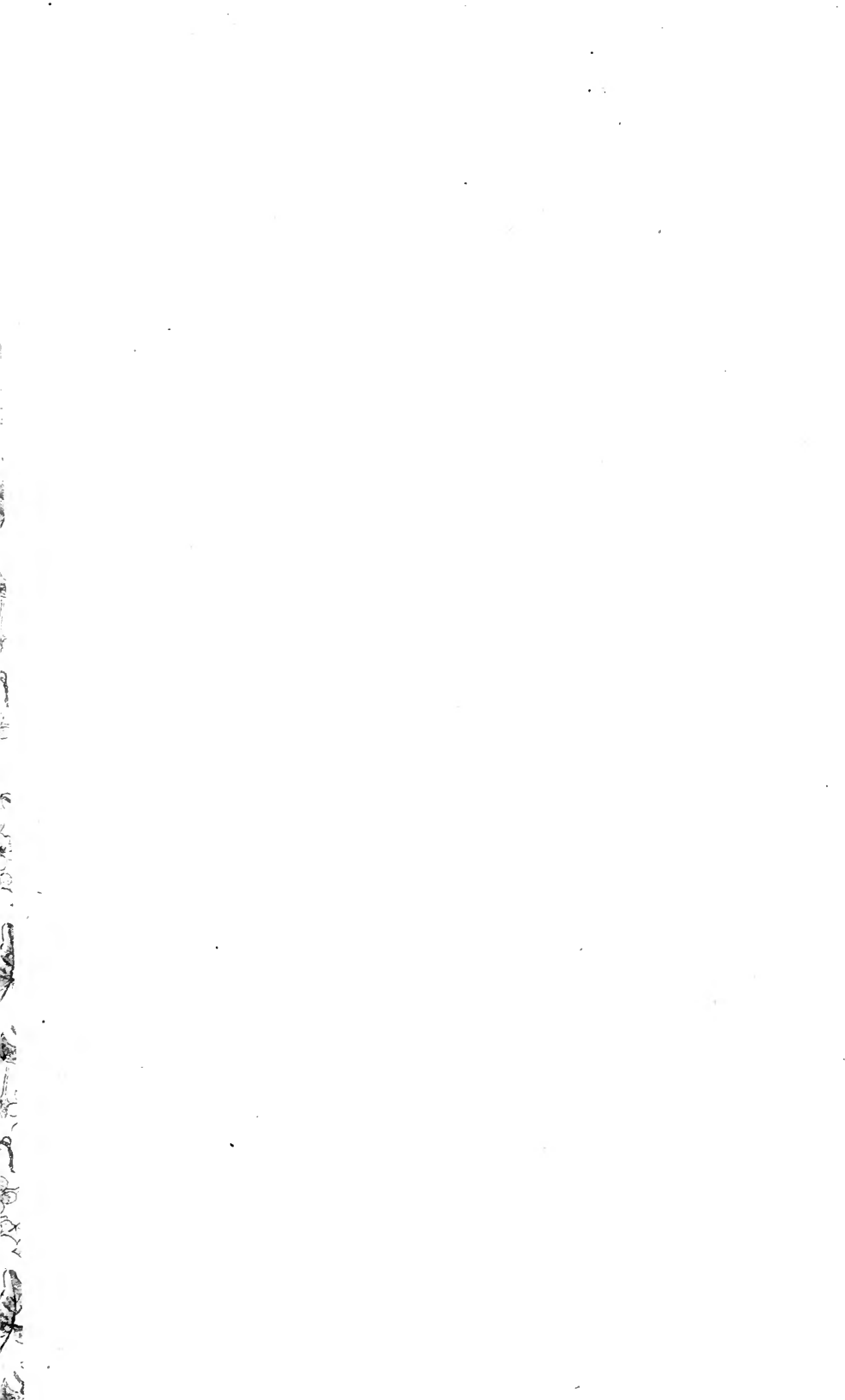


AGRICULTURE



NON CIRCULATING

**CHECK FOR UNBOUND
CIRCULATING COPY.**



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Agricultural Experiment Station.

URBANA, FEBRUARY, 1901.

BULLETIN No. 62.

THE MARKET CLASSES OF HORSES.

BY E. DAVENPORT, M.AGR., PROFESSOR OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN THE
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY SPECIALIST IN
THE EXPERIMENT STATION.

According to the best estimates available only about sixty per cent of the horses that make their way to the Chicago market fill the requirements of the recognized market classes, leaving forty per cent. as "unclassified."

MARKET CLASSES REPRESENT THE MOST USEFUL TYPES.—From the nature of the case the market classes represent all the types and classes for which any general demand has asserted itself, and if a new use should arise demanding a new type of horse, the attempt to secure it would immediately give rise to a new market class.

TOO MANY UNCLASSIFIED HORSES.—While it is and always will be true that the breeder will often fail to produce what he aims to secure, nobody believes that his failures should amount to forty per cent. The late veteran horse breeder, M. W. Dunham, said that in his experience a good breeder working with good blood, though aiming at comparatively high standards, should succeed seven times out of ten. In making this statement he was alluding to standards vastly higher than the average of those demanded in the so-called market classes; therefore, according to his estimate more than seventy per cent. of horses should fill market requirements, if they were really bred to that end.

LACK OF STANDARDS IN BREEDING.—In as much as so large a proportion fail to come to any valuable standard whatever, whether the one they were bred for or some other, we are forced to infer that horses are not produced for distinct purposes and bred to definite ends as generally or as successfully as they should be; in other words, that a large proportion of the forty per cent. is removable and should be eliminated.

MARKET STANDARDS AND CLASSES OF HORSES NOT GENERALLY KNOWN.—The most of the horses that supply the great markets are produced upon the farms of the country and by farmers largely engaged in crop raising and with other kinds of live stock. A somewhat extended study of the matter reveals the fact that few farmers of this class have definite knowledge of the distinct classes recognized in the markets or of the types and characters demanded for each. They have therefore been working in the dark, having no model in mind and no standard to breed to; and we are forced to the conclusion that a large proportion of horses that are suited to the market needs were produced not by design but by accident. This is borne out not only by the forty per cent. of unclassed horses that go to the markets but by the unnumbered mob of "scalawags" that remains behind on the farms, too bad to sell and kept "to raise colts."

This conclusive evidence of lack of standards in horse production, together with the positive knowledge that farmers as a rule do not know the market classes or their requirements, has led to the publication of this bulletin, which is an attempt to define each market class and describe the type of horse that will fill it.

COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION ESTABLISHED THE CHICAGO HORSE MARKET.—The World's Fair of 1892 brought to the attention of European dealers not only the high quality of American horses but the almost infinite capacity of this country for their economical production. Because they could buy more quality here for the same money or the same quality for less money than in their own country horses were immediately taken in large numbers for export and this foreign demand established the Chicago Horse Market on a solid basis and with well-defined classes.

FOREIGN TRADE AND CITY DEMAND FIX MARKET CLASSES.—These purchases were always for particular purposes, giving rise to well defined market classes and calling for definite types of animals. Not only that, the "horse consumption" of this country, constantly and rapidly increasing, calls for the same classes and types demanded by the foreign trade, with such additions and variations as are naturally incident to our home con-

ditions. It is hardly necessary to remark that the home demand like the foreign is largely limited and the classes fixed by the city needs. Stated broadly, therefore, it is the city demand, both foreign and domestic, that has fixed the classes and types of horses in the Chicago markets, and for that matter in all markets. Moreover, this demand is so particular and the classes and types so well defined that horses making their way to the great markets are classified and graded, and sold according to their classification as accurately and as absolutely as is wheat or any other commodity.

UTILITY FIXES THE CLASS AND THE VALUE.—Market classes are established, not according to the age of the animal or degrees of soundness, but according to size, conformation, and style; that is to say, utility for particular purposes is the basic principle of classification, and the ability of the animal to fill the particular purpose is what fixes his class and his value, with the exception that all high class horses must be sound and possess no glaring fault.

CLASSES NOT CONTINUOUS.—As might be expected these classes do not generally overlap, nor do they always meet; that is to say, the gradations are not uniform, passing from one class directly into the next. There are gaps between them, often wide ones, through which an animal may drop, so to speak, and though young and sound may be a cheap horse; for example, if he be too light for a draft horse and yet too heavy and “drafty” for the ‘bus he is too much for the one and too little for the other, and even though considered by himself he may be a good horse he is nevertheless a cheap one, and no man who understands his business would produce him if he could help it.

THE FIVE MARKET CLASSES.—Classes differ somewhat in different markets, but in Chicago, which claims to be the greatest horse market in the world, there are five distinct and well defined market classes in large demand. They are all classified from the standpoint of utility, and except in class five may or may not be registered animals. They are all based upon special needs, and all call for particular size, conformation, and style.

CLASS 1. ROAD, CARRIAGE, AND COACH HORSES.

USES.—This is the highest class of unregistered horses on the market, though many are of the highest breeding and all must show good blood. They are distinctly driving horses, though not racers, and are used for private work as distinct from public service. Accordingly, they are driven to all sorts of private vehicles, either for business or pleasure, from the light runabout drawn by the road horse to the elegant victoria, brougham, or heavy coach

drawn by the carriage or coach horse. They are distinctly gentlemen's drivers, whether handled by the owner or his coachman, and all the conditions call for a high class horse to correspond with good to elegant appointments and to satisfy the eye of a horseman or at least of a lover of horses. They are used both in city and country, but are found chiefly on the boulevards and in the parks of the larger cities before fashionable turnouts driven by a coachman or before a light wagon driven by the owner for the pleasure of driving. They are used singly or in pairs, and, when matched, uniformity in size, style, and action are imperative, while differences in color or sex are almost disregarded. It may be said in general, however, that though the market professes not to distinguish between mares and geldings, yet most men feel a decided preference for the latter, and only the limited supply of horses of high quality prevents this choice from asserting itself and a higher price ruling for geldings than for mares.

DESCRIPTION.--The varied uses to which these horses are put admit a wide range in height and weight. Horses may vary in height from 15 hands to 16 hands 2 inches, and in weight from 1000 to 1200 pounds and still rank in this class, though these are extremes. The typical specimen would stand from 15-3 to 16 hands and weigh from 1100 to 1150 pounds.

In color, there is little choice between bays, blacks, browns, chestnuts and sorrels, but light greys are not in favor, and unsightly colors and markings are barred out. The form, style, and action, however, must be strictly high class, and whether registered or not, they must show plenty of good breeding.

In form they must be both beautiful and serviceable. The head must be clean and fine and well carried upon a neck that rises gracefully from the shoulders. The forehead must be broad and full, ears carried well forward, eye full and bright, all showing intelligence, docility, and spirit. The nostrils must be large and open, the muzzle fine, and the neck of medium length, clean, and well carried without need of check. Short heavy heads, dull eyes, drooping ears, short beefy necks, ewe-necks and thick necks, all bar horses from this class.

The shoulder must be sloping, the back short and well coupled with a full strong loin; the barrel round, the hips smooth, and the tail set high. The legs must be straight and alike and free from all unsoundness and serious blemishes; the bone must be flat and clean, the tendons strong and smooth, the knee wide, the hock strong, and the pastern moderately long and sloping. There should be a proper proportion between the forearm and the cannon.

If the forearm be too long the result will be a knee sprung horse after considerable service; if too short he will be "calf kneed," i. e. the knee joint as it is called, (properly the wrist), will appear as if shutting too far backward and breaking down. The proper relative length of these two bones is believed to be not far from 21 inches for the forearm to 11 inches for the cannon. The foot should be moderately wide at the heel, show dense horn and stand squarely under the leg, with no suggestion of being "pigeon toed" (toes pointing inward) or "nigger heeled" (heels close and toes outward.) Last of all the body should be covered with a full coat of fine soft hair and carry a fair amount of flesh, but without an appearance of beefiness. Nothing is so good an evidence of quality in a horse as fine hair and prominent veins standing well out on the face and over the body.

Every line and movement should please the eye, and satisfy the demand for a stylish horse. He must show considerable speed but his work must be done neatly and with apparent pride and satisfaction to the animal. He must respond to the will of the driver and exhibit sense and courage in the presence of unusual sights and sounds.

Nothing is more important in these horses than action, and nothing expresses what is wanted better than the word, "directness;" or as the horsemen call it "straight line movement." What is meant is that the legs should move forward in straight lines, neither swinging in to "interfere" nor out to "wobble." In taking the step the foot should be well folded in at the pastern and thrust forward, but in straight lines with no suggestion of "paddling." In *carriage* and *coach* horses the knee and hock should be carried moderately high in action, especially the former and the front foot and leg from the knee down should exhibit a rolling action the foot taking the ground lightly at the bottom of a circular movement, so to speak, and not thrust forward into the ground, causing pounding and rapidly "staving" the horse on pavements and hard roads. For *road* horses in which ability to cover distance is a prime requisite, excessively high action is a detriment rather than otherwise as it wears out the horse when his energy is needed for getting over space. In these horses the front leg should be nicely folded as it is taken from the ground then thrust far forward, not punching into the earth but reaching its farthest point while yet three or four inches above the ground then dropping straight down, taking the ground lightly. This is the easiest trotting pace therefore the most useful for covering distance, and if well taken is as slightly as any other though it presumes considerable speed.

In both types the fore and hind legs must move in harmony and neither interfere with the work of the other. If the hind legs are too long the hind foot will strike the front, unless the horse "straddles," which is unsightly; if too short or lacking in action the horse gives the appearance of trotting in front and walking behind, the most awkward known gait and commonly found in a horse too long in the back.

In this class belongs the "cob" which is distinctly an American type, the trade in cobs being confined to this country. The cob is a blocky, "natty" little horse some 15—1 to 15—2 weighing 1000 to 1100 pounds and much in demand as a single driver before a light buggy.

VALUES.—Horses in this class sell at from \$150.00 to \$300.00 and upward, fine specimens selling readily at \$400.00 or \$500.00, and in some instances at \$1,000.00 and upward. These horses are worth from twenty-five to fifty per cent. more when well matched than when single, and in all cases the value depends greatly on the training and "manners" exhibited; for in no other class of horses is an animal sold more upon his merits as a performer than in this class of gentlemen's drivers.

PRODUCTION.—Two elements go to establish the value of these horses—the horse himself and his training. The latter must be done by some one well up in the methods of handling horses and in what the trade calls for. This will generally be the regular dealer or his agent or employé.

The production of the horse himself, however, is a matter of breeding and reasonable feeding and care. Without the former, no feed, care or training can make a high class driving horse and one certainly cannot be made out of a scrub.

The most successful blood for the production of carriage and coach horses has been that of certain strains of the Standard Bred, or American Trotter as he is often called, the French Coach, the Morgan and the Hackney, and road horses have been most successfully produced from the Trotter and the Morgan. Whatever blood is employed, it should be used on brood mares of good form and substance and of a size and type to correspond with the blood of the sire. Whoever undertakes to produce these horses should send them to the markets untrained unless he be a horseman in fact as well as in opinion. Some of the finest specimens are permanently ruined by bad handling long before reaching the markets. The most common mistakes are, first, the use of the over-check while young making a "ewe-neck" and a bulging throat; second, speeding while young, developing the racing spirit, latent in all these

horses, before they have learned real action, and making it impossible thereafter to make good "workers" of them; and, third, clipping the foretop, which, though only temporary, detracts from his value enough to pay his keeping until it grows out. This damage from a clipped foretop is considered in the markets as \$25.00.

CLASS 2. CAB HORSES.

USES.—As the name indicates these horses are used on cabs and other light vehicles kept for public service. This class of horses is also used for light delivery, and those owned by the better mercantile houses are the pick of the class. These two uses fix the class and the price, though many will be found in other places where light plain driving is needed.

DESCRIPTION.—The cab horse is a strong, blocky, and useful little horse, 15 hands to 15-2 in height and weighing 1050 to 1100 pounds. He must be a "rugged" horse, but he is plain, and is required to show but moderate action, though he must be able to go long at the trot, and handle some load.

VALUE.—While an exceedingly useful horse and one "consumed" in large numbers the supply is very large and values are always moderate, rarely exceeding \$75.00 to \$100.00. He is a good but plain and cheap horse. This is the smallest horse and the plainest one that the market demands or that can be sold at anything but ruinous prices.

PRODUCTION.—The prices realized warrant nobody in undertaking the production of these horses. The large supply is due to the fact that there are culls from Class 1, just described and from Class 3, next to follow, and that a sufficient supply will doubtless always appear naturally in the attempt to produce these two more valuable classes.

CLASS 3. BUS HORSES.

USES.—These horses take their name from the foreign demand for use on omnibuses. They are used for the same purpose in this country, though the omnibus is less a feature of American than of foreign cities. For this purpose they are generally driven in pairs. The same horse is used here as an "express" horse or for heavy delivery. Whatever the use to which he is to be put, two requirements are imperative: First, he must be able to handle a considerable load, and second, he must do it at a slow trot and sustain the gait.

DESCRIPTION.—If there is any "general purpose" horse it is the bus horse. He must be fitted to handle a load at a slow trot, but is

not required to show style. His action, however, should not be bad and it must be easy. He must be a smooth made horse, shape himself well in harness, give evidence of plenty of stamina and should stand from 15—1 to 16 hands and weigh from 1250 to 1400 pounds. This is not a small draft horse, for his gait is to be the trot and not the walk. He must, therefore, show a more sloping shoulder and a longer and more sloping pastern than in the draft type, and go at the slow trot with perfect ease. The supposition that small draft horses will fill this class is a common mistake that has cost American horse breeders much time and money.

VALUES.—These horses sell readily for export or home consumption at from \$100.00 to \$150.00. Classes 2 and 3, unlike class 1, have no fancy prices, because there is no fancy service. Their work is purely commercial and their values are as standard as that of wheat and fluctuate only within narrow limits according to individual quality like any other purely commercial article.

PRODUCTION.—This is the cheapest horse that it will ever pay to produce by direct effort. The best blood to use is probably a medium Percheron stallion and a small mare with fairly good action and plenty of bone and stamina. These horses can be sold without training except that they should be broken to harness and accustomed to light work. These are not driving horses and no attempt should be made to develop speed.

CLASS 4. DRAFT HORSES.

USES.—There is one standard use for the draft horse, and that is to haul enormous loads at the walk only, generally in the cities and on pavements or hard roads. They may be used single, in pairs, three or four abreast, unicorn fashion, or in four, or even six, eight, or ten horse teams, two abreast.

DESCRIPTION.—Strength is the one consideration in the draft horse, and broadly speaking, weight is the principal element. If, however, the mechanism of the horse is to endure the strain he must have a strong hind leg, especially at the hock, a heavy loin with short coupling and a strong front leg and dense hoof, because so large a proportion of his weight is, or should be, in front.

With the draft horse it is not a question of height, but of weight; indeed the nearer the ground he is the better both for service and endurance. To class with draft horses an animal must weigh not less than 1500 pounds in good flesh and he is all the more valuable if he weighs 1800, 2000, or even more. He cannot be too heavy if his "bone" corresponds to his weight

Such a horse should be blocky made with heavy bone, though

smooth; short in the back, close coupled with heavy loin, rounded hips, wide strong hock, flat bone, moderately short pasterns, medium straight shoulder, heavy in the front with full breast and legs placed well apart, though not extremely wide. The animal should carry a good covering of flesh, be smooth finished all over, and manifest docility and a disposition to do heavy work with patience but with spirit. Accordingly he should show a bright mild eye, an erect ear, and a smooth easy action at the trot. It should be as straight and true as described under Class 1, though this is not so important, and action is taken at the trot, not because he is expected to use the gait, but because it is the best indication of the ease with which he can handle his legs. The good draft horse, is not expected to make speed, yet he must not be in constant "quarrel with his legs." Because it is easier to secure weight in fat than in bone, care should be taken to insure heavy bone in extreme weights, but this should not be done at the expense of fair finish.

VALUES.—Draft horses of good form sell almost according to weight, except that as weights increase, prices rise at a much greater ratio; so that extreme weights bring enormous prices if only the bone is satisfactory. Prices range from \$125.00 to \$300.00, with an occasional one higher and with an increase of about ten per cent. when matched in teams. These prices are sometimes exceeded, and dealers insist that prices were never so low that a span of draft horses would not bring \$600.00 if only they were good enough.

PRODUCTION.—This is *par excellence* the horse for the farmer to raise. Only the blood of the best draft breeds, and the heaviest and best boned stallions are suitable. Even then the demand for extreme weights necessitates the use of large mares that are good milkers. In no other way can colts be produced with sufficient bone and feeding quality to attain the size and finish demanded by the markets. Even then the youngster must be supplied with the best of feed in large amounts from the very first. Plenty of good pasture, clover hay, oats, and corn are imperative, and there is no better feed for young horses than green corn cut from the field and fed whole. Only the best blood should be used and then every effort must be made to keep the horse gaining from the first if he is to top the market.

All this is much like growing beef, and these are the horses to produce on the farms. They can be produced nowhere else to advantage and, when it is remembered that the draft horse is really the highest priced standard horse in the market, it is easy enough to

see what horse the farmer should raise. He not only sells for more average money, but if bred with the same care there are fewer culls, and no training is required beyond light common work to familiarize him with the harness and with drawing. The disposition of the draft horse is so docile and his ancestors have labored so long that he works almost by instinct, and he requires no special training to go upon the markets.

CLASS 5. THE AMERICAN TROTTER.

This must be a Standard Bred registered horse with a record not less than 2:18. His training must be gilt edged from the racing standpoint and the price is from \$200.00 up.

No other class of horses has so many culls, nor such worthless ones as this, and it is a class to be bred and handled by the professional horseman and not the farmer.

MISCELLANEOUS HORSES.

Aside from these standard classes there are fire horses, police horses, etc., etc., each with somewhat distinct requirements. The demand being limited, it is always easily satisfied from the general supply, and, because limited, offers no inducement to the horse producer who cannot afford to breed for a class so limited in numbers. The saddler is an exception to the above, but the production of saddle horses is a special line of horse production and not of interest to the general farmer. The cavalry and the artillery horse are often called for in large numbers, but the demand is irregular, and, except in rare cases, is fully satisfied from the general stock on hand.

SUMMARY.

Market classes and types are fixed not by the breeds but by the uses to which horses are put.

As these uses are definite, the type and the class are fixed.

As these uses are exceedingly varied, there are often wide gaps between the market classes.

A horse that drops between the classes is a cheap horse, no matter how good an animal, either because there is little use for him or because the supply is unlimited.

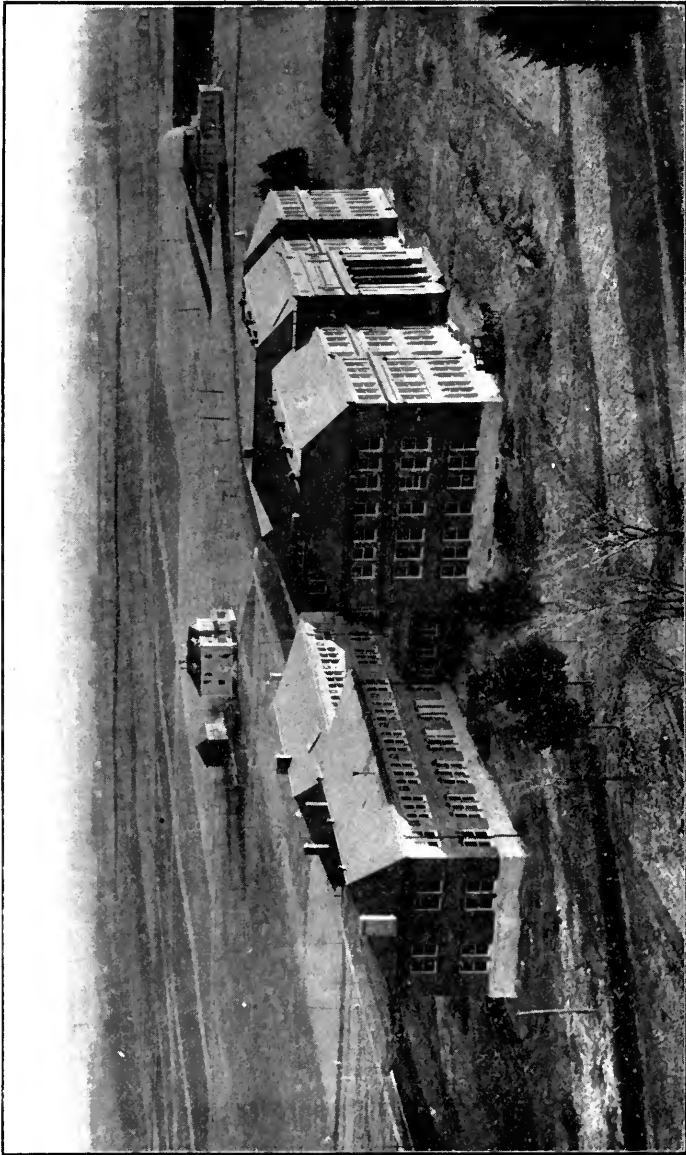
The best horse to breed is one that most fully meets a definite, constant, and strong demand, and has therefore a high average selling price.

The cavalry horse and the fire horse are good examples of valuable horses that the breeder cannot undertake to produce be-

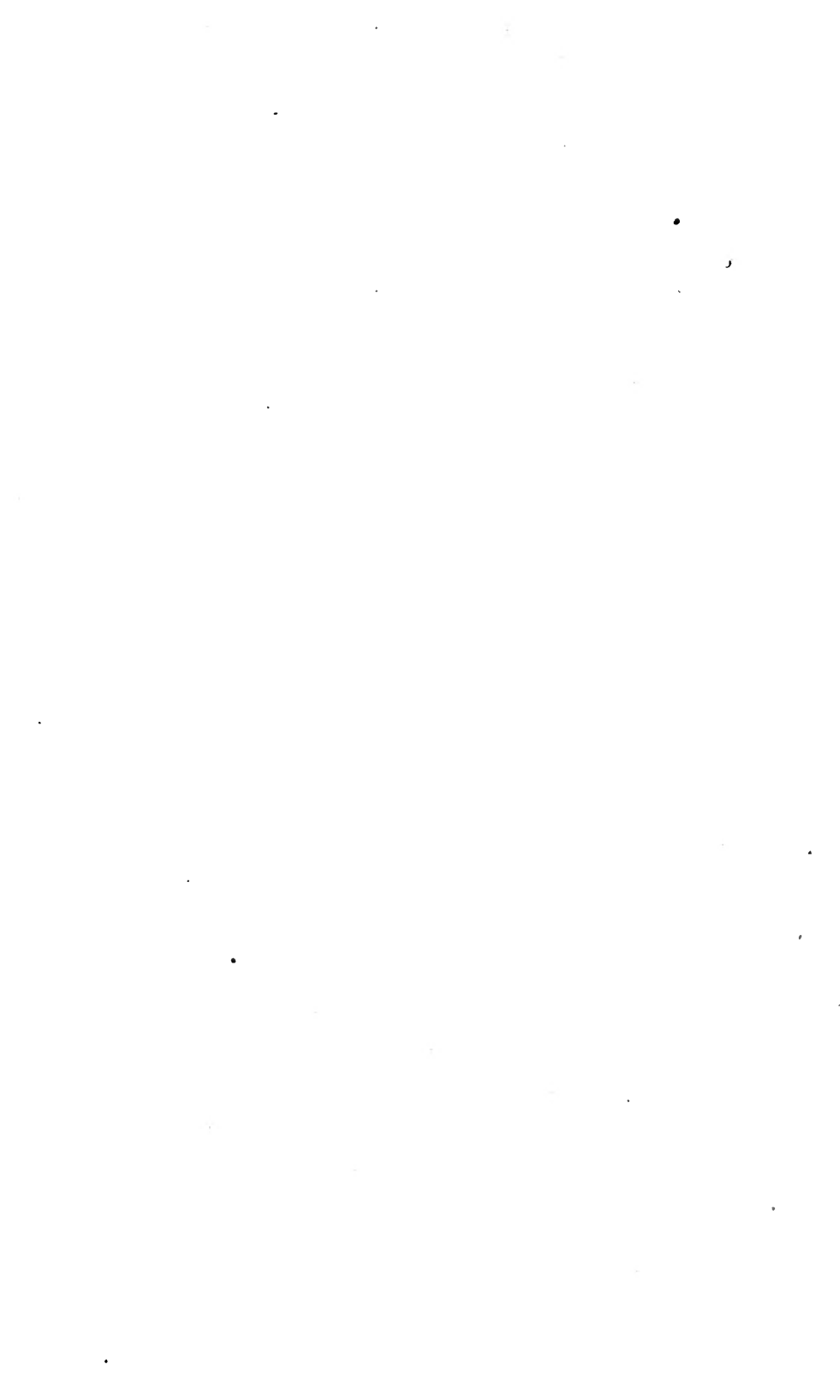
cause the demand is too limited. The demand for them will always be satisfied from the general supply.

Phenomenally high prices are as much due to the fancy of the individual purchaser as to the character of the animal. In any event they are seldom realized and are to be sought by the dealer and not by the breeder, as they represent but one out of hundreds or even thousands—too few to breed for.

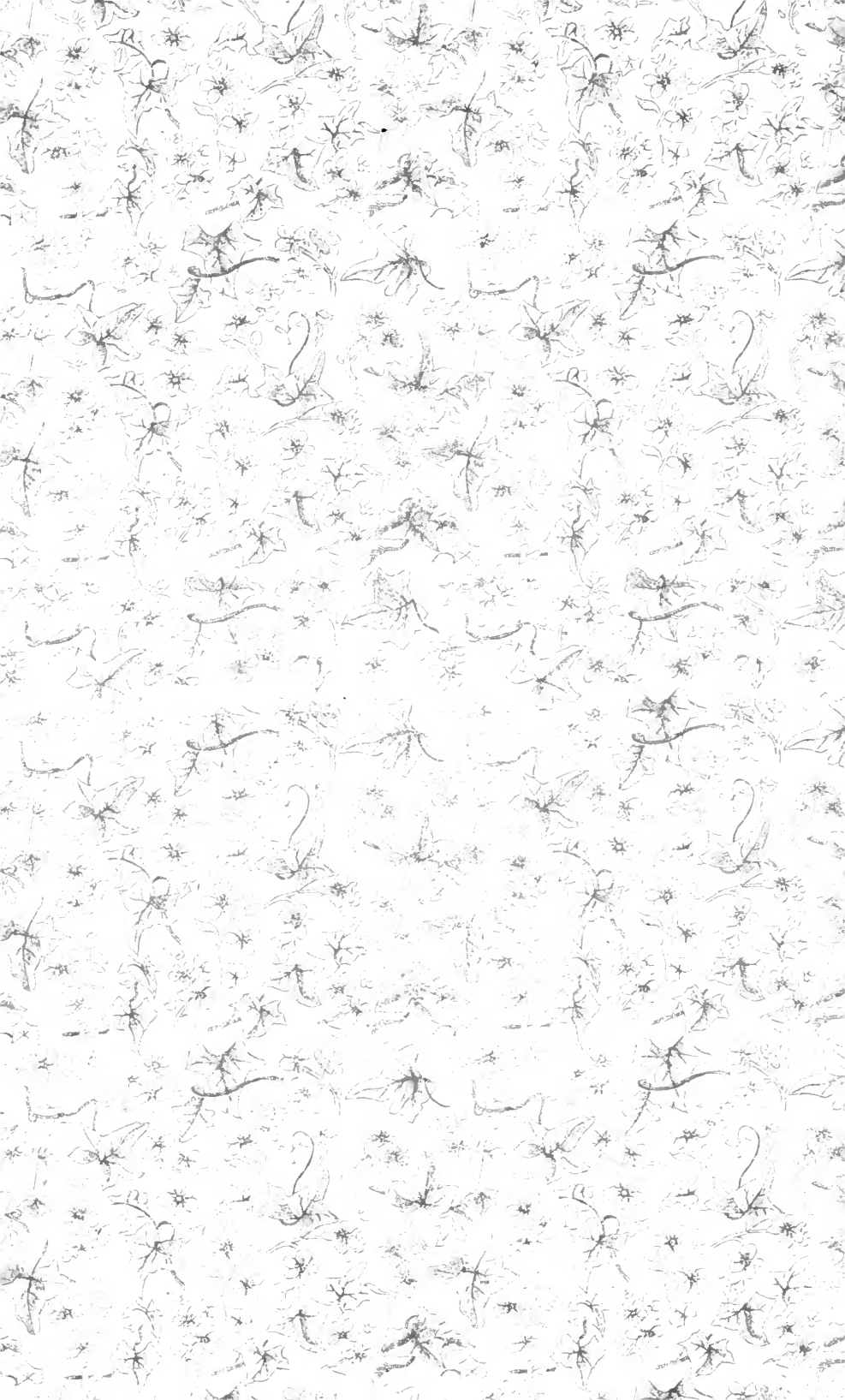
The farmer should keep himself acquainted with standard classes in steady demand at uniformly good prices, breed these, and pay no regard to high speed, phenomenal sales, or fancy values.

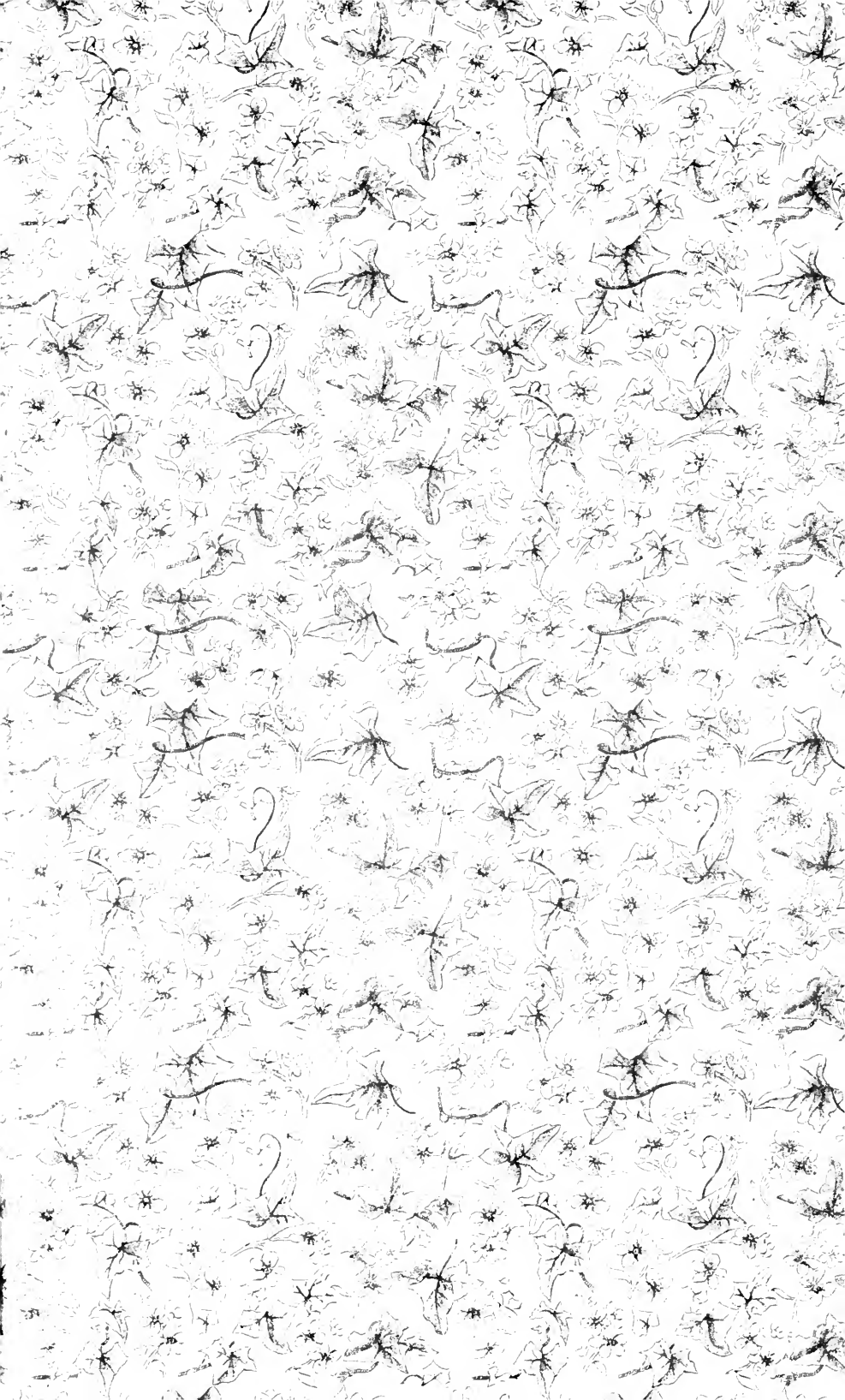


COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS.









UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA

Q.630.71L68

C001

BULLETIN. URBANA

61-84 1901-03



3 0112 019528782