

TRANSPORTATION

Frederic Remington_Horses of the Plains
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To men of all ages the horse of Northern Africa has been the standard of worth and beauty and speed. It was bred for the purpose of war and reared under the most favorable climatic condition, and its descendants have infused their blood into all the strains which in our day are regarded as valuable. The Moors stocked Spain with this horse, and the so called Spanish horse is more Moorish than otherwise. It is fair to presume that the lightly armored cavaliers of the 16th Century, or during the Spanish conquests in America, rode this animal, which has been so long domesticated in Spain in preference to the inferior northern horse. To this day the pony of western America shows many points of the Barbary horse to the exclusion of all other breeding. His head has the same facial line; and that is the prime point in deciding ancestry in horses. . . . I am quite sure that no sane man would have preferred a course-jointed Flemish weight carrier for use on the hot sands of Mexico to the light and supple Barb, which would recognize in the sand and heat of his new-world home an exact counterpart of his African hills. As the Spaniards worked north in their explorations, they lost horses by the adverse fortunes of war and by their thier straying and being captured by Indians. At an/very early date the wild horse was encountered on the plains of Mexico, but a long time elapsed before the horse was found in the north. La Salle found the Comanches with the Spanish goods and also horses in their possession, but on his journeys to Canada it was with great difficulty that he procured horses from the Indians farther north. In 1680, Father Hennepin lived with the Sioux and marched and hunted the buffalo on foot. At a much later day a traveler heard the Comanches boast they "remembered when the Arapahoes to the north used dogs as beasts of burden." That horses were lost by the Spaniards and ran in a wild state over the dry plains of Mexico and Texas at an early day is certain; and as the conditions of life were favorable, they must have increased rapidly. How many years elapsed before the northern Indians procured these animals, with they are so thoroughly identified, is not easily ascertainable. Cheyenne Indians who were well versed in that tribal legend which is rehearsed by the lodge fire by the long winter nights, have told me gravely that they ~~had~~ had horses. I suspect that this assertion has its foundation in the vanity of their cavalier souls, for the Cheyenne legend runs very smoothly, and has pale-face corroboration back to a period when we know that they could not have had horses.

Only on the plains has the horse reached his most typical American development. The range afforded good grass and they were bred indiscriminately, both in the wild state, and in the hands of the Indians, who never used any discretion of coupling the best specimens, as did the Indians of the mountains, be cause of the danger of their being stolen or lost, thus making it unprofitable. Wild stallions continually herded off the droves of the Indians of the southwestern plains thus thwarting off any endeavor to improve the stock by breeding. It is often a question whether the "pinto" or painted pony of the Texas is the result of a pinto ancestry or of a general coupling of all horses of all colors. The latter is/ I think, is the case, for the Barb was a one color horse, and the modern horse breeder in his science finds no difficulty in producing that color which he deems best.

The Comanches, Wichitas, and Kiowas hold that stallion in high esteem which is most bedecked and flared by blotches of white hair on the normal color of his skin. The so called Spanish horse of northern Mexico is less apt to show this tendency towards parti-colored coat, and his size,