

How To ~ RIDE

*MARK W. CROSS & CO.
SADDLERS
118 & 120 SUDBURY ST.
BOSTON*



JOHN A. SEAVERNS

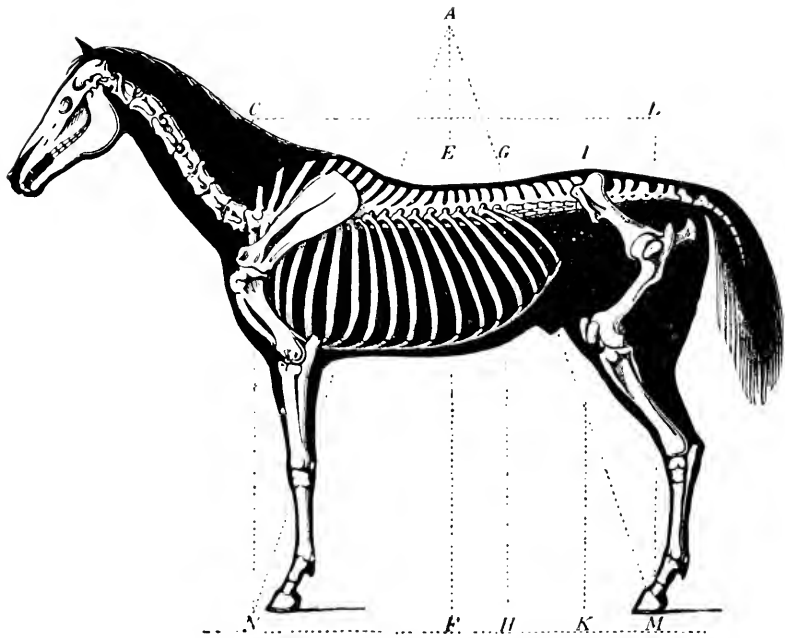


PLATE I.—FRAMEWORK OF THE HORSE.

The line E to F running through the fourteenth vertebra, or *centre of motion of the horse.*

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

It is quite true that no book can, without practice, teach the reader how to ride. Practical arts can only be learned by practical experience. Nevertheless, we can learn considerable from the collected experience of the finest horsemen of the present and past generation. And this we may say, those who are seeking knowledge on this subject will find here the results of many years of experience, written by those who are in every case thorough masters of the subject they treat.

We have tried in this volume to place simply and clearly before the reader, not only a fund of information, and the art of riding as taught by the best professors the world has seen, but also a thorough knowledge of the proper equipment required. It will show the necessity of having the saddle to suit the rider, and not compelling one to ride only as the saddle permits. In the selection of an outfit, the knowledge here gained will enable *the rider* to be the judge of what will best suit his or her requirements.

The artist, after years of toil, is compensated by the attention his work receives from the public; and we ask the reader to pay us the compliment of examining the second part of our labor, the collection of riding equipments in our warerooms, for we have labored as hard to bring this to perfection as we have in editing this work.

Our knowledge of the mechanical laws that govern the relation between horse and rider has been put into practice, and our riding saddles are the result of years of careful thought, of attention to all improvements tending towards safety and comfort, of travel abroad and consultation with the finest makers and the ablest equestrians the world affords.

In presenting this volume to the reader the only reward we hope to reap is that you may visit us. In doing this we feel certain you will be repaid, in looking at the finest and most complete collections of horse goods ever brought together.

MARK W. CROSS & CO.

BOSTON, July, 1891.

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HOW TO RIDE.

The most proper recreation of studious, sedentary persons *whose labor is thought,*
is horseback exercise. — JOHN LOCKE.

PART I. — INTRODUCTION.

THERE is no lack of books in which very full and particular descriptions of model seats on horseback may be found, nor of riding-masters who both know how to sit a horse themselves and impart to their pupils their own particular method. But this will not answer the purpose, for there exists not only a certain number of typical seats, more or less suited to various ends, as racing, hunting, the cavalry service, etc., all of which have their peculiar justification, but there is also a great variety in the build of horses, and especially in the relative power of their fore and hind quarters, which demands consideration, if we would avoid the serious and but too common error of using up one set of members prematurely whilst leaving the others intact. For instance, nothing is more frequent than to see horses, otherwise perfectly sound, irreparably ruined in the fore legs.

Moreover, there exists an equal variety in the build of the riders, which also requires consideration. A man of heavy weight cannot be expected to sit his horse as a man of lighter build, nor a well “split up” man like one long above the hips and short below; nevertheless, there is no reason why each and all of them should not sit well and judiciously, though their seats must be necessarily different.

The aim of this little treatise is, therefore, by appealing to the intelligence, common-sense, and good feeling of all riding men, to enable each to discover for himself what best suits his own peculiar case, and will put him in a position to make the best and the most of every horse he may have to ride, in the safest manner, and it will also afford an opportunity of pointing

out the danger of exaggerations, and the gross absurdity of applying a style of riding specially adapted to one purpose, to others that have no analogy with it; in fact, it will be shown that different styles of riding are not only inevitable, but legitimate, because the ends to be attained vary considerably. The intention is to refrain from all dogmatism and assertions, and merely present general principles, derived from mechanical laws that admit of no controversy, showing their inevitable bearing on the most important points, and leaving the reader as much as possible to form his own judgment independently, and arrive at a practical application for himself.

THE FRAMEWORK OF THE HORSE.

The horse depicted in Plate I. is of an average description, and stands in a natural position. The eye tells us at once that a somewhat greater proportion of its weight rests on the fore legs than on the hind ones, owing, as one sees, to the projecting position of the head and neck, which are much heavier than the tail.

Looking now at the spinal column, the framework of the back, on which the rider's weight is to be placed, we perceive that the spinal processes of the first thirteen vertebrae of the back, reckoning from the point where the neck is attached, incline backwards, whereas those of the remaining ten vertebrae incline forwards; the fourteenth vertebra, with its process, standing perfectly upright, and forming, as it were, the keystone of the arch thus presented, so that, in fact, this fourteenth vertebra becomes the *centre of motion of the horse's body*—the point about which the several movements of the fore and hind legs are performed; and this is further shown by the distribution and points of attachment of the muscles of the back and adjacent parts of the fore and hind quarters. The internal motion of the several parts of the body increases in proportion to their distance from the fourteenth vertebra; *and the same is applicable to burdens placed on the horse's back, especially a rider.*

It has been already pointed out that, in consequence of the projecting position of the head and neck, especially when the horse stands at ease, a somewhat greater proportion of its total weight falls on the fore legs than on the hinder ones; and when it depresses its head still more than is represented in Plate I., — for instance, for the purpose of grazing, — the animal puts forward one fore leg, and usually at the same time the hind leg of the opposite side, for the purpose of securing its equilibrium; and even horses standing still, especially under a load, do the same, in order to rest each pair of legs alternately.

We learn two facts from this: first, that the fore legs are essentially bearers, and that the hind ones, although chiefly propellers, are also to a certain extent bearers.

Put a man on a horse without a saddle, and with nothing but a halter on the animal's head, and he will inevitably slip forwards till his seat comes in contact with the withers. Let him then stand still, and the horse, especially if a young or untrained one, will most probably shove forward his hind or fore legs in one of these two ways.

Now we may favor the propelling power of the hind legs by weighting forward within certain limits; and this we know to be the case, — the long stride of the race-horse is favored by the well-known forward seat of the jockey. And it is equally true that placing the weight too near the hind legs must diminish their propelling power, by converting them, in a greater degree, into bearers. There can be no question but that weighting in this manner diminishes speed.

In the action of a horse the first point to be observed is, that in walking and trotting the horse moves its diagonal legs simultaneously or nearly so, that is to say, the off fore and the near hind legs move together and alternate in this action with the near fore and off hind ones; so that, whilst the one pair is being moved forward, the other sustains the weight of the animal.

In cantering and galloping the case is different: the two legs at the same side are advanced simultaneously, the other two remaining behind.

This will serve to explain why it is that, although a moderate trot is less fatiguing to horses than any other pace for a long journey, on account of the pairs of legs being used as bearers and propellers alternately, some horses will, under the rider, break into a canter, the alternate shifting of

their own and his weight from right to left becoming more fatiguing than the constant use of each pair of legs for the same functions; and the proof is, that many of these horses will go a steady trot in harness when they have only their own weight to adjust. It also explains why horses, when hurried in their trot, and over-weighted in the forehand, whereby the bearers (fore legs) become unable to support the weight thrown more and more rapidly on them by the hind legs, which now act solely as propellers, naturally, and to save themselves from falling, "lead" with a fore leg, immediately followed by a hind one — that is to say, break into a canter.

Horses that overstep, that is, bring the hind feet ahead of the track of print of the fore ones, will be usually found to be such as are over-weighted on the forehand, whilst those that step short are usually such as are over-weighted behind.

The advantage conferred by throwing the weight forward is, that it tends to increase the speed; the disadvantages attendant on it are diminished stability, and the rapid using-up of the fore legs. It has been shown that the centre of motion, that is to say, the point around which all other parts of the animal move when in action, or what comes to the same thing, the point where the least motion is felt, is situated somewhere in a perpendicular falling through the fourteenth vertebra, Plate I.

Again, in a ship or boat of any kind, people that have experienced seasickness soon find out where the centre of motion lies, and nestle round it; and the master who sails her knows well that his cargo or load, whatever it may be, must be so stowed away that the centre of gravity of the whole coincides with the centre of motion of the vessel. This is what is called "trim," as we all know. Now, the horse under a rider must have the trim that suits the objects of the latter, and bringing the rider's body, from the hips upwards, slightly forwards or backwards, will answer exactly the same purposes as shifting the hands in a yacht.

The fourteenth vertebra indicates, by its peculiar shape and position, a different function from that of the others, all of which evidently admit of movement towards it, within certain limits, whilst this one, not being adapted for this purpose, may so far be considered to be intended for the centre of motion. The construction of the horse's legs, and the relative position of the various bones composing them, furnish us with very clear proof of this same vertebra being the real centre of motion when the horse

is in action. For there is one bone in each of the hind and fore legs through which the remainder of the limb acts as a lever on the whole frame, either for the purpose of propelling it (hind legs), or supporting and lifting it (fore legs). These are the thigh-bone and the arm-bone, whose upper ends have their fulcrums or points of support in the hip-bones and shoulder-blades.

It is therefore evident that, both in a state of rest and of action, the fourteenth vertebra is constantly the centre of motion.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE SADDLE ON THE SEAT.

It would be only reasonable, one would suppose, to accommodate our saddles to our seats, just as we do every other instrument to the purposes for which it is intended; but this is precisely what is very seldom done, and in the great majority of instances the rider sits his horse just in the fashion his saddle allows, or, perhaps, compels him to do. It is therefore a matter of some importance to understand clearly the mechanical principles applicable to this piece of horse-furniture, as it will enable every rider to ascertain exactly what he wants, and how to attain his object, whatever that may be, as also to save his horse's back.

To begin with the under surface of the saddle — the portion coming in contact with the horse's back — we find two principal points for consideration, — its shape or form, and its size or extent. One general mechanical principle applies to both, namely, that the larger the surface over which a given amount of pressure is equably spread or divided, the less will be the action on any given point of the other surface in contact; and this translated into plain English means, as regards shape, that the under surface of the saddle should bear as nearly as possible the same relation to that part of the horse's back it is intended to occupy, as a mould does to the cast that is taken from it, always saving and excepting that strip lying

over the horse's backbone, which must remain altogether out of contact. The notion of making one portion come into closer contact than another, "giving a gripe," with the intention of preventing the saddle slipping, is altogether erroneous, because it is the sum total of the pressure which produces the cohesion between two surfaces; its being concentrated on one point or line does not increase this amount, but is very likely to make a hole in the horse's back.

As regards size or extent of surface, the meaning is, that the greater this is with a given weight, the less will be the pressure on any given point, and consequently the less risk of sore back, provided always that the pressure be equally distributed over the whole surface. To make a saddle a yard long, and put the weight altogether at one of its extremities is not the way to attain this very desirable object.

There must be some limit to the size of a saddle, for its own absolute weight is a matter of serious consideration. Let the size be proportioned to the weight to be carried, and if you have a tender-backed horse, make it a little bigger than would be otherwise necessary. Of course a jock can ride his race on a thing that is more a contrivance for hanging up a pair of stirrups than a saddle, whilst a two-hundred-pound rider must divide his weight over as large a surface as convenient.

The way in which the weight of the saddle may be decreased without its useful under surface being narrowed is to use, for the tree, materials combining great strength and moderate elasticity with the least possible weight. If the plates supporting the tree be made thin and light, they bend, and then retain the wood in a distorted shape. The platings should be made of steel not too highly tempered. There should be little, if any, padding under the flaps, as increased thickness between the rider's leg and the horse brings the former away from the latter.

Supposing, now, the under surface of the saddle to have the proper form and size, the next point to be determined is, where to put the weight. As we cannot, in consequence of this being a man, divide and spread it out equably over the whole upper part of the saddle as we would inert matter of any kind, we must place the rider's centre of gravity exactly over the centre of the bearing-surface of the saddle, for this is the only single point which, being loaded, transmits the pressure equably to the rest of the surface.

Take a small common table and place it exactly level on sand, grass, or

soft ground, then put a weight precisely in the centre of the table, and measure the depth to which the feet have been forced into the soil; you will find it to be the same for all four feet, if the surface on which the table stands be equally soft throughout; then shift the table a few inches, having previously removed the weight, and place this near one of the ends, instead of in the middle; measure again, and you will find that the pair of legs nearest to the weight have penetrated much deeper than the others; therefore, on a horse, in order to equalize the pressure, the rider's weight should be placed in the centre of the saddle.

But this is not all. Place a piece of stout board about two feet long on the ground, stand on one end of it, and you will find that the other loses its contact with the ground, and is more or less tilted up into the air; the board has become a lever. Now, make a motion as if about to jump, but without quitting your position on the board; this latter will, being out of contact with the ground at the further end, be shoved onwards in that direction. This is precisely what happens when a rider sits at one end of the saddle, generally the hinder one; this one is pressed down into the horse's back, the other, the front end, is tilted up, and at every movement of the horse and rider the whole saddle is shoved forward till stopped by the withers, which it will probably wound.

We may now go a step farther. Suppose the saddle be placed with its centre exactly over the combined centres of gravity and motion, and the rider in the centre of the saddle, there will be, first, an equable distribution of the combined weight of horse and rider on all four legs, both in a state of rest and action; secondly, the movements of the horse, centring in this point, have the least possible tendency to disturb the seat of the rider or the position of the saddle; thirdly, the weight of the rider, being equally distributed over the whole surface of the saddle in contact with the horse's back, is therefore less likely to injure any one portion of this; nor does it convert the saddle into a lever, and shove it forwards or backwards.

Again, let us suppose the saddle as before, but the rider sitting altogether at its hinder end, for instance, and there will be, first, the horse's equilibrium destroyed; secondly, the rider himself, being nearer to the hind legs, will first receive an impulse from that direction, and be thrown forward till he meets that coming from the opposite direction; and these two forces, instead of resolving each other from one common point into their sum total, neu-

tralize each other partially in successive shocks, at the expense of the horse's legs. It will be said that the use of the stirrups is to prevent the rider being thus thrown forward. No doubt they do, and this kind of rider always sticks out his legs towards the horse's shoulder; in other words, he transmits the shock from the hind legs to the fore ones, through the medium of the stirrups (this, by the way, is the reason why stirrup-leathers are broken), of course shoving the saddle constantly forward; and these men's girths can never be drawn tight enough to prevent the saddle tilting up in front. Thirdly, of course his weight is not distributed equably over the whole under surface of the saddle.

The next question to be determined is, To what part of the saddle should the girths be attached? Now, it is very evident that, if the placing of the weight in the centre of the saddle has the effect of transmitting an equal amount of pressure to all that part of the horse's back with which the latter is in contact, the attaching the girths so as to act directly on the centre of the saddle will have precisely the same effect; and the friction that results — that is, the adhesiveness produced by pressure — will be equable throughout, and of course least likely to injure any one particular point.

The point from which the stirrup is suspended has nearly an equal influence on the stability of the saddle, and a much greater one on the form of the seat than the position of the girths. If the stirrups be wrong, all the rest being right will be of little avail.

What is the legitimate use of the stirrups besides enabling us to mount our horses? The first and most obvious one is to give the rider lateral support, that is, prevent his slipping off to the right or left by his seat revolving round the horse's body as a wheel does round an axle. In riding barebacked, or on a saddle without stirrups, if the rider falls it is most generally to one side, and not directly forwards or backwards; and it is very evident that the more directly upon the rider's seat the stirrups be suspended, the more efficiently will they perform this duty, the resistance offered by them being perpendicularly upwards, or precisely in the opposite direction to that in which the weight falls, which is perpendicularly downwards; whereas, if the stirrups be suspended at a distance from the rider's seat, they act at an angle to the line of fall; they may, and always do, in such a position change the direction of the fall, but they cannot meet and prevent it so efficiently as when placed under the seat.

For military purposes the stirrups must be placed in the centre of the saddle, directly under the rider's seat; there is no alternative. The cavalry soldier is often compelled in the use of his weapons to stand in his stirrups. If by doing so the equilibrium of his horse be altered, he disables the animal and himself at the most critical moment.

We mentioned above that the man riding barebacked, or on a saddle without stirrups, most frequently tumbles off to the right or left; well, it will be found that with stirrups, especially when the latter are very far forward and very short, the catastrophe generally occurs by the performer being thrown over his steed's neck, to the great damage of collar-bones.

And this brings us to the length of the stirrup. The length of the arm is generally prescribed as being the proper length for the stirrup. This might answer well enough if stirrups were always suspended at the same perpendicular distance from the upper surface of the saddle, and also right under the rider's seat, and if men's arms and legs always bore a fixed proportion to one another. To adjust the stirrups precisely, the rider had better first mount, and then, letting these instruments loose together, shake himself down into the lowest part of the saddle, wherever that may be situated; his assistant may then adjust the stirrups to a convenient length. There is no use in attempting to ignore this lowest point, because every motion of the horse tends invariably to throw him into it; and if he does persist in ignoring it, he will find himself a mere stirrup-rider, which is, in its way, quite as bad as a rein-rider, the combination of both being the very climax of bad riding. For the absolute length of the stirrup no special rule can be given, applicable to all circumstances and to all kinds of riding. The only general rule that can be given is, never make your stirrups so long as to render your tread on them insecure, nor so short as to allow them to cramp up your legs and deprive them of the requisite power of motion, making you depend on the stirrups and not on your seat for your position in the saddle.

With respect to the upper surface, or seat, of the saddle, we have to remark, that as the under one must be large in proportion to the weight, so this should be roomy in proportion to the bulk of the rider. The sum of the whole matter is this—the larger the surfaces of the rider and saddle brought into permanent contact, the firmer will be the seat, and the less will it depend on the stirrups or the reins.

The saddle-flaps serve in some cases to increase, in others they absolutely diminish, the surface of contact between the rider and horse; their chief use is to protect the man's legs from injury by the girth-buckles, straps, etc.

To sum up the whole of the foregoing, we may describe the general rule for seats to be this, — the saddle in the centre of the horse's back; the girths, stirrups, and rider in the centre of the saddle.

SEATS.

When one observes the great variety of seats on horseback that present themselves to our notice every day, and their totally contradictory character in the most important respects, a certain amount of bewilderment necessarily ensues. What, for instance, can be more contradictory than to see one man sitting at one end of the saddle, as in an easy-chair, with his legs tucked up at the other, till his knees are nearly on a level with the pommel, called "the wash-ball-seat;" whilst a second, sitting in his fork, sticks out his legs as stiff and as far away from his horse as he can, taking for his model what is very aptly named "the pair-of-tongs-across-a-stone-wall seat."

We start out with the declaration that we have no desire or intention to set up any one kind of seat as a model, but this is no reason why we should not try to find out and lay before our readers what are the real essentials, leaving them to adopt whatever suits their purpose best. Now, the seat on horseback is maintained by balance, by friction, and by the support given by the stirrup; and it is easy to perceive that such a combination of all three will necessarily secure a much greater amount of stability than can be attained by depending on one to the neglect of the other two, or even depending on two in such a manner as to sacrifice the third. The best and safest seat will be always that which depends exclusively on no one means of support, but uses them all in the best manner.

It has been shown that the stability of the saddle and the safety of the

horse's back depend to a great extent on the stability of the rider's weight — that is to say, on his poise or balance. Why does anything tumble down from the position it has hitherto occupied? because it loses its balance; and the rider that does so is sure to meet the same fate, unless the friction of his seat, the stirrups, or the horse's mane are called to the rescue.

The amount of surface of contact does not increase friction, but, of course, if the whole weight be brought to bear on one or two points of a rider's seat, these will soon require soap-plaster. Here, however, we have to do with an inanimate body, the saddle on the one hand, and a very lively one, the rider's seat and legs, on the other, whose muscular action may form a very important friction; and the amount of this action does increase with the surfaces in contact, because a greater number of muscles are brought into action. Therefore we can never bring too great an amount of the surfaces of our seat and legs into contact with the saddle.

In some forms of seats the rider depends almost entirely on the pressure of his knees against the fore part of the saddle, and relinquishes altogether the advantages derived from steady contact of his seat with the other end of it. The best hunting, steeplechase, and military riders we have ever seen all agreed on this one point at least: that of depending on the thigh, and not the "under-leg," for their seat; and hence is derived the grand cardinal rule for a good seat: "*From the hips upwards movable*, in order to enable the rider to vary his balance, or use his weapons; *from the knee downward movable*, for the use of the spur, and the control of the horse's hind legs; *and between these two points, hip and knee, fixed, for the seat.*" According to this rule, the middle of the rider adheres, both by weight and muscular action, to the middle of the horse; according to the other system, the lower third of the rider clings, by muscular action alone, to the horse's shoulders, aided, perhaps, to a certain extent, by the stirrup.

But this brings us to the stirrup. Riding was certainly invented and practised before saddles existed; and it is nearly equally certain that the first saddles, pads, or whatever they were, had no stirrups, these contrivances having been subsequently invented for the purpose of giving the rider further aid in addition to that derived from balance and friction. Even nowadays many a man can ride barebacked without stirrups; and this very short statement of facts ought, we think, to go far to prove that stirrups are very subordinate in value to balance and friction taken together,

which is precisely why we have used the term stirrup-riding in an opprobrious sense. The "tongs-across-a-wall seat" depends on balance and the stirrup, renouncing all contact of the legs with the horse's body; the wash-ball seat goes farther, and abjures balance. If the stirrups are thrown too far forward, the thigh runs diagonally toward the horse's shoulder, and it is evident that the greatest amount of adhesive surface is obtained by placing the stirrup nearly under the rider, and making the tread on it perpendicular, instead of in an angle with the horizon.

There is a notion prevalent that a military seat is a fork-seat: this is simply a popular error that requires refutation. On the other hand, some people will persist in sitting on that part of their back which is still, perhaps, called back, instead of on that portion of it which is honored with a supplemental designation.

What is a man to sit on? Well, he has two bones in his seat, which we venture, in imitation of German phraseology, to call his "sitting-bones," and a third in the rear at the bottom of the spine; this third bone completes, with the other two, a triangular basis for the human seat on horseback.

Whatever difference of opinion may exist as to where the rider should sit in his saddle, or however necessary it may be to vary the exact position of the seat according to the object in view, there can be no doubt whatever that the only firm and steady seat is on the triangle. No good rider sits on his fork, nor on his spinal bone, but on his seat. How this seat is to be obtained depends on the conformation of the man. The toes should be turned in just enough to increase the hollow of the thigh; but the round-thighed man, in order to get a hollow curve, may have to *turn out* his toes a little more than a man of slender build.

The seat, therefore, depends on balance, on the amount of surface brought into contact with the saddle, both of which in their turn depend on whether the rider's weight rests on three, two, or only one corner of a triangle; and all this is necessarily modified by the position of the stirrup. We have endeavored to show the relative value of each element in succession, and now leave the reader to make such a combination of them as best suits his purpose, reminding him merely that, although he may safely modify first principles, he never can totally despise them without committing an absurdity.

The advocates of beginning without stirrups say you must first give the pupil a seat, and then when he has acquired balance and a hold of his horse, you can give him the additional assistance of the stirrups. Now, the most difficult thing to attain is balance, and the stirrup was devised for the purpose of assisting in acquiring and maintaining it; and it is therefore just as reasonable to act in this manner as it would be to set a boy to learn swimming without corks or bladders, and when he learned to support himself in the water give him these artificial aids. But there is another objection; namely, that the pupil first acquires one seat, and afterwards is expected to change it for another and better one.

Long experience in training recruits has resulted in the conviction that it is much better, and in the end more expeditious, to give the young rider stirrups from the beginning; and when he has acquired a certain amount of confidence and balance you may take away the stirrups to perfect the latter, without running the least risk of destroying the former.

THE JOCKEY'S SADDLE AND SEAT.

The saddle is placed just over the fourteenth vertebra; it is of such small dimensions that the rider can only sit on one spot, and under this, or very nearly so, the girths are attached, and the stirrups suspended; nay, still further, a surcingle passing over the exact centre of the saddle is generally employed. The length of the stirrups should, according to the best authorities, be such as just to enable the jock to clear his saddle when he stands in them, but never so long as to make him depend on the reins in the least for his upright position; therefore, when he does stand in the stirrups, he transfers, through them, his weight to the centre of the saddle, without, of course, disturbing the general equilibrium of his horse. When he wishes to bring the centre of gravity more forward — which favors, as

we have shown, the propelling action of the hind legs — he does this by bending his own body forward *from the hips upward*, and throwing forward his head, his legs remaining straight down close to his horse ; and this bend is altogether different from that of the rider who sits far back in his saddle, with his knees drawn up to the horse's shoulder. When he comes to the finish, the jock sits down to "ride" his horse. Much of the success of starting depends on the rider throwing his weight forward at the proper moment, and not overdoing it, as good riders well know.

THE HUNTING SEAT.

The length of hunting saddles has been increasing constantly with the rapidity of the pace ; and although an increase of the bearing surface of the saddle, as has been already shown, is an admirable thing in itself, no great advantage is derived, so far as the horse's back is concerned, unless the rider be placed in the centre of the saddle. But our saddles have been lengthened chiefly for the purpose of enabling us to get farther away from the stirrup, so as to use this as a point of support, not against falling to the right or left, but to prevent one's being pulled right over the horse's head in fast galloping and jumping ; and thus many riders whose object really is to throw their weight somewhat forward, because this favors speed, actually come to sit almost on the loins of their horses, where they seriously impede the action of the propellers, and are then compelled to throw their body forward in the most inconvenient and unsightly manner.

It involves unnecessary wear and tear of the horse's fore legs, because the rider's weight is with every bound thrown forward into his stirrups ; whereas, by sitting over the centre of motion, the shock is equally divided over all four legs, and not on one pair alone. So it is very evident that a man may sit far back and still ruin his horse's fore legs. Secondly, it is not the safest method, because, if the horse fails with one or both fore legs,

the rider loses all his support at once, the stirrup acting only as a pivot round which, by means of his stiff leg, his whole body is made, by the impulse received from the hind legs, to rotate and go over the horse's head. And if a horse suddenly swerves, turns on his haunches, or comes to a dead halt at a jump, the rider is most likely to continue the original line of movement, whilst the horse adopts a new one, or "reposes." Thirdly, this method of riding tends very forcibly to making the horse convert the rider's hand into a fifth leg for itself, the pull of the head on the rein coming at an acute angle to the push or tread of the leg in the stirrup; and this, when carried to excess, degenerates into pure rein and stirrup riding without any seat, especially with horses that carry their heads low.

The rule for the jockey we have seen is, never, in standing in his stirrups, to depend for seat to any extent on his reins. Why this should be neglected in hunting is not easy to understand. The Cossacks and Circassians, who all ride with a snaffle, and do wonderful things with it, sit perfectly independent of the rein; any one can make his horse equally light in the hand with a snaffle as theirs are, by making his seat as independent of the reins and stirrups, or use a curbed bit in hunting if he pleases. It is the close, steady seat that makes the hand light and the horse's mouth soft; and therefore it is much more valuable in teaching to make the young riders dispense altogether with the reins than with the stirrups, and may be done sooner.

Apropos of rising in the stirrups, we hear it asserted that "either to avoid a kick, or in jumping a large fence, the rider, by merely rising in his stirrups, lifts his body off the seat and accordingly the blow aimed at it fails to reach it."

If a man sits in the right place he does not need to rise in his stirrups for any such purpose.

We believe that the great secret of good horsemanship in general consists in avoiding exaggerations of all kinds. The saddle, the position of the stirrup, and the peculiar object in view, may and must induce modifications of the seat; but riding is still riding, and the mechanism of the horse's construction cannot be altered by mere fashion.

ROAD-RIDING.

The road-rider, although not required to take fences, or permitted to ride at full gallop like the hunter, has his own difficulties to contend with: he has to do his work on a hard, inelastic surface, and not on grass fields or ploughed land; he must be prepared to make sharp turns, and to meet all sorts of provocations to shying and restiveness, of which the hunting-man knows little or nothing; in fact, handiness, safety for himself, and a due regard for his horse's legs, are much more important considerations for him than great speed.

Let us take the hard road, in the first instance, into consideration. When one body strikes, falls, or impinges on another, to use a scientific phrase, it receives the blow back sooner or later. This is, as we all know, what is called recoil or rebound; the elastic surface gives back the blow later and more gradually; the inelastic one sooner, and more suddenly. The horse's leg being elastic, it receives but a small shock from the elastic turf, this being divided between both nearly equally; on the hard road nearly the whole recoil is transmitted back to the horse's body through its limbs, and this is nearly equal to the weight of both rider and bearer. There are various means by which this recoil may be diminished in intensity, to the great ease of the horse. One of the most obvious is to distribute the weight as nearly as possible over the middle of the horse's back, which is constructed, as we have shown, in such a manner as to admit of a certain amount of elastic action in a vertical direction — in plain words, up and down.

Two men can carry a greater weight with an elastic pole on their shoulders than with a stiff one; and if the burden be not exactly in the centre of it, the man to whom it is nearest will get more of the recoil from the ground than the other one. Now, taking into account that the road-rider does not want great speed, and has at the same time an inelastic surface to deal with, there can, we think, be little doubt that, by placing his saddle and

himself over the middle of the horse's back, he will save his bearer and himself a large amount of recoil. If, however, in this position he thrusts his whole foot into the stirrup, he thereby throws away a further chance; for, by merely resting with the ball of his foot on the bar of the stirrup, his knee being slightly bent, he superadds the elastic action of his own legs at knee and ankle to that of the horse's, and this is the legitimate and proper way of riding "close seat."

A wholly useless and absurd method of performing this feat is when the stirrup is ever so far away from the part of the saddle on which the rider sits, for then there is an end of the elastic action of the rider's leg.

The plan adopted in England is to avoid the recoil of the "close seat" by rising in the stirrups, which, of course, is the most sensible way for a man who has to ride long distances and is not encumbered with weapons. It has, however, its inconveniences, especially if the stirrup is placed very far forward; for then, in the first place, the foot being thrust home in the stirrup, the elasticity of the rider's leg is not utilized; and even when this is not the case, the "tread" being oblique cannot have the effect intended; secondly, the whole seat is abandoned for a certain time, nothing remaining in contact with the horse except the leg from the knee downwards, which is of little use; thirdly, the horse learns to lean on the hand, for the rider must depend on his reins, for a moment of time at least, which, of course, renders correct biting impossible; finally, the rider's weight is being constantly transferred from the hind to the fore quarters of the horse. There may be average equilibrium, but it is never permanently in the right place, and hence the danger; for a sudden start or stumble at the moment the rider is in the air is the most common cause of the accidents that occur.

There is, however, a further peculiarity belonging to this English method, or rising in the saddle, that is worth understanding, because the successful trotting of many horses depends on its being so. The man riding "close seat" rises and falls with each tread of the horse; the English rider only with the intermediate ones; he always comes down on his saddle simultaneously with one and the same hind leg; and the consequence is, that in trotting after this fashion one diagonal pair of legs is constantly saved from the recoil, and the other as constantly exposed to it.

Every practical rider must have observed that with certain horses there is a difficulty in starting to trot, in the accommodation of the rider's rise in

the stirrups to the first movements; he will have to feel his way, as it were, to the proper leg, and perhaps be obliged to sit out two or three shakes before he can get at it; for many horses trot unequally — that is, take a longer stride with one pair of legs than with the other. The rider should observe this in difficult cases, and try to find out, which he soon can, with which hind leg he should rise or fall. Men who have this instinct are able to trot horses that perfectly good riders fail with.

A celebrated German veterinary surgeon has observed that the near hind and off fore legs of most horses are stronger than the other two; and he attributes some well-known but hitherto seemingly inexplicable facts in connection with horses to this circumstance — as, for instance, that they naturally prefer, in cantering and galloping, to lead with the near leg, the weight being then supported by the two strongest limbs (near hind and off fore); that spavin occurs more frequently on the off than the near side; and that horses in wheeling about, through restiveness, always do so to the left, on the near hind leg, etc. He advances in support of his views the well-known fact that men's right arms and left legs are naturally most relied on, being also stronger; and he believes this to be the case with very many other animals — dogs, for instance, whose method of going diagonally seems to prove it. Now it is quite possible that this is also the cause of what has been alluded to above, — namely, that in trotting after the English fashion, the horse endeavors to accommodate the strong and weak pairs of legs to the rise and fall of the rider in the saddle; and if so, it is worth the attention of practical men.

It is scarcely necessary, after what has been already said, to demonstrate over again how conducive to handiness, perfect mastery over the horse, independence of the rein, and therefore good biting, a central position of the saddle, stirrups, and seat must be; and these are, we take it, the conditions under which road-riding may be done safely and agreeably.

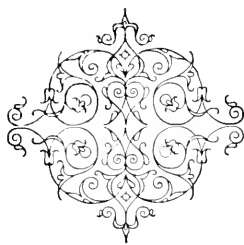
THE MILITARY SEAT.

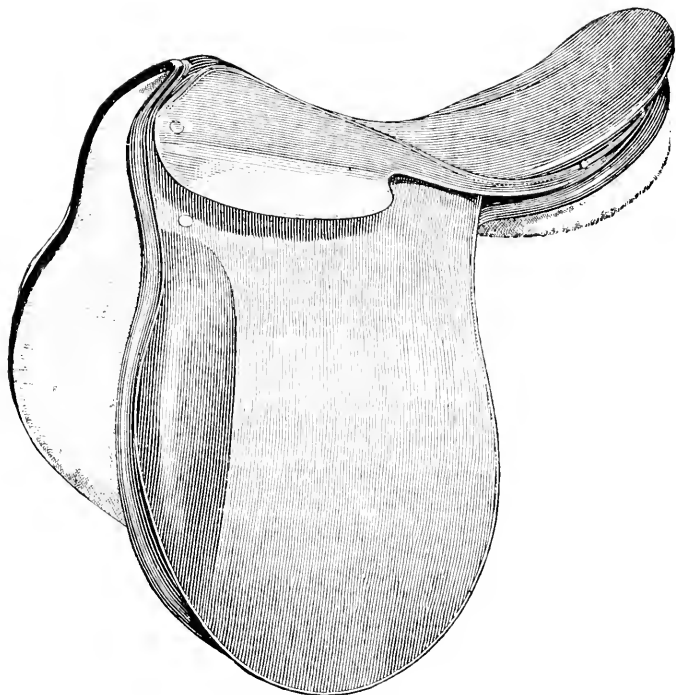
And, as to the seat, the hunting rider can adjust his weight as he pleases; he may vary his position in the saddle, which constitutes the whole of the dead weight; his doing so must not necessarily give his horse a sore back or bruised withers. On the other hand, the dead weight carried by the troop horses is most usually equal to, in many cases greater than, that of the rider; a shifting of the seat will, therefore, necessarily destroy not only the poise of the horse, but, what is still worse, that of the saddle — and this is what kills the horses, or, at least, sends them into hospital.

The cavalry soldier's seat must be therefore fixed, and not subject to variation; in charging he must bend his body forwards, from the hips upwards, in order to use his weapons, and stand in his stirrups, and this will suffice to accelerate the speed of his horse. The grand rule is to arrange the saddle itself and the stirrups so that the rider can only sit in the proper position, that he falls naturally into it, and that it requires no muscular effort to maintain it.

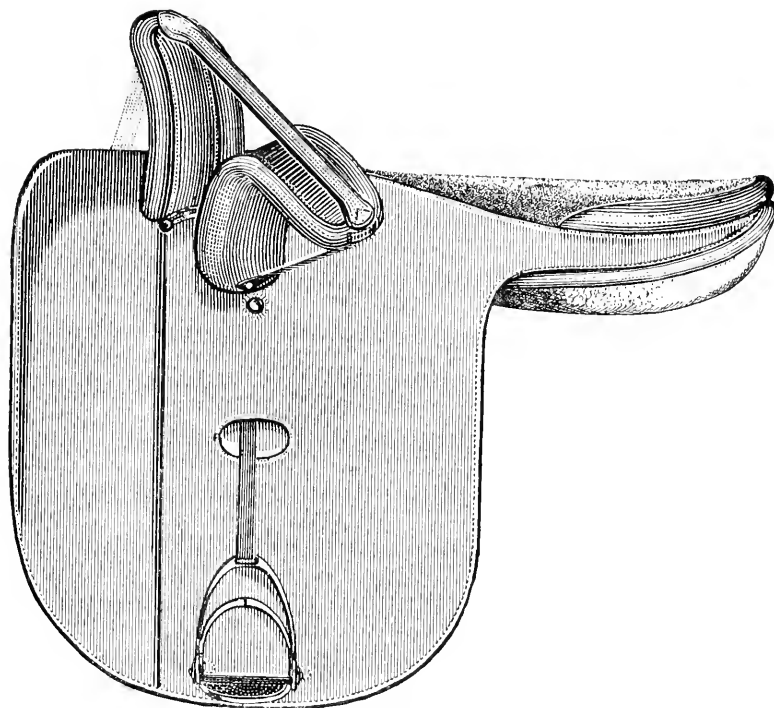
If this be not the case, the moment the man becomes tired, or his horse makes a rapid movement, the whole seat is lost, and the muscular effort that should remain altogether available for the sabre is expended in endeavoring to maintain or regain an injudicious seat. The true seat is, therefore, in the middle of the saddle, whose upper surface should be so formed as not to admit of any other one; then the stirrup must be under the seat, and not eight to twelve inches in front of it. For that requires muscular action to keep the stirrup in a certain position at an angle to its natural fall, instead of the stirrup supporting the leg as the latter falls. Such a position is not maintainable for any length of time, or in sharp movement. In trot, for instance, the soldier, not being permitted to rise in his saddle, must seek a support which the stirrups cannot afford if they are too far forward, the tread in the stirrup comes to be in the direction of the

point of the horse's shoulder, "tongs across a wall," and the counteraction is then upwards in the line of the man's thigh, against which the intestines descend, and produce, if there is the slightest natural weakness in the individual, rupture. The stirrups being far forward in the hunting or civilian saddle are not so injurious in this way, because the rider evades the shock by rising in the saddle—and this is just what led to the English way of riding; but the cavalry soldier cannot do so.





"OUR GLADSTONE SADDLE."



'OUR VICTORIA SADDLE

PART II.

The best thing for the inside of a man is the outside of a horse. — OLD PROVERB.

“ FIRST LESSONS.”

HORSEBACK exercise is the physician's prescription to a patient whose general derangement of stomach, liver, and skin, not to mention brain, has been brought about by sedentary and mental exhaustive pursuits. To the pupil commencing to ride, two grand rules must be constantly obeyed, first, the avoidance of fatigue; second, the recognition of amusement in connection with the lessons, which must be conducted according to the physical capabilities of the individual.

Boys learn to ride anywhere, or on any sort of an animal; but the person who has not ridden since his youth, distant a quarter of a century, cannot expect to do the same.

A little preparatory training, carefully conducted, will do much towards rendering the first riding lesson easy. A mild course of gymnastics such as the dumb-bells, not being too heavy, will give a compulsory, firm position to the lower half of the body, while the upper half is actively employed. *Now that is exactly what is needful for a horseman* — that the lower limbs should be attached to the horse, like a centaur, and his trunk well balanced and flexible.

When a grown man, after the time his bones are set and his muscles assume new duties with difficulty, takes to riding either as a remedy for indisposition of body or mind, or as an amusement, he should avail himself of the saddle which will help him most, giving him a comfortable, secure, and upright seat, no chafing, and easy to retain under difficulties. This is our Gladstone saddle, designed by us, and made by the best English saddlers for our establishment only. It is used even by practised horsemen, whose muscles are less strong and nerves less steady than in the days of their youth.

To be thoroughly comfortable and safe it is as necessary that the rider should be measured for a Gladstone saddle as for a pair of trousers or breeches. The seat must be large enough, the sloping under the thighs fit in well, and the pads in front of the knees be arranged to a nicety. The seat is soft and springy, causing no soreness even after a long ride. A gentleman who had been riding a common saddle described the change to one of our Gladstone's, as "all the difference between abject terror and perfect confidence."

MOUNTING.

Horsemanship came with the horses from the East. The first horsemen were soldiers, and the art is to this day affected by military traditions. We are all taught to mount or dismount on the left or "near side" of the horse, because the military horseman requires to mount with his sword or spear in his right hand ready for defence or attack. This compels him to face towards the rear of the horse.

The correct way of mounting for civilians is shown by the drawings No. 1 and No. 2. To attain the position "prepare to mount," the pupil should grasp the reins with the right hand, and rest it on the pommel of the saddle; then take hold of the stirrup with the left hand, raise the left foot, and place it in the stirrup as far as the ball of the foot, carefully keeping the toe away from the horse's side.

To attain the second position "mount," spring from the right instep (not to drag the body up by the hands), bringing both heels together, the body upright and slightly leaning over the saddle, both knees firm against the flap of the saddle. As you spring, grasp the mane with the left hand. The right leg should now be passed clear over the horse's quarters to the off side. The knee should be closed to the saddle first, and in passing the right leg over the horse's croup, the toe should be down. The pupil should



"PREPARE TO MOUNT."

next be shown how to take a rein in each hand, and be placed in the saddle. In taking the reins they should be through the full of the hand and over the forefinger, with the thumb closed firmly on the top, and the little finger should be outside the rein.

The pupil should sit in the *middle* of the saddle, with the body upright but easy; the head raised, and the weight of the upper part of the body over the hips; the shoulders square, and thrown back; the small part of the back slightly bent forward; the elbows under the shoulders, and to touch the hips lightly. The hands should be in front of the elbows, which will bring them about six inches apart, and the wrist very slightly rounded outwards, the little finger about as high as the elbow and under the hand, the thumb on the top and close on the rein. The flat side of the thigh and inside of the knee should be placed to the saddle, but not *screwed* round so as to take all the power out of the leg. (A great deal here depends on the shape of the leg. A man with a round thigh and large knee finds it more difficult to do this than one with a thin, flat thigh and small knee, and allowance must be made accordingly.) The lower part of the legs should be close to the sides of the horse, and the heels down.

The stirrup may now be fitted, and in doing this the bar of the stirrup should reach about three inches above the upper edge of the heel of the boot; the feet are then to be placed in the stirrups as far as the ball of the foot, care being taken in doing this not to get the knees forced too much up.

The sketch No. 3, "the proper seat," shows the square seat, the upright carriage, the fall of the legs, and position of the toes. A firm seat can be attained by practice and close attention to the style of the rider here depicted.

After feeling confidence, it is well to acquire flexibility of body above the hips, while the lower parts—hip to knee—are left firmly attached to the horse, learning, while still riding first slowly, then fast, to lean back and touch the horse with the shoulders, to bend down, put on, and take off either stirrup; in trotting to lose a stirrup and regain it without bending; to let the stirrups up or down while walking; all of which will render the seat firm, and give the rider confidence.

If a horse is ridden with a loose rein and careless leg, he can turn round to one side before he can be stopped, and if he is tired he may overbalance



"MOUNT."

himself and fall. Therefore a horse should always be "pulled together" or "collected" before he is asked to move; he should be slightly retained by the bridle, and lightly pressed by the legs. This makes him stand square with his legs under him, and helps his equilibrium. The legs of a good horseman on a well-trained horse will imperceptibly guide and regulate his paces almost as much as the reins.

"THE RISE" IN THE STIRRUPS.

The general mistake in beginning to rise in the stirrups is that the rider works too hard and continues bobbing up and down without getting the time, taking a great deal out of himself and his horse and doing no good.

In rising the seat should just clear the saddle, but the body must be kept long enough up, as it were, to rise with one step and sit down with the next (although the horse really takes a step between). If he loses the time, which he is pretty sure to do at first, it is no use to keep on working the body up and down to try and recover it, but sit still for a few steps and then try again.

It is found advisable with some pupils in beginning this lesson to shorten their stirrups a hole for a time, and with others to take a lock of the mane in the right hand, first putting both reins into the left hand, of course resuming the proper position as soon as they get into the way of it a little. Care must also here be taken that the lower parts of the legs are kept steady. Nothing looks worse than to see a man kicking his horse under the jaw with his toe, and in the flank with the heel every time he rises on the stirrup. Besides, as long as the legs are swinging backwards and forwards, the seat cannot be very secure.

With a full bridle, that is, snaffle and curb, the pupil should ride on the snaffle, leaving the curb reins loose on the horse's neck, and then he must be instructed how to take all four reins. There are several ways of doing so, but the following is preferable: —



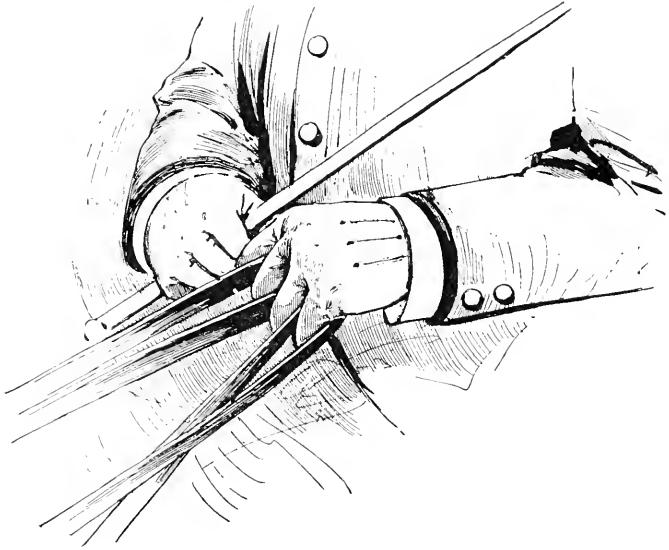
"THE PROPER SEAT."

Take the centre of both reins in the right hand, the snaffle rein being on the top of the curb; then place a finger of the left hand between each rein, beginning with the little finger, so that the left snaffle is outside the little finger, the next finger being between the curb reins, and the right snaffle rein between the forefinger and the middle finger, the whole being brought over the forefinger, and the thumb closed firmly on the top of the reins. Thus the curb reins are the two centre ones, and the snaffle reins on the outside.

DISMOUNTING.

In "preparing to dismount," the right hand takes hold of the reins above the left, and the right foot is taken out of the stirrup, the left hand then slides forward on the reins which are still held in the right hand about twelve inches from the saddle; then drop the spare part of the reins out of the right hand to the off side, take the lock of the mane as in mounting, and place the right hand on the pommel of the saddle. In doing this the body should be kept upright. In "dismounting," the body is to be supported by the right hand and left foot, and the right leg brought clear over the horse's croup to the near side; heels close. (It should be explained to the pupil that a pause is always to be made here both in mounting and dismounting; in case the horse is not steady or anything wrong, he can from this position come down or not as may be best.)

The body is not to be lowered till the right foot is on the ground. Then, keeping the hands in the same position, take the left foot out of the stirrup and place it in line with the horse's fore feet. The pupil is then to quit his hold with both hands and turn to his left, as he turns taking hold of the rein about six inches from the ring of the snaffle and raising the horse's head.

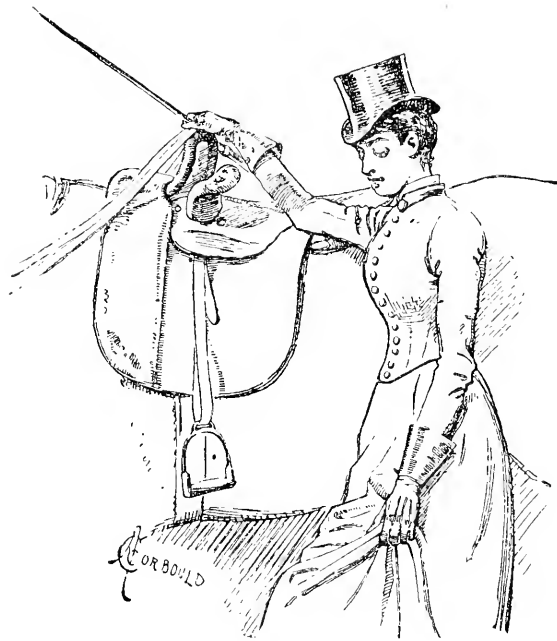


HOLDING A FULL BRIDLE.

LADIES' RIDING.

Nowhere in woman's empire does she appear to such an advantage as when on a horse's back; in the street, the park, or anywhere a horsewoman appears, the eye is irresistibly attracted; and the figure, the face, the dress, and finally the horse, are closely scrutinized. There is nothing so attractive to the male observer as a graceful horsewoman in a well-fitting riding-habit. Her beauty is, no doubt, enhanced by the blood being set in motion and the exhilarating effects of the splendid exercise. It imparts a courage to a timid woman, which must be beneficial in after life, and as an aid to digestion and health the exercise is invaluable. There is no limit to the age at which a lady may commence taking lessons. Some of the most finished horsewomen known did not begin riding till long after they were married. The position of the lady rider is much more secure than the man's. On a well-fitted lady's saddle, with the pommels arranged to a nicety, it is almost impossible for the rider to lose her seat; it is as essential, however, for the lady to be measured for the saddle as for her riding habit.

The seat of the saddle should be perfectly level. Level seat may require a few words of explanation. The ordinary side-saddle, made with the arch of the tree raised to clear the withers, is necessarily much higher in front than behind, and as a consequence the knee is thrown up in a cramped and fatiguing position. It is thus difficult to keep the figure erect, an aching back ensues to the rider, and the body is twisted sideways, giving only a one-sided development to the muscles, and great danger of causing damage to the spine. The weight is not in the centre, and that with the chafing on the withers is frequent torture to the horse. The level seat has the tree cut away to escape the withers, and replaced by a pad of soft leather, giving that horizontal shape from front to rear so much desired, yet so seldom found. It permits the rider to sit perfectly square to the horse's head, with the knee down, the body erect, and no cramps, fatigue, or twisting the spine.



MOUNTING.

The safest arrangement for side-saddles, to avoid risk of being hung up by the stirrup, or dragged by the skirt, can be seen on our "Victoria" side-saddles, with perfectly level seat, patented and adopted in England. We have secured them for this country, and find them invaluable. With these attachments, in case of accident, the foot is instantly released, and the skirt of the habit falls clear of the saddle.

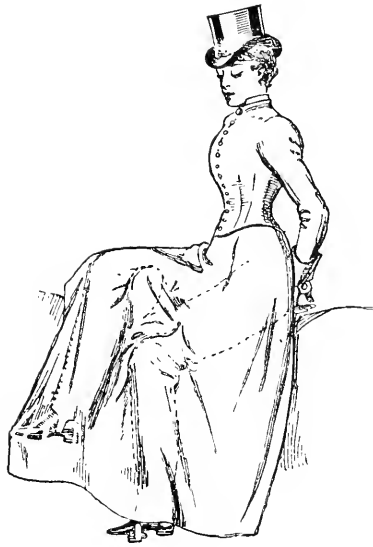
The method of mounting is as follows:—

Take the reins and whip in your right hand, and lay the fingers of it firmly upon the top of the up-pommel,—grasping it, in fact; then, with your left hand, gather your skirt away from your left foot, and place this latter in the hand of your assistant, bending your knee as you do so. When you feel that his palm is firmly supporting the sole of your foot, take your left hand from your habit skirt, and place it on his left shoulder, he being in a slightly stooping position at the time. Then give him the signal. As you say the word, straighten your knee, and make a slight spring upward, your cavalier at the same instant raising himself to an erect position, without letting his hand drop in the smallest degree. By this arrangement you will reach your saddle with comfort and expertness. Be cautious also not to touch your horse, when mounting, with your whip.

As soon as you are secure upon your saddle, and have learned to feel at home there, get your horse walked about with the reins looped over his neck. Do not touch them at all at first, or trouble yourself about carrying a whip, but rather devote your energies and attention to acquiring an *even balance*, and learning the proper grip of the pommels, without which you never can ride well.

Do not lean heavily upon the stirrup, or force yourself to undue muscular action; nor will it be in all cases wise to thrust the left foot "home," as it is called: better ride from the ball of it. Ascertain before starting that your stirrup-leather is precisely the right length, in order that you may not be induced to lean to the left side, owing to its being too long, or have your knee uncomfortably thrust up on account of its shortness. You should sit erect and square, with chest forward and shoulders well back, yet without any appearance of stiffness or rigidity of position. Be as firm as a rock *below* the waist, but light and flexible as a reed above it. On these two rules all the beauty, and indeed the safety, of equestrianism depend.

Again, you will discover that the toe of your right foot has a dreadful



SEATED.

tendency to turn outward from the ankle, while that of the left turns down, and shows the sole of your boot to those in the rear of you.

Avoid, above all things, sitting too much to the left: it will not only induce you to lean too hard upon the stirrup,—a thing which you ought not to do at all,—but will be pretty certain to give your horse a tender back from the very beginning.

Never, on any account, grip the pommels, or clutch at the mane, no matter how frightened you may be. A little start will not upset you, nor will a sudden playful movement have the power to send you off, providing that you are sitting “square,” with your right leg well pressed over the up-pommel, and your left against the leaping-head, while your whole attention is given to your seat, and to nothing else whatever.

This is the true secret of learning to ride from balance; and once it is yours, nothing can unseat you, so long as your horse remains upon his legs.

To rise in the saddle, you must keep the left heel well down, and move the leg as little as possible. To sway it like a pendulum will not help you one bit.

Keep your hands perfectly steady, your arms to your sides, your left foot slightly pressing the stirrup as the horse throws out his near fore leg, while you lift yourself very slightly at the precise instant that his other leg is advanced.

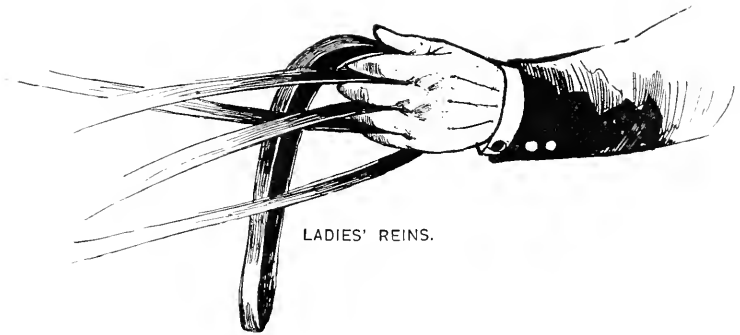
It will take you a long while to accomplish this. Over and over again, you will sigh with disappointment, and say involuntarily, “I cannot do it.” But you can, and will in time, if you will only persevere. Few things worth learning can be acquired in a hurry. A woman with plenty of courage and go about her will learn how to “stick on” in an incredibly short space of time.

Horses are controlled by the reins, the voice, the legs, and a lady rider must make her whip-handle serve her for the management and guidance of her horse on the off side, where a man has the advantage of having his right leg to assist him in the office. For example, in turning a corner to the right, the body should be bent slightly to the off side, and the leg be pressed lightly but firmly on the left side. When the turn is to the left, the body should be inclined that way, while the whip-handle is judiciously pressed against the off side: this preserves an even balance, and prevents the animal’s quarters from coming too suddenly round.



OFF SIDE OF VICTORIA SADDLE, SHOWING LEVEL SEAT.

1



LADIES' REINS.

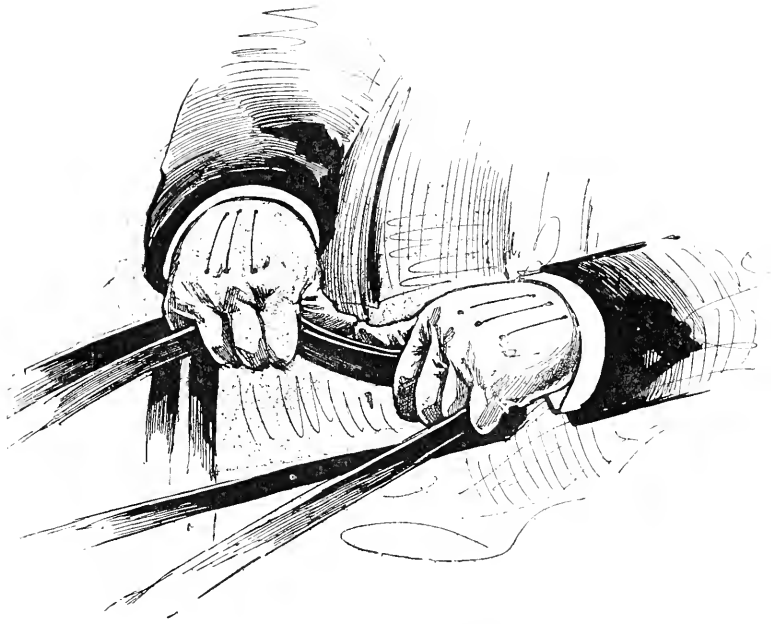
LEAPING.

Every one should learn to leap, as the practice gives the rider a secure seat. When a horse leaps he throws the unprepared rider forward. The object then is to resist or neutralize by his position in the saddle, the impetus forward, created by the horse's bound. The horseman must sit firmly in the *middle* of the saddle, with the snaffle reins held in both hands, and both hands held low over the horse's withers, and look straight between his horse's ears. As the horse approaches the leap, he should bend his body back, *from the hips upwards*, over the cantle of the saddle, while keeping his "seat" firmly in its place by the grip of his legs and thighs.

The degree of leaning back depends on the extent of the leap and the action of the horse; at a great down jump the best horsemen almost touch the horse's croup. Some make the mistake of *sitting back* on the saddle and thus exposing themselves to the action of the loin-muscles; whereas it is not their seat, but their shoulders, that should fall flexibly back and return to the upright position when the horse is landed.

According to military instructions "the body is to be inclined forward as the horse rises, and backwards as he alights;" but that is a feat which only a long-practised horseman can accurately perform. The chances are that the pupil who attempts it, if he does not get a black eye or bruised nose from the horse's neck, will find himself jumped out of the saddle from not having timed his change to the backward motion accurately.

The reins should be held loose enough to give the horse power to fully extend his neck. Many a rider has been pulled out of the saddle, at a leap, by the extension of the horse's neck, and many times the horse refuses the leap from being held hard by the reins when his mouth should be *felt*, not restrained.



HOLDING REINS IN LEAPING.

HINTS TO BEGINNERS.

Teaching horsemanship is expressed in the following commands, which all good riding-masters repeat hour after hour to their pupils. Shoulders back — waist slack — heels down — hands down — elbows close to side — head erect — eyes directed upwards — sit back.

A short rider mounting a tall horse may let down the stirrup leathers a few holes, and take them up when mounted.

Restive horses should be mounted in the stable yard, with their heads turned against the closed stable door, until they learn to stand still without being held.

Make it your habit to fondle your horse before mounting, so as to accustom him to your voice.

Always approach his head first.

The bridle hand is the left hand.

The whip hand is the right hand.

The near side is the left side as you sit; the off side is to the right.

Never begin to fight with a horse unless you have strength enough to win.

If a horse rears, do not support yourself by the reins; loosen them slightly and throw your arm around his neck, giving him first one spur and then the other; this will compel the hind legs to move forward, and he loses his support.

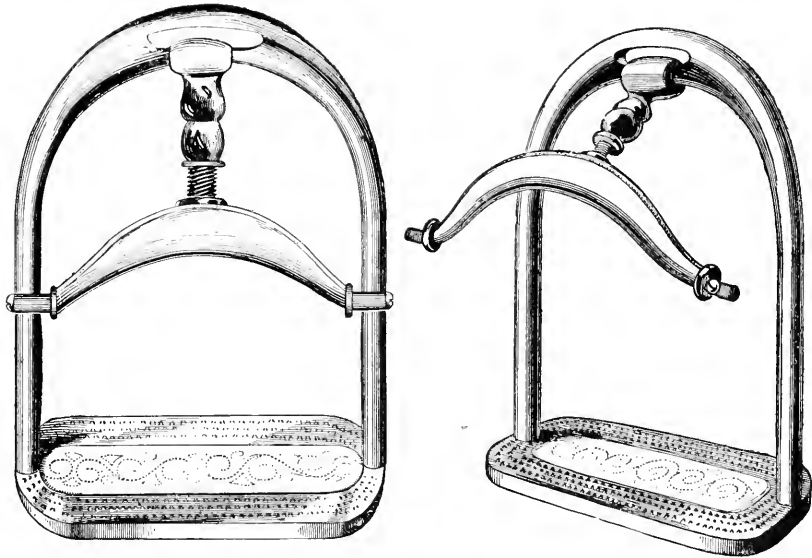
When a horse shies and turns half round, it is useless to try and force him back, because he always turns on his strong side; but quick as thought turn him round in a complete circle; if he still hesitates to go forward, circle him again and again, because in this motion he cannot resist.

If he shies without turning around, always pull him from the object of his alarm.

If he tries to rub you against a wall or tree, pull his head towards it.

If a horse is really alarmed, as for instance at a machine of some kind, dismount, soothe, and lead him past.

When a gentleman accompanies a lady, he should ride on the right side, his bridle and whip in the right hand, so that he may be prepared to assist her with his left hand if needed.



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