Observing for Ourselves

By LENORE WILSON, Calgary, Alta.

OWNING a half-arab by the Arabian stallion AHMUR, A.R.C. 2061, and having studied all available material pertaining to the Arabian horse, led to a desire to become personally acquainted with some of these horses and their owners. We wanted to satisfy ourselves that it was not just a coincidence that our half-arab had inherited so many desirable qualities from his sire but rather because the Arabian horse had been bred pure for centuries, he does possess outstanding physical and mental qualities, which he transmits to his progeny with great prepotency.

Therefore, it was in August 1950, that my husband and I left on a tour of Arabian owners and breeders in Montana, Wyoming and Colorado. The following is an account of what we saw and learned.

We first visited with Mr. and Mrs. Cooley of Lewistown, Montana. They own several breeds of light horses but their pride and joy is the lovely grey Arabian stallion, RAGHIR. Gentle yet spirited, he is a real companion to his owners.

That same day we drove down to the Smith Arabian Ranch, situated just east of the city of Billings, Montana. To our delight, we witnessed for the first time a corral full of purebred mares, and their foals. Among them were CURFA, 17 years old and SANTA FE, now 22, both grand age mares, still raising a foal each year. This is not considered unusual in Arabs for they continue to produce when much older than most other breeds of horses. This fact proved itself at almost every breeding establishment that we visited.

Mr. Smith showed us how his 13 year old former remount stallion, OLNATAR 2628, had been recently trained for stock work and the style and action of his young stallion, REDRAFF. The hospitality and time extended to us by the Smiths was certainly appreciated.

The next day our journey continued by leaving the main highway, 87, going west to the small town of Big Horn, Wyoming, then further west down a canyon road to the Watt Smyth Cross U Bar Ranch situated at the very foot of the Big Horn Mountains. Mr. Smyth raises Arabsians, Palominos and Pigtet Shetlands. He spent the whole morning showing us his stock. There was GAMHURI 1776, a ten year old bay ex-remount stallion; YABBIB, a fiery seal-brown stallion, an excellent example of the typical Arabian, having unusually large ears, erect head and tail carriage, short back with deep sloping shoulders. We saw quite a number of his progeny, many of them half-arabs and these characteristics were plainly stamped on them. Mr. Smyth's favorite mount is an upstanding gelding by this classic Arabian stallion, YABBIB, out of an Instr. Inster. He is said to have unbelievable endurance, stamina and in the rocky terrain is as surefooted as a mountain goat. In another corral was the result of the cross of the shetland and the Arabian. This proves to be an ideal children's pony.

Victory Day II. Champion Arabian Stallion, 1950 Pacific National Exhibition, Vancouver, B.C., owned by G. A. Finnsson, Oak Island, B.C.

much finer than the shetland with the disposition and gait of the Arabian. Another stallion, TAJASAR, a golden chestnut, was brought to our attention. This horse is used exclusively in the Palomino program. Due to the demand for a better type of Palomino, the logical thing was to call on the Arabian to improve on conformation. This horse has been very successful, for, if the Palomino color is not realized from this cross, at least it produces a superior grade which inherits many of the Arabian sire's characteristics. We left this ranch feeling we had gained a wealth of practical knowledge on advantages to be gained by using Arabian blood for improvement purposes.

Our next stop was the beautiful Bear Claw Ranch at Dayton, Wyoming, owned by Mrs. Cox Morrill, famous for her champion Hereford cattle and Arabian horses, of which she has been a breeder for many, many years. Mrs. Morrill, herself, conducted us on a tour of her stables and later to the pastures for a visit with the mares and Colts. Purebred Arabsians and half-arabs are bred and trained here specifically for working the cattle. The men working on the ranch feel they cannot be equaled for endurance. There are the only legs and feet that have proved capable of standing up to the long hours of work in the mountainous country.

From Dayton to Cheyenne, it was a long drive through the desolate badlands. Perhaps it just seemed longer because we were anxious to get to Cheyenne for we had been invited to stay for a few days at the Joder Arabian Ranch. Mrs. Joder is the Editor and Founder of the Arabian Horse News, a wonderful magazine devoted entirely to Arabs, half-arabs and their owners. Upon arriving there we were greeted by the whole family and promptly escorted to the stables, where we first became acquainted with TCCRA, a beautiful tail chestnut stallion; Rafflin, a young stallion whose first get are making their appearance, and the lovely kind stallion, Kanan. Then the mares, ADRAFFA, DARAGA, RAFFANI and the 17 year old RIHANI who had just given birth to a lovely filly foal — the pride of the ranch.

Many a happy hour we spent among the Joder yearlings and foals. Their disposition was amazing, they followed one around like dogs, each vying for attention but never becoming mean or impatient. One little fellow had an irresistible personality. His name was IBM KANAZ, meaning son of KANAZ. We still hear of him occasionally. At Joders, too, we saw the great improvement realized by the use of Arabian Sires on ordi.
nary old-bred mares. In fact, one of their 1950 half-arab foals was awarded reserve half-arab champion at the All-Arabian Show in Cheyenne, Wyoming, in July 1950.

Here it suddenly dawned on us that these great horses must have an effect on the dispositions of their owners. Never had we met such people, so enthusiastic and generous in passing on their knowledge of the Arabian horse.

As the weekly Sunday morning show at the Van Vleet Lazy V Ranch starts at 9:30 a.m. sharp, we left Cheyenne on Saturday in order that we could spend the night in Nederland, Colorado, a small mining town not far from the ranch. En route we stopped at Ft. Collins, Colorado, to meet Mr. E. Hildekoper and his beautiful grey stallion KALD 1638—a man and a horse that have done a great deal to encourage the raising of better light horses in the United States through the use of Arabian sires.

Early Sunday morning we arrived at the Van Vleet Ranch where the beauty far exceeded our expectations. The ranch is situated high in the mountains west of Denver, surrounded by towering peaks capped with snow. It is the perfect setting for such an outdoor show. That particular Sunday morning, 3,000 people were in attendance, representing 30 states and Canada.

Mr. Van Vleet did the announcing as each and every horse on the ranch participated in the program. The mares and colts were ushered in first and as they milled about, their finely-cast intelligents heads and deep jaws, large eyes set low and broad, were a joy to behold.

Then, as a snappy driver, came RIFAGE 1296, a grandson of SHOWBIZ, world famous Arabian for whom Lady Wentworth of Crabtree Stud in England refused $250,000 from the Russian Government. RIFAGE also showed very well under English equipment. The Egyptian stallion KAHAR 1159, representative of early importations by the American, Homer Davenport, and GAZLY 2820, a chestnut son of old ZARRIFF, exhibited their skill at cattle cutting.

Fortunately indeed were we in seeing the 22 year old stallion ZARRIFF 885 because this was one of his last showings. He died on September 12, 1954. He was bred by Prince Mohamed Ali of Cairo, Egypt and imported into the United States in 1932, where he became one of the best known and loved Arabsians. His dam MABBOUSSA was considered one of the most beautiful Arabian mares in the world.

A crowd pleaser was the dashing display given by riders wearing authentic Bedouin or丰富多彩和lorning long spears. As they galloped about the outdoor arena their bright yellow, green and red cloaks were particularly impressive in the sunlight against the picturesque background. Horses, riders and families enjoyed the game. All in all it was a spectacular show which proved beyond a doubt that the Arabian and his progeny are using horses is every sense of the word.

One can well imagine now that it was to leave all these wonderful horses and people we had become friends with but all good things must end so we began the homeward journey, with hopes of a visit at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Saylor in Great Falls, Montana. We met the stallion RADAR KING and the old Polish mare KOSTREWZA, once a famous race horse in Poland and now at 21, a good brood mare.

Upon arriving home and after carefully compiling all the knowledge gained, we were convinced our trip had proved that all statements made by historians and present day writers concerning the advisability of improving light horses through the use of Arabian blood, were true. The results achieved in the United States are extremely gratifying. Gone are the days when the horse trader can claim his parti-colored animal is an Arabian, and get away with it. Through the work of the eleven Arabian Horse Associations in various parts of the United States, people everywhere have become familiar with the true Arabian. Four major All Arabian Shows are staged each year, at Pomona, Portland, Cheyenne and San Francisco.

In 1950, Pomona, California, staged its sixth show with 220 entries; Portland, Oregon, had its fourth with 150 entries; Cheyenne, Wyoming, its second with 137 entries and San Francisco, Cal., its first with 86 entries. All have been successful.

It is encouraging to note that the first Canadian Arabian Association was formed in June 1950, known as the Arabian Horse Association of British Columbia. It is open to membership for all owners of purebred and Arab-cross breed owners. The purpose of this organization is to get recognition for the Arabian horse in Canada. Therefore, it will not only benefit British Columbia but Canada as a whole. It certainly is a step in the right direction to benefit all breeds of light horses.