian is black; next, rich dark brown. When true-bred, they are remarkable for the great volume of their manes and tails, with the wavy texture of the hairs composing them; for the shaggy coating of their back shews nearly to the knee, and of their fetlocks. From fourteen to fourteen and a half hands is their usual size. Their powers of endurance are excellent, for though not reckoned speedy, they will travel fifty miles daily for a considerable period."

Notwithstanding the repute in which Canadian horses are held by those best calculated to judge of their merits, it is a remarkable fact that, even in these days of agricultural progress, no systematic attempts have been made to improve this breed in a pure form. Quite a number of experiments by crossing have been carried through, and with great success. The authority we have heretofore quoted, gives it as his opinion that "no race probably is more susceptible of direct improvement than this; and, as their excellence is universally acknowledged, both as the small, poor farmer's working and draught horse, for which they are adapted above all American breeds, and as brood mares, from which to raise a highly improved and useful and general working roadster, by breeding them to thorough-breds, it is evident that this is an end most devoutly to be wished."

The central figure represents the *Oriental* blood of the desert, originating, it is thought, in the mixture of the various countries to which the horse in its purest form has, from time immemorial, been indigenous. To this breed of horses are the English indebted for the unrivalled excellence of their racers, which are the offspring of a judicious cross of the Orientals. The countries from which an Oriental strain of blood is obtainable, are Arabia, Syria, Persia, Turkistan, the Barbary States, Nubia, and Abyssinia. The form of the Arabian will not please every judge of the horse, but none will deny the beauty of the head. Broad and square forehead, short and fine muzzle, prominent and brilliant eye, small ears, and the beautiful course of the veins, always characterize the head of the Arabian horse. The shoulder, in this breed, is generally unexcelled. The withers are high, the shoulder-blade inclined backward, and so nicely adjusted that in descending a hill the edge never ruffles the skin. The body is considered light, and chest narrow, but behind the arms the barrel swells out, leaving sufficient room for the lungs. The Arabian is seldom more than fourteen hands two inches in height.

Just below the Arabian we have, on the left, the *Hunter* or *Trotter*, and on the right the



SCOTCH PONY.
THE HUNTER, OR TROTTER.
FARMER'S BROOD MARE.

SHETLAND PONY.
ARABIAN.

CANADIAN.
THOROUGH-BRED.
DRAUGHT HORSE—CLYDESDALE.

