



RIDING

BY

W. A. KERR, V.C.



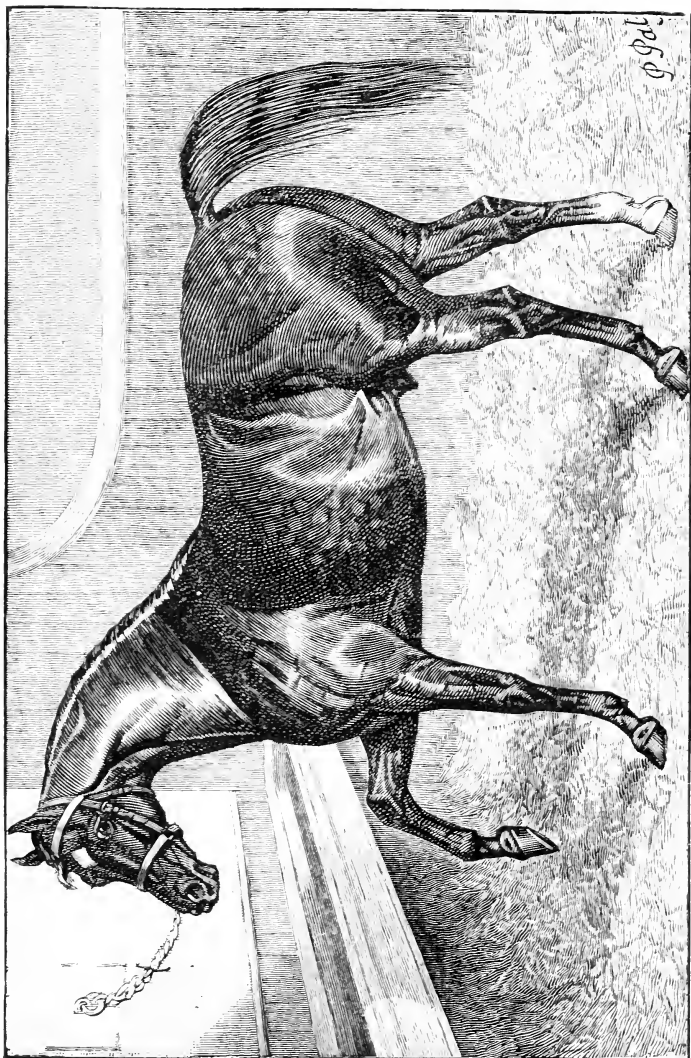
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“KHALED,” AN ANGLo-ARABIAN.

PRACTICAL HORSEMANSHIP.

BY

W. A. KERR, V.C.,

FORMERLY SECOND IN COMMAND OF THE 2ND REGIMENT
SOUTHERN MAHARATTA HORSE.

ILLUSTRATED.



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PREFACE.



ENGLAND has the credit of being a nation of horsemen. To any such *specialité* our countrymen have no valid claim. Half an hour's stroll in the Park, or a few minutes' loll over the rails by Rotten Row, will convince any capable equestrian that this popular belief is not founded on fact, but, on the contrary, is a palpable fallacy. During the London season, and out the of season, some of the worst, as well as some of the best, riding in the world is displayed. Before the Crimean War our cavalry rode very indifferently, so much so that Napoleon the Great is reported to have said that did he possess our horses, he could readily beat our men. But we have changed all that. Of hard-riding, bold-riding, and rough-riding we could always boast, but with us the *manége* (derived from the Latin words, *manus*, "the hand," and *ago*, "to do, or act") was never popular. A national failing is to "talk horse," but a large majority are supremely ignorant on the subject, and few and far between are those who can be termed *manus agere*, or skilful to handle. Among us are not a few who, in the

words of *Punch*, are “the fustiest men on an ’oss, and the ’ossiest men on fut.” The proportion of Englishmen and Englishwomen, of the upper and middle classes, who have any practical knowledge of horses and their management, in and out of the stable, is really very small. Military statistics show that the lower strata of society are not any better acquainted with the noble animal, for out of the seven hundred recruits, who last year joined one of our principal cavalry depôts, only one individual had ever, prior to taking the Queen’s shilling, ridden a horse.

That the English, Scotch, and Irish can justly boast a natural love for the horse cannot be denied. Our instinctive desire to be his master, our aptitude to accommodate ourselves, to some exclusive extent, to his ways, and a facility of acquiring the art of riding him, are possessed by us as by no other nation. Though we do not make him, with true Arab zest, the omnipresent partner of our occupations, and part and parcel of our history, still he, more than any animal under the dominion of man, occupies our thoughts and is our constant theme. We have seen exhibitions of horsemanship by the Bedaween of the desert, by the famed Tungustanee horse, by the pick of the Maharatta and Mogulai sowars, *fantasias* executed by the swarthy riders of the Sahara; we have witnessed feats in the saddle by the Gaucho and the Cow-boy, but, with the exception of our own colonial kith and kin—the Australian stockman—none can compare with the finished horseman of these isles; and no woman, save and except H.I.M. the Empress of Austria and her sister the ex-Queen

of Naples, looks so well outside her horse, or manages him with such perfect ease, as the fair daughter of Albion, Scotia, or Erin.

We do not pretend to teach riding, as some medicos profess to cure, by written instructions. The equestrian art is no more to be acquired by the sole means of printer's ink and the artist's pencil—even one so deft as that of Miss Sophy Turner—than are painting, sculpture, or fencing. All we aim at, in these few pages, is to give the tyro, and those whose faults need correction, some useful wrinkles as aids in the application and development of the practical tuition which must be undergone.

There are in London, and in a few of our fashionable watering-places, riding-schools where civilians can receive sound instruction, and which have all the advantages of capacious covered-in rides; but we are not all dwellers in towns. Moreover, much is to be learnt out of school by close observation of proficient, and by putting into practice at home the few hints contained in these pages. When the reader is in the vicinity of a garrison town at which a regiment of cavalry is stationed, or near to a cavalry depôt, an introduction to the officer commanding should be sought, who, the applicant finding his own horse, might be disposed to permit of his joining “the ride.”

The art of equitation, as now taught in the British army, is of the highest. Harshness and undue severity are no longer permitted in the military school; the lessons are progressive and thoroughly explained by question and answer; the muscles, by an admirable system of gymnastics and

physical drill, mounted and dismounted, are by degrees developed and hardened; the height and weight of the recruit are added to, and his chest measurement greatly increased. Great stress is laid on the necessity of avoiding any such rough forcing treatment as is likely to create nervousness or beget want of confidence. The introductory lessons are short, and only the quietest and most sedate horses, animals thoroughly broken to their work, are the novice's first mounts. The result of this carefully thought-out and excellent system is that our men are well down in their saddles in an easy, natural, and strong position, understand the different "aids," and can use their weapons with good effect. The seat of the trooper is now a near approach to what is understood by "the hunting seat," a combination of ease and flexibility, in which, as aptly described by Sir Francis B. Head, Bart., "the knees form the pivot, or rather hinge, the legs beneath them the grasp, while the thighs, like the pastern of a horse, enable the body to rise and fall as lightly as a carriage on its springs." Our gallant Six Hundred, who perpetrated that magnificent folly the death-ride of Balaclava, with their upright balance "fork" seats, would, with all their devoted heroism, have found it impossible to go in and out of a road in line, negotiating the stiff fences on either side, without drawing rein or without emptying a saddle. And yet this feat was performed by one of our regiments during last autumn manoeuvres without the slightest hesitation, though this "double event" would have sent many a so-called hunting man skirting round by "shuffler's bottom."

Whenever a man presumes to give advice, or to pose as an instructor, he lays himself open to the charge of egoism and arrogance unless he can adduce valid reasons for fancying himself qualified for such a task. In this instance the writer, possessed of a *stable* mind from his boyhood upwards, can fairly lay claim to many years of practical experience as an owner of all sorts of horses, as an amateur trainer, and as a not unsuccessful gentleman-rider on the flat, over hurdles, and "between the flags." In old Deccan days of "saddle, spur, and spear," when men rode hard over a break-neck country for "first blood," many a grim-grey boar has fallen to his hog-spear. As adjutant and second in command of a smart cavalry regiment, he, as in duty bound, has imparted the art of equitation to many a score of as good light-horsemen as ever drew sabre or charged home. The remarks on horse-buying, suggested by the author's somewhat lengthy and wide experience, may put intending purchasers on their guard, save much disappointment and serious loss, and, at the same time, help to mount them to their satisfaction. The subjects of "Driving," and "Stable-management," are reserved for subsequent volumes.

In these pages—all too few for the demonstration of an art in which perfection is seldom attained—the writer addresses himself to three classes of those who prefer to take exercise on four legs:—Firstly, to those who never have ridden at all; secondly, to those who having ridden a little are secretly convinced that they are but at the bottom rung of the ladder; thirdly, to those who having

ridden a good deal, and that very badly, are willing to "climb down," to take a back seat, and to commence *de novo*.

The first attribute of a good horseman, or horsewoman, is courage or nerve; the next, hands and seat. It has been said that about four-fifths of the art depend on attaining a *just* seat, and the balance on the possession of light hands. But there are other essentials which are treated of in the body of the volume. The reader will please bear in mind that perfection is not to be attained without long and continuous practice on all sorts of horses, and that there is a vast difference between *riding* and being *carried*. It can only be said of few that—

"He grew unto his seat;
And to such wond'rous doing brought his horse,
As he had been incorps'd and demy-natur'd
With the brave beast."—(*Hamlet*.)

Very reluctantly, in some cases of persistent vice, the author has suggested drastic measures and severe correction. "He that spares the rod spoils the child," is a true maxim too little applied in these superficial days of cram; then again, "A merciful man is merciful to his beast."

W. A. K.

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HORSEMANSHIP.



CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

A WORK entitled "A Guide to Health and Long Life" says: "In general it may be laid down as a rule that *riding* is the best exercise for regaining health, and walking for retaining it." Why not preserve a *juste milieu*, ride a good deal, walk a good deal, and banish the doctor? Riding certainly, in the most effectual manner, strengthens the stomach and intestines, and is less tiresome and laborious to the lower limbs than walking, so that persons in a weak condition of health can take horse-exercise with less pain or difficulty. Both body and mind are enlivened by riding. Sir Philip Sidney wrote: "You will never live to any age without you keep yourself in health with exercise, and in heart with joyfulness;" and a medical aphorism says: "The grand secret (of health) seems to be to contrive that the exercise of the body and that of the mind may serve as relaxations to each other." Ye who have experienced the indescribable elasticity and happiness of a morning gallop on Newmarket Heath, the Downs, or some other expanse of sound turf, with a free-going horse under you, "who looked

as though the speed of thought were in his limbs," breathing the pure bracing atmosphere of a summer's early morn, tell me what is more exhilarating, what so exquisitely refreshing?

Give me a noble steed of stainless purity of breed, his limbs fashioned fair and free in nature's justest symmetry, one that can travel far and fast, untiring as the ship on the sea, a crisp keen air, then begone melancholy, a fig for dull care, throw medicine to the dogs! Who among us, when the hot blood of youth galloped through his veins, has not felt

"The joy, the triumph, the delight, the madness,
The boundless, overflowing, bursting gladness,"

when the hounds throw their tongues sharp and quick, the gorse bends, quivers, and cracks again, and a varmint racing-like wild Hector, accepting notice to quit, flashes from the cover and bravely faces the open? Better this than all the cunningly compounded pick-me-ups of the *Materia Medica*.

No one should attempt to acquire the art of riding—for it is an art, and a very high one—simply because it is the correct thing to do. There must be a natural "hankering after it," a desire to emulate the prowess of some acknowledged artist in the saddle. Three things are all but indispensable to the tyro who aims at perfection—courage, temper, firmness. Without the first he will lack confidence, and this want of courage the horse speedily finds out and presumes on. A bold determined rider imparts those qualities, in most instances, to the animal under him, and, *vice versâ*, timidity is transmissible. The horse's instinct is very keen; he is not long in finding out whether he has a man or a "muff" on him. Temper and patience are synony-

mous terms ; without them the pupil can neither be taught himself nor impart instruction to his horse. Temper implies the exercise of discretion and judgment. Though we are opposed, as a rule, to the *force contre force* system, there are occasions when firmness, in combination with courage and patience, can alone establish the mastery of man, and these must be brought into play in the case of vicious, stubborn animals.

As an example of temper in combination with Job-like patience and firmness, and an illustration of the saying, "all things come to him who waits," I may instance the treatment by which a well-known Yorkshire breeder and breaker—one who always broke-in his own colts—cured a stubborn and by no means uncommon case of mulishness. Riding a colt one day, about noon, the colt *reested*, *i.e.* obstinately refused to turn out of the road that led to his stables. He reared, whipped round, kicked, plunged, stuck his toes firmly in the ground, backed into the ditch, and otherwise behaved himself unseemly. Many a man would have administered severe punishment, and have endeavoured to exorcise the demon of contrariness by free application of the Newmarket flogger and the Latchfords. Our friend's creed was the *suaviter in modo*, spiced with patient determination. After exhausting every method of kindness and encouragement he determined to "sit it out," so, bringing the disobedient youngster back to the point of disputed departure he halted him there, sitting in his saddle as immovable as one of the mounted sentries at the Horse Guards, or the Duke of Wellington at Hyde Park Corner. At the end of an hour's anchorage a fresh essay to make the pig-headed colt go in the way it should go resulted in a renewed exhibition of rearing. Observing a lad passing at the time, the determined tyke ordered him to go to his wife and tell her

to send his dinner to the cross roads, for there he meant to remain out all night and the day following if need be. The repast duly arrived and was despatched on the animal's back. Another effort was but a fresh failure, so the statuesque weary wait was resumed, and the veteran breaker sat again for hours immovable. Here was the living exemplification of Patience on a monument. With the setting sun came the horseman's supper, still not a move, and the sturdy yeoman prepared to make a night of it. In due course his top-coat and a stiffly mixed "neet-cap" arrived. Whether or no the colt divined the meaning of these campaigning arrangements deponent sayeth not, anyhow, his master had hardly donned the one and swallowed the other when the quadruped, with one long sigh, one that nearly carried the girths away, all his obstinacy evaporated, and thoroughly defeated, relieved himself from his post and quietly walked down the road in the direction he had so long protested so firmly against. The lesson was a permanent one; it took some eight hours in the teaching, but lasted a life-time—he never "stuck up" again.

Horse-breaking or horse-taming are very much and very effectually understood and taught by Professor Sydney Galwayne, the Australian expert, whose extensive establishment at the Model Farm, Neasden, London, N.W., is well worthy of a visit. The story I am about to relate refers to that master-of-the-horse's struggle with, and victory over, that concentrated essence of equine ferocity, the Clydesdale sire, "Lord Lyon," a horse of fine breeding, magnificent physique, power, and action, and, but for his fiendish temper, as grand a specimen of his race as has been produced. Some of my readers may have heard of the vicious General Chasse, the combative Alarm, the well-named Phlegethon—he of the hellish temper, of Cruiser, and other man-eaters, but all com-

bined were harmless, well-disposed turtle doves as compared with this Scottish specimen of downright devilry. Only three or four weeks previous to meeting the professor in the ring, his lordship would have worried a man to death had not his owner emptied the right barrel of his gun right into the savage's face, knocking his off eye out and otherwise damaging his truculent visage. The loss of this optic did not improve the murderous brute's look, and when Mr. Galvayne first exchanged looks with the ferocious stallion he must have felt something as Sir Charles Napier did when, unarmed, he faced the glare of the tiger. "Why surely that brute must be out of devil's dam," muttered one horsey onlooker as the splendid savage, led by four men, each holding on to a long and strong tow rope, came plunging into the marquee. But before he had time or opportunity to indulge in any of his antics the tamer had him in his meshes, he was "Galvayned"—a sort of Scottish-maiden process, only to be learned by attending its inventor's classes—and to some extent powerless. The writhings of the demon during his first lesson might have been compared to the contortions of the vast python when Waterton took him by the throat in his hollow den. If the Australian had thrown away the glimmer of a chance he would have been savaged. Had Lord Lyon got him fairly down, with firm teeth-hold, then "not the gaunt lion's hug, the boa's clasp," would have been more deadly. Completely frenzied, roaring like a hungry lion, his solitary eye gleaming with passion, the Clydesdale put forth all his might, he struck out in front like a prize-fighter.

"His ears laid back, his tangled hanging mane
Upon his compound crest now stands on end;
His nostrils drink the air, and forth again
As from a furnace vapours doth he send."

(SHAKESPEARE, *slightly altered.*)

Many a horse, in stable parlance, is said "to kick himself straight," but this unruly patient lashed out with the vigour and activity of a thoroughbred, reaching far above his own great height. In response to Mr. Galvayne's order, an assistant stepped into the ring to wipe Lord Lyon down, for the struggle between man and beast had been so long and severe that the perspiration was flowing freely on either side. A scream of rage, followed by one, two, straight from the shoulder, sent the well-intentioned servitor flying out of the ring. Though at one time it seemed likely that the two hundred spectators, professor, his assistants, and even the marquee itself would disappear in the struggle, what can stand before "science's wondrous wand"? At length victory declared for the system; for a time, at least, his lordship accepted defeat, and, turned loose, followed his conqueror sullenly round the ring, stopping and turning, with no good grace, to the word of command. 'Twas but a patched-up truce, for, after submitting to be put once or twice through his facings, he once more broke out with all his savagery, refused to obey, and then rushed open-mouthed at his adversary, intent this time on forcing the fighting. Rearing up, he threw himself on his man, and got him down. Though unprepared for this sudden act of rebellion, Mr. Galvayne never lost his nerve or presence of mind, and, from the ground, landed the aggressor a terrific cut from his whip across the nose. This saved his life, for it turned the brute aside. On his feet in an instant and at work again, the Australian, nothing daunted, flogged the horse round the ring. Again the infuriated animal came at him, full of mischief, only to be met by severe punishment, which seemed to take the steel out of him. He obeyed the mandate to step back, and was forced to retreat at the word of command, finally leaving the tent, on his best behaviour, led by one

man, and he a stranger. Next day, beyond a few feeble kicks, he exhibited no trace of vice, backed twice the whole circle of the ring, refused to attack though challenged by the whip being flourished in his face, and returned to his stable a conquered horse. Never was victory more complete or more hardly earned. At one time the victor only escaped by "the skin of his teeth." Here, then, is a *galvanic* combination by which a horse with the worst reputation for vice in the United Kingdom, one so essentially dangerous because of his variable moods, and one possessed of a legion of devils, was reduced to reason and usefulness. Previous to being operated on by the deft tamer, Lord Lyon, when the dark fit was on him, would walk clean through the walls of his box and worry at large. The colt and the mature horse were both cured, but by widely different methods; that of the East Riding breaker would have had little effect on the Clydesdale, in fact, he would have dined and supped off his rider. Before quitting this subject, I desire to register my opinion that no horseman's education can be considered complete till he has thoroughly mastered Mr. Galvayne's excellent systems of training and general management of the horse. They are based on "science and humanity" *v.* "ignorance and barbarity;" on the possession of a little common sense plus the knowledge of how to apply it. They work in the case of untractable animals what Mohammed termed "a goodly thorough reformation," and considerably shorten the colt's curriculum of training, to the conservation of legs, temper, and constitution.

There are three roads, or methods, by which a man possessing the attributes I stipulate for may become an adept in the art of horsemanship. The first is by putting the boy from his earliest days on the donkey or pony, and allowing him to tumble about till practice gives a firm seat, probably

good hands, and an insight into the various ways and tricks of horses. It has been contended that this early tuition or practice is needless, and, in some cases, positively harmful. Needless, because some of the finest riders the world has ever produced knew little or nothing of the art in their nursery or even schoolroom days; harmful, because at that tender age, the back is weak and the spine liable to injury. The cases of the Empress of Austria and her sister, the ex-Queen of Naples, both magnificent horsewomen, are cited by those who oppose the lessons of early age, for neither of these skilled ladies rode much before attaining womanhood. The Arabs have a saying that, "the lessons of infancy are engraved upon stone, the lessons of ripe age pass away like birds' nests;" and despite the prowess of these royal dames and others, male and female, whose names might also be quoted as examples, I maintain that the schooling should commence with the "ride-a-cock-horse-to-Banbury-cross," first on the father's crossed leg, then on his shoulders, and so, by degrees, in front of his saddle. By this means all nervousness at being hoisted high in the air is overcome; the rough, bucking, bounding motion becomes a positive delight, and the flaccid infantile muscles are taught to grip and hold on. This is the time, and these are the means, by which to eradicate the germs of nervousness and to create nerve. We all know how passionately fond children are of their ponies, and how they seem to cleave unto them above all other pets or toys; how they clamour each for their turn for a ride. By degrees we promote the two and three year olds to the backs of donkeys or preferably of some very quiet, well-trained, *grass, not corn-fed*, ponies, till at about six years old we find them so grounded in the rudiments that they may then be taken in hand and properly instructed. My first task, therefore, will be to teach the

young idea how to sit firm, how to acquire that natural adaptation to every movement of the animal under him, which constitutes perfect balance, and how to handle his reins.

The second mode is that of mounting the tyro on a perfectly-trained horse, and step by step leading him on till, aided by practice in the riding school or under a qualified out-of-door instructor, such proficiency may be attained as is necessary for amusement, or even show, air, and exercise, or all four combined. A graceful seat may be insured, and good hands acquired, but long and continuous practice on every variety of horse will alone entitle the pupil to call himself a "horseman." Artistic riding implies something more than mere boldness and the ability to charge an ox fence, or "go in-and-out-clever;" it means the mesmeric influence—the brain, the eye, the nerves, the muscles, all unconsciously acting on the aids together—of the man guiding and bending the horse to his will without seeming effort. Those among us who may be termed "fair riders" are numerous. One may make a good show on a well-broken hack in the park, another may ride well to hounds, a third may distinguish himself "between the flags" or "on the flat," but to excel in all is given to but very few. The pupil who has commenced late in life will always find it difficult to throw off a certain riding school mannerism unless, so soon as a safe firm seat has been secured, the lessons are continued on horses all differing in temper and action. Learning and diversity of practice should go hand in hand.

We now come to the third method, which is the easiest to the instructor. We have now to deal with boys who have never ridden. A hard plucky boy is pretty sure to make an apt pupil. The material to work on is good, and, with the help of a little encouragement, sticking-plaster, and

some bruise lotion, will bear a lot of knocking about. Nobody cares much if he gets a purler, and, if of the right "grit," he less than anybody else. His bones are not sufficiently set to break, he falls light, and is accustomed, after the fashion of our English playing fields, to "rough and tumble." All lads, however, are not fashioned in the Spartan mould, many are nervous and timid, requiring gentle handling, constant encouragement, and every device that may inspire confidence. With such a one the lessons must be short and on the quietest of ponies, undue straining and fatigue being carefully avoided—in a word, he must be "coaxed" into the saddle. An over modest, retiring disposition is often mistaken for timidity, but by judicious management, confidence in himself and his powers may be established. Many a youngster, who in his early days has been known as a "sap" and a "muff," has developed into a good, if not first-class horseman, and in the sterner realities of war has won an enviable reputation at the cannon's mouth. In either case there is, happily for the instructor, nothing to be unlearned, no bad habits to eradicate.

In these days of ceaseless travel, colonization, restlessness, and general going to and fro, men cannot say when they may not be called upon to ride great distances on half-broken horses. They may unexpectedly find themselves mounted on an Australian buck-jumping Brumby, careering on the South African veldt, bestriding a fresh-caught South American mustang, climbing Judah's hills on some sure-footed Syrian, scouring "Hagar's desert, Ishmael's plains," carried by a true-bred Khailan of the Anezeh, or taking "a breather" over the Toorkomán steppes, rejoicing in the untiring powers of a staunch little Bedevi, the pride of some Yomut nomad. We Britishers might aptly be claimed as "the tribe of the wandering foot," for the

migratory instinct is dominant in the race. We are ever seeking "fresh woods and pastures new." For those whose fortune it is to live at home in ease, riding may be regarded as a luxury, and not a necessity; but to others—military men, Indian and other civilians, whose lot is cast beyond these pleasant shores, and Colonials—it is a something that must be learnt as thoroughly as possible.

I conclude my "preliminary" by quoting from one of the most perfect horsemen of bygone times, His Grace of Newcastle: "Those things which to you, perhaps, seem not very concise, but too prolix, might if shorter have left you in darkness; whereas you (will) have now a full sunshine to look on you with the splendour of the knowledge of horsemanship. This art does not consist only in study and mental contemplation, but in bodily practice likewise. You ought to be well informed that the art of horsemanship cannot be collected together in a proverb, in a short aphorism, or reduced to a syllogism, or brought into a little compass as the poesy of a ring; nor can there be one universal lesson, as many desire this art. For my part, I am very sure there is nothing universal in horsemanship, nor in anything else I know."

CHAPTER II.

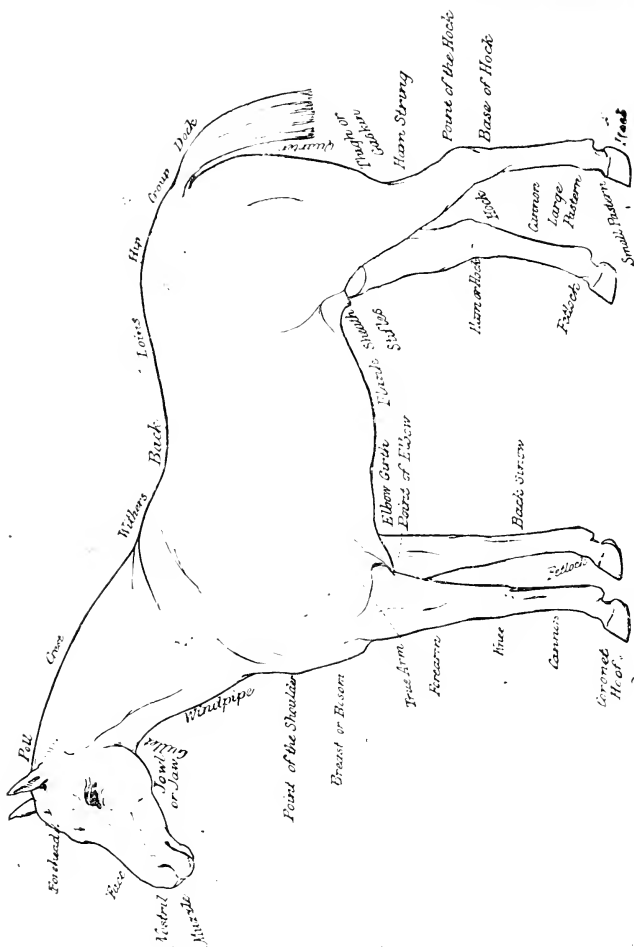
CHOICE OF A HORSE.

IF a man merely desires to ride for amusement, for air and exercise, or for the mere "pomp and circumstance" of the thing, he can, always providing he has a long purse and a thoroughly dependable, competent judge at his elbow,

generally mount himself to perfection. Despite the unequal distribution of capital in this little world of ours, the "honest broker," the man with the special knowledge, who makes his friends' or employers' interests his own, is a rarer article than even the big available balance at the bankers'. Still, this *rara avis* is not yet so extinct as the dodo. Many of us, far too many, alas! though suffering keenly from that *auri sacra fames* which we are never able to satisfy or even to take the edge off, are blessed with more dimes than dollars. To those who cannot at any moment draw a big cheque at sight, and who, like myself, want a very good horse for very little money, I mainly address myself.

When writing of *hacks* I do not use the term as indicative of inferiority, nor do I refer to the wheel-like actioned hackneys or roadsters of Norfolk, Yorkshire, and often of somewhere else beyond the eastern shores of these islands—a blend of the true old Marshland Shales stock with a blend of the carty element, hardened by an occasional dash of the thoroughbred to "revivify the flame and bid it burn afresh." When freely fortified by blood, these hackneys, those bred in the East Riding of Yorkshire especially, make excellent hacks for heavy and elderly gentlemen, with whom a good, quiet, weight-carrying cob, incapable of tripping, and able to walk five miles an hour, fair "heel and toe," without suspicion of run or amble is a pearl of price. But it is the thoroughbred, or very nearly so, cantering and galloping hack, not this conglomerate, that I have in my mind's eye, and that I would put the reader on.

To enjoy one's self thoroughly one must study one's ease. Captain Percy Williams's "bone-setting," liver-shaking, stirrupless rides from Hounslow to Hyde Park Corner, to which I call attention hereafter (p. 52), were excellent in their way, and strongly to be recommended as a means to the end he



THE POINTS OF A HORSE.

aimed at, but what's wanted in Rotten Row or elsewhere in a perfect riding horse are good looks, together with quality, manners, and smooth easy action. Nicely reined in, he should go neatly, lightly, and quite within himself. Such a horse is deceptive as to pace, and goes much faster than he appears to do, stealing over the ground apparently without an effort. Placing his fore legs well in front of him, without any rounding or climb of the knee, no "fighting the air," the racing-like sweep of his powerful well-gathered haunches gives him a stride and pace that smothers any plodding half-bred labouring by his side. I would, for my own riding, fix the standard of such a horse at fifteen hands, and certainly no more; but I stand barely five feet eight and a half inches under the standard.

The horse and his rider should be proportionate in height, conformation, and power one to the other. To my eye a little, stubby, thickset man perched, "like a tom-tit on a round of beef," on a sixteen hands animated clothes-horse sort of an animal is a very offensive object to contemplate. A long, lanky, spindle-shanked rider bestriding a podgy little hog-maned cob, his spur-garnished heels almost touching the ground, is another object I abhor. A big burly fellow crushing a light-framed blood "tit" under his elephantine proportions is enough to make an angel weep. Picture the Claimant on a Shetland or New Forest pony, or General Tom Thumb outside the stalwart Harold of Calwich and Islington fame. Such incongruities must be tabooed.

My horse should be neat and pretty rather than handsome and of grand physique, beautifully balanced and moulded, a patrician from head to heel. I would have him of the high caste Arabian type, his head the index of his blue blood, a level croup set off by a switch tail carried away from his buttocks with that arch peculiar to the *azeel* horse of the

desert. The drop of the hind leg may be straightish, and a somewhat long cannon bone with a shorter radius will qualify his daisy-cutting proclivities. He should be long in proportion to his height, that length made out by the distance of the elbow to the stifle, from the back of the wither to the point of the shoulder, from the hipbone to the extremity of the haunch. These salient points give strength, propelling power, and freedom of action. In his walk he must step gaily and lightly, placing his hind foot well in front of the imprint of the fore; so free his action that the slightest indication of the "aids" shall set him instantly into an eight to twelve miles an hour out-and-on trot, or into an easy collected placid canter. To top up all, he must carry his handsome blood head in its proper place, and have so sensitive and obedient a mouth that he answers to the slightest touch of the helm and can go handsomely in a packthread.

Such a delightful hack costs money; but to those who know where to go for animals of this class in the rough, and possess the requisite skill to teach them manners and to put the polish on, there is no necessity for great outlay. There are numbers of young thoroughbreds troubled with that incurable disease, "the slows," to be picked up by people on the spot. Owners do not care to keep them, and trainers, wanting their stalls and boxes for horses endowed with racing speed, insist on getting rid of them. Many of these would, if put aside for a year or two, in able hands, come up to the fancy picture I have drawn. Their main fault is a too great breadth of chest, which militates against speed, but this conformation, desirable in the hack, is generally accompanied by a churn-shaped barrel, a certain indication of a good feeder and of a good wear-and-tear constitution. A blood horse is always up to a stone or two more weight than his build indicates.

When the purchaser desires to invest in a horse to both hack and hunt, he must content himself with something less showy, of more decided points, and more of the general-purpose type. The breeding may be as high, in fact in our grass counties, with their big-acre fields, large fences, and racing packs of hounds, blood is a *sine qua non*. The fifteen hands horse will carry his rider brilliantly in a small cramped country, or over the high banks and steep hills of Wales or West of England, where one verging on sixteen, with his scope and stride would come to grief; or would, better than his big brother, rattle up and down the Surrey and Sussex slopes and downs. But if a man means to keep with hounds over "the Turkey carpet" of Great Britain—Leicestershire—and to take those ready-made graves, those bull-finchers, oxers, and other big obstacles in his stride, then he must have not only a high-bred, but a fifteen-three horse under him.

There are, as I have said, many counties in which the pocket Hercules will force the galloper whose name figures in the Stud Book, to strike his flag; but for "the Shires," there must be height with scope, and especially so if the owner desires to find a purchaser. One of the best hunters that ever looked through a bridle was the famous "Jack Russell's" equally famous pony, "Billy," the produce of a two-year-old grass colt, a grandson of "Eclipse" and an Exmoor pony mare. But Dartmoor is not the Midlands, and though the clerical Nimrod's, *multum in parvo*, could gallop all day over those heavy moorlands, and jump boundary fences big enough to stop anything but the wild stag, he would not have shone in the Shires. Like the blood hack, the hunter should be faultless in front of the saddle. When a happy medium between the two is aimed at, the rounded beauty must give place to a deeper girth, still

stronger loins, longer arms, shorter cannons, big angular knees and hocks ; the finished prettiness to a certain rough-and-readiness ; the light sprightly action to, what the Americans term "vim"—the equivalent of our words "go" and "power"—the taking front action, though still active and clear of the ground, to be supplemented by the evidence of enormous propelling power behind and lifting capacity in front.

The hack first spoken of should "hardly break an egg if he trod on it," but this general-purpose hack and hunter combined must unite show with utility, some of the former ingredient being sacrificed to add force to the latter. In the hack, the trot, walk, or canter are the only really important paces, but the hunter must be handy over all sorts of ground at the gallop, and should be all action though with nothing flashy about it. Much as I object to the steep quarter there is no doubt that the "goose-rumped" droop of croup and angularity of hip, ugly as it undoubtedly is, gives greater leverage when high timber or stone walls have to be jumped. Persons in search of such horses as these will do well to attend the annual sales of the Compton Stud Company, held in September, at Sandley, Gillingham, Dorset, at which establishment carefully selected blood sires are mated with approved mares.

At the end of the season, when all London goes out of town, or pretends to, many of the park hacks are sent to Tattersall's to be sold without reserve. In the highlands or on the continent Lady Plantaganeta Vere de Vere does not ride, and, of course, Mrs. Ponsonby de Tomkyns, the wife of "somebody in the City," follows suit. The riding horse, often a really good specimen, purchased at great cost and sometimes with judgment, is put down. As with the ladies so with the men. The Duke of Broadacres sends

his animal to Albert Gate and Mr. Lombard's pays a visit to Knightsbridge, also to emerge therefrom under new ownership. There need be no blind buying here, for the constant visitor to the Row of a forenoon must have seen the identical hacks ridden day after day, and must have had ample opportunity of pretty correctly reckoning them up. When on the day of sale—bidding, of course, through some one who knows the ways of the professional *habitués*—if some fashionable West End or Paris dealer appears “fond,” the bidder may safely go on. Perhaps from the two and a half months' constant bucketing up and down that monotonous ride the horse may be a little stale, but, if he be young, and passes the vet, a few shoeless weeks in a cool roomy covered-in yard, with a bite of green food, will soon freshen him up and restore his action. At the end of the racing season at Newmarket a lot of very useful cobs are annually sold. If a man is a really good judge, or can enlist in his service one who is, there is no better place to pick up a good horse than at the numerous fairs throughout the United Kingdom, and the further he goes afield the better his chance of suiting himself at a moderate price.

We now come to the Cob, which, if a safe, handy, symmetrical, and gentlemanly animal, light in hand, and active, and of good colour, is one that, as the dealers say, “keeps the money together.” There must be nothing of the polo, or of any other pony, about him, neither must he be a dwarfed thoroughbred, but a cob pure and simple; such a one as was “Sir George,” and is “Little Wonder of Rigmaden Park,” Mr. Morton's “Sir Gibbie,” Mr. W. Burdett Coutts's “Tommy,” or Mr. C. E. Cooke's “Cassius.” A coarse carty-looking cob gives one the idea of an undersized agricultural horse. Now that the Italian and other governments so extensively patronize pedigree hackney

stallions, and that they are being "boomed" in the United States, where one hackney used to be bred we have now a dozen. Breeders appear to be sacrificing power and the old thickset build to lightness and quality. The shows so much patronized by those who want to make a name to attract foreign buyers, by others who have something to sell, mainly fostered by parvenus, whose sole aim is to keep themselves right in the eye of the gullible public, do not show that we are making any improvement. The best horse at Islington was passed over the other day because "the runner" who showed him knew not the art of bringing out his magnificent action, the premier prize going to a horse that is decidedly weak behind.

The correct type cob should, for easy mounting, be about fourteen hands high, must have a sweet head—many of these hackneys and roadsters have beautiful Arab-like heads—perfect shoulders and legs, long straight quarters, and a great deal of substance. I have seen many such, admirable, jaunty, and pleasant walkers, a few easy trotters, though generally with round wheel-like action, but only one or two able to canter fairly well. The only hackney with good hind galloping action I have seen is "Dr. Syntax." It has often struck me that the mating of an Arab sire, one with action, such as Colonel Willoughby's "Elston," now standing at Murrel Green, Winfield, Hants, with the old-fashioned thick-set hackney mare would be productive of the best results.

The game of polo and the rage for galloway and pony racing, both on the flat and over hurdles, has created a demand for quite a different cob from that we have just referred to. These bantamized racers take us back a century or more to the days of "the little gray horse" "Gimcrack." Judging from an engraving now before me,

this miniature, muscular, firmly knit, and active racer must be the model our polo-pony breeders are endeavouring to breed up to. Making due allowance for the lack of anatomical knowledge in the animal limner of those days, this remarkable son of the Godolphin Barb must have presented the beau ideal of a racing galloway. Irrespective of his great weight-carrying powers, marvellous staunchness, and hardness of constitution, he was considered to be so perfect a model that his last proprietor left him for a length of time at Tattersall's for public inspection.

In running these galloways—for it is a misnomer to term them ponies—it is found that blood alone can ensure their success. Many of them are undersized thoroughbreds, and as such are very hot and strongheaded. These blood-cobs are in every way qualified to make perfect hacks, and in addition are superlatively good hunters for boys. Those not quite fast enough for racing, and not handy enough to play polo well, are, as often as not, the best on the road, in the park, or in the hunting-field. A smart racing galloway or polo player commands a high and increasing figure. A year ago, when the 16th Lancers were ordered on foreign service, two hundred and seventy guineas were given for one pony, and some, the property of officers of the 11th Hussars, sold at public auction on the eve of the corps sailing for South Africa, changed hands at a still longer price. Fashion, without valid reason as usual, has decreed that these beauties should be smartened up by having their manes hogged. The vile disfigurement, in the case of a too light or a ewe neck only accentuates the deformity. Though quite as well able as my neighbours to maintain my seat in the saddle without extraneous aid, I am free to confess that not once or twice, but scores of times, has a grip on the mane saved me from a fall. Under no circumstances should

this mutilation be countenanced. For docking, in the case of some harness horses, there may be some excuse; but for this senseless barbarism, which serves no purpose, there is absolutely none. Having already stated my opinions on the just proportion between the horse and his rider, I will only add that these miniature blood horses should only be ridden by medium-sized men. Some of them carry young ladies to perfection, but they lack the height necessary to carry a full-grown *equestrienne*.

Ofttimes and many have I been accused of being afflicted with the Arab craze. To the accusation I plead guilty without extenuating circumstances. Having had as much and more to do with pure-bred horses of the silent desert than most men not of Ishmaelitic lineage, I hold the tough Arab fibre in the highest esteem. I am convinced that in the black tabernacles of the Bedaween of the Maha Rania exists the horse in the perfection of his beauty and pride. The difficulty is to get really good specimens of the highest pedigree. Only two faults can be found with the Arabian for park and road riding—viz. that for general purposes he lacks height, seldom being found over 14 hands 3 inches high; and that he is a careless walker, given to tripping. Those now being bred in this country are rapidly acquiring increased stature, and with the change of habitat they appear to lose this slovenly habit. In the face of persistent opposition this terse, active, and altogether delightful little horse is rapidly winning his way into favour. "The value of a thing is exactly what it will fetch" is an old axiom. A few years back I have seen Arabs sold at Tattersall's for a few sovereigns, but now anything worth looking at readily fetches £120 and upwards. Their intrinsic value will be ascertained when the results of their unions with approved weight-carrying, blood, and three-parts bred mares appear



“SPEED OF THOUGHT,” A HIGH-CASTE ARABIAN, THE PROPERTY OF THE AUTHOR.

on the market. We shall then go back to those times when the choice potent blood flowed in a broad full stream, and our thoroughbreds so-called—we have never yet been able to boast the possession of an absolutely pure thoroughbred—were for all purposes, save “sprinting,” superior to anything we now possess.

The description of the horse's hoof in Isaiah, “their horses' hoofs shall be like flint,” is true to-day of the Arabian's, which is as hard as the nether millstone. In him strength and beauty have met together.

The Barb lacks the harmonious beauty and truthful balance of the Arab. He is often fifteen hands and over, has a lean, bony, and often somewhat plain head, with thin compressed lips, a small mouth, a large expressive eye, calm in repose, but full of courage and flash when roused, a strong, arched neck, short back, broad loins, and generally beautiful shoulders. A steep quarter, meanly set on tail, light thighs, and “cat hams” dwarf his hind quarters, giving an appearance of an exaggerated forehand; but these defects are more than compensated for by his undeniable vigour, stamina, and endurance. He is more leggy than his first cousin of “Hagar's desert, Ishmael's sands,” and his feet are not so well formed and regular, but his limbs are very strong and are everlasting wear. In point of strict utility he, when pure, is quite on a par with the Arab. Up to the reign of Muley Mahomed, son of Muley Abderrhámán, about A.D. 1775, the Government of Morocco provided each country village with a pure-blooded stallion, of which the owners of mares had free use for stud purposes. Since that Sultan's death, however, this useful custom has been discontinued and, consequently, the quality of the horses has deteriorated to such an extent that it is difficult to find one of pure blood. Moreover, the

exportation of horses is hampered by such heavy duties that permission to take them out of the country is illusory. Doubtless in the royal stables there are some fine specimens. The Emir Abd-el-Kader of Algiers, when at the height of his power, defending his native land against the armies of France, inflicted the punishment of death, without mercy, on any Moslem convicted of selling a horse to the Christian.

About foreign horses I shall have little to say. Many of those now sold, both for riding and driving, are what we term "soft foreign substitutes." One very nice stranger, for young ladies' riding especially, is the real Spanish jennet. Under the Moresco Khalifat the commercial enterprise of the Arabs knew no bounds. In those warlike times richly caparisoned horses of the purest blood were the most acceptable royal gifts, and to the stables of the Kalifs of Cordova, Toledo, Seville, Valencia, Murcia, and Badajos, during the rule of the Moslem on the Siberian peninsula, came the very pith and marrow of Mesopotamia, Nejd, Morocco, and Tunis. The royal farms of the Alhambra were the breeding grounds of the finest and purest blood horses of the Orient. Granada, the Damascus of Spain, enjoys a climate akin to that of "the eye of the East," the oldest city in the world. In the true Andalusian jennet's veins runs a stream in which mingles some of the bluest blood of Asia and Africa. He is a gentleman every inch of him, small and pretty, graceful and easy in his paces, carries his dapper, well-bred head handsomely in the proper place, and is gifted with a good mouth. There is not much of him, but what there is is good and comely, quite the animal to catch the eye and win the affections of a young lady or an Eton boy.

Some of the half-bred French Arabs, from Arab sire and

well-bred mares, make excellent hacks and are hardy. Austria, Hungary, and Poland all furnish their quota of horses bred on similar lines, and Italy, if not already in the field, will soon be catering for our wants. Of late years she has been our largest and best customer for thoroughbred and hackney sires, buying only the best, regardless of cost. In securing choice specimens of the *azeel* Arab the Italian agents have been peculiarly fortunate. One of the most beautiful ponies I ever had was a Sardinian, evidently full of Arab blood. In the vicinity of Pisa, at Babericina, the Newmarket of Italy, and at San Rossore, on the Arno, the beautiful pine-clad estate of the king, which skirts the Mediterranean for sixteen miles, and rejoices in a dry sandy soil, and mild, healthy, and constant climate, are three large studs with two thousand five hundred horses. In them is to be found the English thoroughbred and the Arab in great perfection; the beautiful well-knit Melton, the winner of the Derby, a prize-fighter from head to heel, and the purest Anezeh being found side by side.

In Poland, mainly in the Government of Wolthymia, the Count Branitzky, and Counts Joseph and August Potocki, and others of the nobility have inherited from their ancestors studs of pure Arabs in which the true types and strains of blood have been carefully and jealously maintained. These horses have earned for themselves a very high reputation; a pair, owned by the late Lord Lyons, the British Ambassador at Paris, enjoying the reputation of being the handsomest in the Bois. The climate and generous keep, added to the careful system of selection practised by these intelligent breeders, and by those to whom they succeeded, have added considerably to the bulk and height of these Arabians. Price alone stands in the way of their free introduction to our stables, for they are as clever under the saddle as in

harness. The Orlov, another horse of Arabian descent, though not pure, owing to an admixture of Dutch Friesian, is essentially a harness horse, and in American hands would be a trotter. There is nothing in the German bred horse to recommend him to my readers.

Ponies of all sorts come to us from abroad. Hungary, Russia, Norway, and Iceland, each contribute in ever-increasing numbers, and now that Shetlanders are eagerly sought after by our wealthy American cousins, and have risen greatly in price, we may expect still heavier importations. Of these diminutive animals few are good, many indifferent, most unfit for anything save the coal-mine and the costermonger's cart or barrow. When we consider the cost of freight, risks by sea and land, and the low price at which these little slaves are purchased here, the wonder is what must be their cost in their native pastures. It is easy to distinguish these half-starved uncouth strangers from the ponies of these Isles. Ere long, however, the exaggerated droves or mobs of the New Forest—where overstocking and, during the winter, cruel neglect bordering on almost absolute starvation, is rapidly ruining this once famous breed—the ponies at the royal grazing-demesne must lose their neat finish. At no distant date they may become as common-looking and plebeian as the products of the coarse wershly pastures of the inclement North or of the Danubian marshes. Under the influence of the American "boom," and with such men as the Marquess of Londonderry, the Earl of Zetland, and others interested in the Shetland breed, there is no fear of its deterioration. Ranging from 8.3 to 11 hands these miniature horses have, in proportion to their stature, enormous strength, are very docile, and easily managed. My only objection to them is that they are spread too much—too thick through for children's

riding. A child's pony ought to be narrow, so that the little legs may get a grip of his sides. If broad on the back the little one has about as much hold as a man on the pad of an elephant ; moreover, the short " chunky " pony is much more proppy and jerky in his movements than those of lighter and more " planky " build.

Though of late years—grazing sheep having been found a more paying industry—pony breeding in Wales has been conducted in a very slipshod manner, some good ponies are still to be found in the Principality. There is little doubt that the Welsh pony is the descendant of the horse that in the days of Rome, yoked to the scythed chariots of our forefathers, used to spread dismay into the serried ranks of the war-worn legionaries. On the Cambrian mountains the war-horse of the Angles became dwarfed, but lost none of its vigour and activity. In these latter days it, on the borders of Shropshire especially, has been crossed with blood. The late Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, Bart., of Wynnstay, introduced the thoroughbred element, and in and about Brampton Brian, Ludlow, Knighton, Corwen, Llampeter, Welshpool, Newton, and Montgomery, following the banks of the Severn from Pool Quay down to Llanidloes, is to be found many a natty scion of the Arab Selim, of May Fly, Underhill, Polardine, and Wandering Minstrel. The Berwyn mountains, south of Corwen, on the line from Ruabon to Bala, are famous for a very superior " stiff " breed of pony, distinguished by peculiar white markings under the belly. Some are beauties, all are active as cats, are able to go any distance on very short commons, and are as hardy as the proverbial tinker's dog. The best animals to be found in South Wales are on the borders between Builth and Breckon. Copenhagen, the Anglo-Arabian that carried the Duke of Wellington at Waterloo, was foaled at Old Colwyn, Denbigh.

Facile princeps amongst our pedigree pony breeders stands that critical judge, Mr. Christ. W. Wilson, of Rigmaden Park, Kirkby Lonsdale. The success of his various little model sires, Sir George, Little Wonder, and others, in stamping their mint-mark on the mares of that portion of Westmoreland to which their services have been confined, is strongly in evidence. Many of them come as near perfection as need be, and he who covets the possession of one of these little beauties must be prepared to pay for the luxury. The stallions being closely inbred are very impressive, and transmit the characteristics of the Rigmaden Park blood with undeniable truth. The Exmoors appear to have deteriorated, though not so far back Mr. Knight, of Simons Bath, bred some such as a judge could find little fault with—staunch, sturdy, safety conveyances for whom the longest day with the Devon and Somerset Stag Hounds is but a trifle. Akin to these are the ponies of Dartmoor and Cornwall.

At the Pony Stud Farm, Pebworth, Gloucestershire, are three small-sized Arabs, sent home by Mr. J. H. B. Hallen, the General Superintendent of the Horse Breeding Department in India, where, for the object advertised, their services must be thrown away for lack of good pony mares. I have never seen these horses, but, if they be good specimens of the breed, I should have thought a more suitable location might have been selected. Better placed are the two beautiful Nejd high-caste ponies, owned by the Albrightlee stud, in the vicinity of Shrewsbury. North of the Tweed, at Auchenflower, Ballantrae, Ayrshire, Mr. Alex. Murdoch has the "right article;" his mares run in a half wild state, never receive any attention at foaling, and his youngsters after half an hour's experience of this world are to be seen galloping round the fields like deer. With that experienced

breeder constitution in sire and dam is a *sine qua non*. Some capital ponies are bred in the western isles of Scotland, and the establishment of an extensive pony farm on Achill Island, off the coast of Mayo, is projected.

The popularity of Galloway and Pony racing, and of polo, already referred to, is certain, at no distant date, to furnish us with a race of the most perfect miniature horses in the world. Seeing how easy the Arab is to handle at speed I consider him above all others the best calculated to beget polo ponies. Ridden with a mere halter he answers immediately and intelligently to the voice of his rider, to the sway of his body, or to the pressure of knee and thigh, stopping short from full gallop, going about on his own ground, and at once springing into "full power ahead" again, doubling or jinking, and managing his legs as nimbly as a chamois. There is a pliancy about the Arab such as no other horse can boast of, he can "pat butterflies" when at the verge of speed. That his pace is of no mean order was amply proved by Hermit in his great race with the imported English mare Voltige, in the Calcutta Trades Cup. He comes of a long ancestry, seldom exceeding 14.1½ hands high, so that the breeder has, to some extent, the power to control and keep down the height. That he can stand the rigours of a European climate was testified to by the correspondent of the *Times*, who inspected Bourbaki's army when, in order to escape total defeat and the bitterness of surrender, it sought asylum in Switzerland. "The horses," wrote that gentleman, "present a still worse appearance than the men, seeming more fitted for the knacker's yard than to bear their burdens; although, undoubtedly, the Arabs justify the established reputation of their breed by the very tolerable condition they present, and the comparative elasticity of their paces."

CHAPTER III.

ACTION.

Too much stress cannot be laid on true, "corky," easy, and safe action. It is essential both to horse and rider. There must be nothing forced about it. Without gliding smooth action, which comes from perfect symmetry and just balance, there can be no manners, no intrinsic value in the hack, no great pleasure to the rider, and no conservation of energy. A labouring goer can never be a thorough stayer. The walk should be bold and free, the foot picked up smartly, with well bent knee, raised clear from the ground, thrown forward straight to the front, and placed again on the ground lightly yet decidedly and without hesitation. I like to see a horse *marching* with a bold, swaggering, airy walk, looking about him at passing objects, and swinging his tail like the plumes and sporans of the Black Watch, as the splendid corps proudly sweeps past the saluting flag. If he can swagger along at the rate of five miles an hour in such form, fair "toe and heel," then he is not only a comfort to his owner but a luxury. Objection may be taken to such horses as are constantly looking about them on the score of their being addicted to tripping on inequalities, over a rut, on a freshly "darned" or metallated road, but they are generally of the light-hearted mercurial sort which, if they make a false step, never permit the trip to degenerate into a downright stumble, and are sharp in their recovery. Of such is the Arab, one of the surest footed animals in the world; he is constantly tripping at the walk, but rights himself in a second, as if his foot had trodden on

the horned viper or the cobra. My experience is that light-hearted horses are more prone to this disagreeable habit than are the more plodding, placid, methodical goers, but when one of the latter makes a mistake it is apt to be a serious one.

Nothing is more unsightly in the walk, or in any other pace, than the far too common habit of "dishing," or "paddling." A horse is said to "dish" or "paddle" when in the walk, or, more frequently and in a greater degree, in the trot, the fore leg, from the knee downwards, is not lifted from the ground and carried forward in the plane along which his whole body is moving, but is caused to describe, before reaching the ground, a lateral ellipse or curve somewhat similar to that of the paddle of a canoe as it leaves and re-enters the water. This faulty action is best detected when a horse is being met or followed. The fore foot should be thrown out perfectly straight, devoid entirely of lateral twist. Dishing is most commonly seen among our carriage horses and the hackneys and roadsters proper. These products of Norfolk, and Yorkshire—the profane term the former "Norfolk rollers"—have of late, since the creation of a Hackney stud book, come much into fashion, and to certain of the Confidence tribe are we indebted for the accentuation of this objectionable gait. Unfortunately it is potentially hereditary.

When using the term hack I mean it to apply to the thoroughbred, or "cocktail" (nearly thoroughbred). If there be a flaw in his pedigree, then let the alien blood be that of the Yorkshire roadster. For trotting purposes we, in the old country, want nothing beyond the capacity to do his twelve mile an hour under the saddle if needed. To ride a fast trotter in the Park at the verge of his speed would be shocking bad form; one that can step handsomely,

well within himself, alongside a companion in a swinging canter or hand-gallop is the extreme concession good taste can sanction. I mean no disrespect to those afflicted with the trotting craze, only let them keep their trotters to the Alexandra Park and such-like unfashionable gatherings. The trot should exhibit a true, equal, and collected action, not lofty or climbing, but "out and on" of the forward throwing description right from the shoulder, the hocks well flexed, and the haunches well tucked under. We see far too much of that horrible rolling funereal "up to the curb-chain" style of knee action which, in black horses especially, bewrayeth their Friesian origin. Not a few so-called Norfolk trotters hail from the rich dairy land of this Netherland province. For pleasant attractive riding there must be nothing extravagant.

The canter—which I may remark wears a horse out and makes him groggy on his fore legs quicker than any pace—is *par excellence* the easiest pace of the horse, and consequently the most patronized by ladies. It is essentially the lady's pace, and being artificial as to its measured and collected slowness and circumstance, requires careful teaching. Perfect hand and perfect seat can alone impose this stately and delightful action. No horse can canter in perfect form unless he is light of mouth and in his paces, has long, well-laid-back riding shoulders, springy pasterns, can get his haunches well under him, and can "bend himself," or bring his head down to his chest. This capacity for bending implies a clean throttle—the game-cock throttle—and a well set-on head. In the canter, the horse trained to perfection and handled by an artist, will lead with either leg, but, as a rule, ladies' horses go with the right or off foot forward. He ought to be trained and accustomed to lead with either leg in obedience to the rider's will and

hand. The utmost nicety of the hands is necessary, especially in the slow five-mile-an-hour rate of progress, and here comes in that give-and-take of the reins on which so much depends. When the horse has settled down into his canter an easy and regular action is maintained; he is nicely balanced on his haunches, the hocks are brought well under without any outward "wobble," the fore hand is lightly lifted from the ground, and there is nothing "false" in the motion. A horse is said to go *false* when, if cantering to the right on a curve, or circling to the right, he leads with the left, and *vice versa*, if cantering to the left, he leads with the right. The rider must feel the cadence of every stride, and be able at will to extend or shorten the action. Simple as the pace appears it really belongs to the *haute école* of the equestrian art. It is sometimes to be seen illustrated to perfection by some of those equestrians who "do miserable penance in Rotten Row," occasionally by men and women, when going to cover, in our best riding schools, and in the circus by some star rider.

No lady or gentleman, in riding in the park or on the road, ever dreams of galloping; a hand-gallop, or, in other words, an extended canter, is all that can be perpetrated. There is, however, no reason whatever why, on some breezy downs or in crossing big "turkey-carpet" enclosures, the pleasure of a "breather" should not be indulged in. Horses gallop in all shapes and forms. There is the gallop of the race-course and of the hunting field; the one daisy-cutting close to the ground, the other higher from the ground and therefore safer, neither climbing nor laboured, both demonstrating enormous leverage and power behind. The exception proves the rule, and almost all of our racers, gifted with the keenest edge of speed, possess the poetry of motion. They appear to glide over the ground without an

effort. But it is not always that these faultless gallopers are the best stayers ; there is something flashy about them that appears to assign a mile as about the length of their tether. A horse that, with his head in its proper position, can, at a good pace and collectedly, cross ridge and furrow is, in my opinion, as near to the ideal of a galloper for most purposes as need be. When fully extended the stride cannot be too long, provided it is not the lobbing gallop of the wolf, is vigorous, devoid of climbing in front, and with a powerful recover and leverage from the propellers. The print of the hind feet should be inches in front of the fore ones. Short, proppy, or stilty action of the fore legs is indicative of soreness from overwork, used joints, a recent sprain of the shoulder from a slip or fall, rheumatism, or *chest-founder*. In this last case the horse is said to be *shoulder tied*. Mayhap some mischief in the feet, such as laminitis, coronitis, canker, or navicular disease, may be the cause of the horse not laying himself down to and stretching out fully in his gallop. Some very fast horses gallop very wide behind—Eclipse, for instance—others with the points of the hocks turned somewhat in towards each other, giving the appearance of what we term *knock-kneed* in man. As a rule speed is more frequently found in the latter conformation. Those that are pinned in at the elbows seldom go with any ease to themselves or comfort to the rider. As a rule they have short, unpleasant, jarring action, and are liable to fall. The horse that turns his toes out like a dancing master, must have twisted ankles, is apt to hit himself, is liable to break down, but may withal have the gift of going.

Pigeon-toed horses *i.e.* those with the fore feet turned in, invariably make bad hacks. Ayston, Mr. Thomas Assheton's famous mount, prized by his hard-riding master as the finest performer that he ever "rode across Belvoir's sweet vale," suffered from this malformation and was, in

consequence, so bad a hack that he had to be led to cover. I have noticed that horses with rather low shoulders, but fine at the point and rather light in the neck, are generally pleasant and speedy gallopers. Fine-topped ones with high large shoulders are often high actioned and by no means fast or pleasant conveyances. The length of pace in no way depends on the height of the horse. Champion, a well-known Arab racer, when in training at Meerut, North-West Provinces of India, covered twenty-one feet at each stride.

The late Captain Roger D. Upton, of the 9th Lancers, in his work of Newmarket and Arabia calls attention to the ability of the Arabian to play with his fore feet even when at a hand-gallop. He further makes the following remarks, which are *apropos* to the unusual liberty of shoulder possessed by these true pure-bred horses of the pathless desert: "Most must have noticed when riding on the grass by the side of roads, how constantly their horses are putting their feet into grips, or on the edge of them, which have been cut to carry off the water, and which, it would appear, they are incapable of avoiding, jerking and shaking their limbs, and making it unpleasant for their riders. I have known Arabs, on the contrary, either at a canter or a trot, avoid these grips and obstacles by a most nimble management of their legs, either by extending one shoulder and leg beyond the grip, or putting one foot neatly down before concluding the usual length of pace." Whyte Melville termed this *handiness* with the feet "patting butterflies." I have, on more than one occasion, noticed the eager Arab pig-sticker, when brought up alongside the mighty boar at racing speed, lay his ears back, and go open-mouthed at "the father of tusks," and strike smartly at his "bow back" right from the shoulder as a passing reminder.

Though, perhaps, not the most elegant, the firmest seated riders in the world are the Australian stockmen, their horses

by far, with perhaps the exception of the Bedaween's Arab, the most active and the best trained. When yarding cattle or heading a bullock that has broken away, these horses follow the fugitive, turning, twisting, and wrenching, with all the activity of a sheep-dog. Fallen trees and all kinds of obstacles are taken in the stride at the verge of speed. The sudden halt, turn, or spin-round, as unexpected as instantaneous of one of these stock-horses, would send the best of our horsemen flying out of their saddles. All this racing and chasing is accomplished by aid of the plain snaffle bit, the reins, for the most part, lying loose on the animal's neck, his rider being busy with his twenty foot, short-handled whip.

Ambling, or what in America and Canada is termed pacing or racking, is a lateral camel-like motion much in vogue in Eastern countries, and in the United States for harness, where the speed is frequently very great and quite equal to an ordinary gallop. The pacer Billy Boice, under the saddle, covered his mile in two minutes fourteen seconds, and few of our blood hunters, untrained, would cover that distance in less than two minutes. Though unsightly to the English eye, this peculiar gait is certainly the easiest of all to the rider, and is the least injurious, save the walk, on the Queen's highway. In India and in the East I have ridden pacers long and continuous stages with the greatest comfort, and it is wonderful how a trained pacer gets over the ground seemingly untiringly and without effort. For invalids and old gentlemen seeking a thoroughly comfortable airing, there is nothing, outside a horse, like this pacing, the off fore and hind feet being on the ground alternately with the near fore and hind feet. In the State of Kentucky, America, where men and women ride long distances and are frequently in the saddle, their horses, all of English blood, are trained to this peculiar running-walk.

CHAPTER IV.

PRACTICAL HINTS.

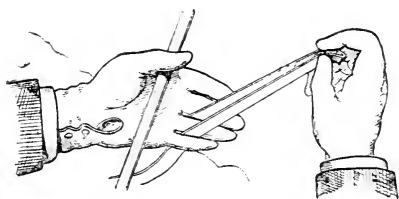
MOUNTING.

NEVER approach your horse from behind, or mayhap he will, being in playful mood, "land you one" more forcible than pleasant. Having carefully looked him all over to

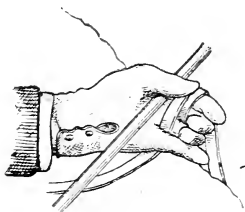


MOUNTING—FIRST POSITION.

satisfy yourself that he has been carefully groomed, and that he is properly bridled and saddled, the orthodox manner of placing yourself on his back is as follows. Stand opposite his near fore foot, place the left hand open on the neck, just in front of the withers, the back of the

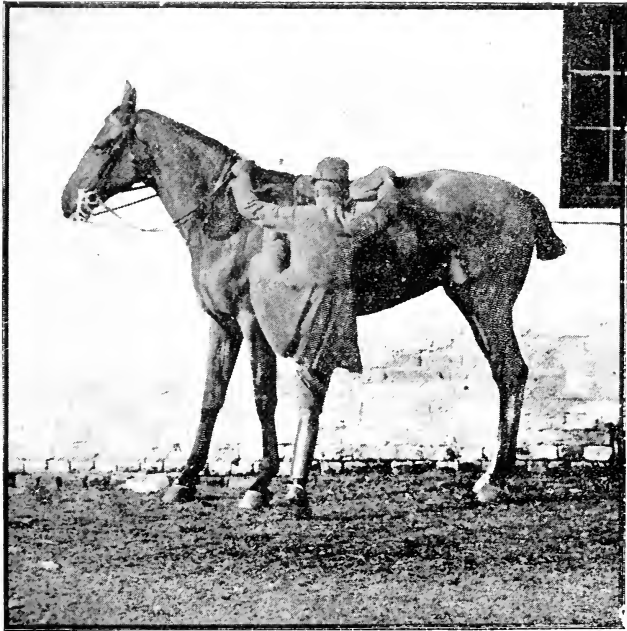


hand to the horse's head (position No. 1). Take up the reins with the right hand, separate them by placing the third finger of the left hand between them, then draw them through the still open hand until you feel the horse's mouth; turn the slack of the reins over the fore-finger to the off side, the mane side, of the neck; twist a lock of the mane round the forefinger and thumb, and close the



hand firmly, the thumb acting as a stopper on the reins. The right hand, now free, takes the stirrup by the eye, or the stirrup leather immediately above the eye, and turns the stirrup so that its sides are at right angles to the horse's body. Place the left foot in it as far as the ball.

You will now stand facing the tail, your left arm on the neck and hand on the crest holding the reins and wisp of the mane. Let the knee press against the flap of the saddle to prevent the toe from digging into the horse's side. With a hop come



MOUNTING—SECOND POSITION.

round to position No. 2 in mounting, at the same time seizing the cantle of the saddle with the released right hand. You will now be looking over the saddle, with the left foot in the stirrup, the whole weight of the body being on the ball of the right foot. Before the hop which, aided by the stirrup,

faced you or swung you round to the left has died away, give another big hop or spring—the motion, quick as thought, must be almost continuous—and stand balanced for a second on the stirrup (position No. 4), to transfer the right



MOUNTING—FOURTH POSITION.

hand from the cantle to the right side of the pommel, throw, swing, or cock your right leg over, not letting the knee go higher than just sufficient to clear the horse, and so drop quietly into the saddle, as light as “feathered Mercury,” and not like a sack of oats. The right hand is in the best

position to stay and "lower handsomely" the weight of the body. Put the right foot into the stirrup by aid of the foot and not of the hand. If your groom be present he, standing on the off side of the horse, should hold the horse's



MOUNTING—THIRD POSITION.

head with one hand and bear a portion of his weight on the off stirrup with the other. Position No. 3 represents an attempt to climb into the saddle: the gentleman has muddled the double-barrelled hop, so, at the risk of turning the saddle round and of tearing a lock from the horse's mane,

is dragging himself aloft. The reader will please to observe that the hands placed on the horse's neck and saddle are merely to guide the body, and are not to be used as lifts.

The above is *secundum artem*, but for the rough-and-ready horseman the following method is equally effective. Being proficient at the art of riding, and having the fear of the horse's heels before his eyes, he, as a matter of course, goes straight up to his head without any of the studied mannerism indicative of the riding-school. The reins are caught up in the right hand, which rests on the saddle, the left being engaged in guiding the left foot into the stirrup. The rider's back, in contradistinction to the practice of the *manège*, will be towards the horse's tail. The left hand then relieves the right of the reins, and by giving the body a swing so as to bring the chest against the horse's side and at the same time springing from the ground, the rider gains position No. 4, as in the first manner of mounting. The lock of the mane is gripped by the left hand, along with the reins, as he prepares to rise.

A third and very general practice of mounting, is for the rider to walk quietly up to the horse, take up the reins in the left hand, and, with his front facing the horse's side, to put the foot on the bottom or tread of the stirrup, which so hangs that this can be done without laying hold of the eye or leather with the right. The left still holding the reins grasps a lock of the mane, the right being placed on the cantle. One spring places his body in position No. 4 (which should be upright and not leaning over the withers, as represented in the illustration) and he, as usual, lightly swings himself into his saddle.

If the tyro's too solid flesh and inactivity prevent his adopting any one of the above three saltatory methods,

then there remains nothing for him but a fourteen hands cob, and the mounting block.

In adopting the first and strictly orthodox plan, the rider had better tighten the off rein a trifle more than the other, as, otherwise, he may find a playful animal, when he is placing his foot in the stirrup, giving him a nibble or even taking a pattern out of the seat of his breeches. On the other hand, when mounting with his face to the horse's head, if, perchance, his toe gave the horse's ribs a prod—a not unlikely occurrence—he might happen on a stern reminder from the near hind hoof.

With practice, backed up by a moderate degree of agility, the act of mounting quietly and neatly, without any strain to yourself or horse, will be acquired in a very few lessons.

MOUNTING WITHOUT STIRRUPS.

As the first lessons in equitation should be conducted without stirrups, it is essential that the beginner—man, youth, or boy—should learn to vault into the saddle without the assistance of these adjuncts. In the army, recruits are constantly practised at rapidly mounting and dismounting; and if these exercises can be, as they are, neatly and actively executed on and off a military saddle, the average civilian can have no difficulty in going through them on the plain riding or hunting saddle, with its low pommel and cantle. The illustrations, reproduced from instantaneous photographs, represent the various positions of mounting without stirrups from the near side; but, in practice, the rider should accustom himself to get into the saddle from either side. Horses should be mounted and dismounted, led, and fed, as often on the off as the near side. Many horses, restless when being mounted on the near side, submit quietly when mounted on

the off. Practice on a quiet fourteen two or fifteen hands horse in the first instance, then, by degrees, try your hand on something bigger till you can deftly and neatly throw your leg over a sixteen-hander, beyond which height no horse,



MOUNTING WITHOUT STIRRUPS—FIRST POSITION.

except a mammoth dray or waggoner, should be. Cross the stirrups over the horse's neck, or, for practice, slide them out of the bars and remove them; stand immediately opposite and close to the saddle; take up the reins with the right hand, pass the little finger of the left between them, and

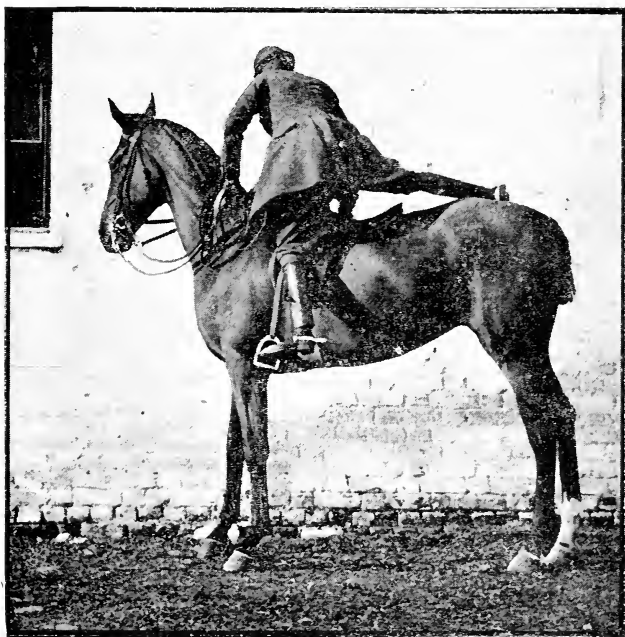
draw them through the hollow of that hand till the horse's mouth is felt, and throw the ends of the rein over the neck to the off side. In the illustration the rider is represented, as in the case of mounting with stirrups, with a lock of the mane



MOUNTING WITHOUT STIRRUPS—SECOND POSITION.

twisted round the fore-finger and thumb, but it is preferable to grasp the pommel with the left and the cantle with the right hand. Spring well from the ground into position No. 2, raising the body by the strength of the arms and wrists, dwelling there for one moment only to preserve the

balance, and, as in position No. 3, quitting the hold of the right hand to place the heel of it on the off side of the pommel so as to break the descent of the body on to the horse's



MOUNTING WITHOUT STIRRUPS—THIRD POSITION.

back, throw the right leg smartly over his back and drop without jar or bump of any kind into the saddle ; of course, when mounting from the off side the motions are reversed.

THE SEAT.

Many of our finest and most graceful riders are men who have never had a lesson from a riding-master—intuitive, natural, horsemen after the manner born. The *manège*, pure and simple, teaches a great deal, but is apt to leave a certain “stuck up” stiffness behind it. My ideal of an elegant horseman is one who combines all the studied art of the school with the wholesome laxity of the thoroughly capable untaught.

To illustrate what is meant by “wholesome laxity” I will first describe the riding-school seat, and then endeavour to tone down the ramrod unyielding primness inseparable from strictly military instruction, which, to some extent, is absolutely necessary to give uniformity of appearance to large bodies of men in movement. Before settling himself in the saddle the rider draws the reins through his left hand, and, taking a half turn over the fore-finger, the thumb being firmly pressed upon them and the hand well closed, the strongest possible grip consistent with good riding is secured. The hand in proper position will be perpendicular to the pommel, the knuckles turned towards the horse’s “pack-wax,” the wrist slightly rounded towards the body, and the little finger on a line with the elbow. The arm hangs perpendicularly from the shoulder, scarcely touching the body, with liberty for the elbow to move freely backwards and forwards to “give and take,” and to preserve touch of the horse’s mouth. An appearance of its being pinned to the side is to be avoided. In some schools the pupil is taught to let the elbow touch the hip joint, a position to be condemned on account of the constraint it imposes. The rider, in glancing towards the pommel, should be able to

see the back of his thumb and upper edge of the fore-finger only. The position of the body is perfectly upright and straight, shoulders well squared, chest thrown out, small of the back drawn in, and the head so placed that the line of vision be directed straight between the horse's ears. Feet should be almost parallel to the sides of the horse, the toes slightly turned out so that the calf of the leg be brought to bear against the horse's sides; heels depressed, and the ball of the foot resting on the sole of the stirrup iron. The grip should extend from the knees to half-way down the calf of the leg, the knees being just sufficiently bent to permit the rider, when rising on his stirrups at the trot, to rise and fall without undue display of daylight. An easy posture is for the back of the heel to be in a perpendicular line with the posterior bend or hollow of the knee. The whip, which till the reins are taken up and arranged, is in the fork formed by the thumb and fore-finger of the left hand, is transferred by being drawn—not flourished—into the right.

The right hand is then permitted to hang down in a natural position.

Now, then, as to an equally correct, less studied, and, therefore, much easier seat. Permit me to walk or ride round you and to make a few slight alterations. Turn the thumb of your bridle hand more down, your knuckles almost across the horse's neck, and drop the hand a bit; rest the back of the right hand easily on the thigh. Do not sit bolt upright, as if you had swallowed a ramrod or had gone through a severe course of back-board drill; do not, on the contrary, roach your back, poke your head forward, and sit all-of-a-heap in a toad-like position; do not adopt what Sir Bellingham Graham termed "a wash-ball seat." There is no occasion whatever for you to look straight out between the horse's ears, and to hold your neck as if it were glued to

one of the old-fashioned military leather stocks. Sit easily and naturally as in a chair, get all of that buckram stiffness out of your body, and when you give the horse his head, let the whole body flex with his motion. We do not want to see this yielding to his movements developed into an exaggerated swing or bend, it should be nothing more than an almost imperceptible sway, devoid of all lateral inclination. Men that look stiff and ride stiff are seldom or never ideal horsemen; they tire themselves and fatigue their horses. A man can sit perfectly upright without appearing as if he wore steel corsets, had a steel wire doing duty for spinal marrow, and was trussed up like the brave old Cid on Bavioca when, like Death on the Pale Horse, his mailed corpse "reared on his barbed steed" led the Spanish host against King Bucar of Morocco. An easy seat in no way detracts from a firm one, but the very reverse. To preserve a perfect equilibrium or balance, the rider's body, without seeming to do so, must adapt itself and conform to every movement of the horse. The position of your legs and feet are well enough, but there is a certain stiffness and want of play about the knee and ankle suggestive of the surgical manufacturer's art rather than of a live limb, and of the leg being nailed to the saddle flap.

When you have so far perfected your grip of the saddle, and have acquired confidence, then, having selected the best model of your sex, one in whom the ease and grace of being perfectly at home is contrasted with the restraint and formality of the riding school, copy that model as closely as can be. Be sure that he is a man who shines not only in the Row, and on the road, but in the hunting field also. Although the seat of hunting men varies considerably, there is an undefinable something about a first-rate cross country rider, a certain subtle ease, security, and confidence begotten

of having ridden all sorts of horses, over all sorts of countries, and at all descriptions of fences. He takes no trouble to appear or act like a horseman, there is no affectation, no attitudinising, nothing peculiar about him, yet his every motion is that of a gentleman and of a finished equestrian. Do not make your own selection of a model, but elect to follow the silent teaching of one who is on all hands an acknowledged brilliant horseman, and not a mere fearless bruising rough-rider, "the first in the throng," perhaps, but still not a master of the art.

Some short rotund men may acquire a strong seat, but dumpies cast in that mould can never make elegant riders ; in fact, such figures are not attractive under any conditions. Men so built are apt to roll in the saddle, and once out of it are difficult to get back again. It is not the low stature that militates against such robust Pygmeans ; it is the round and short thigh, the fleshy knee, and the general Bacchanalian chubby conformation that handicap them so heavily. Perhaps for all purposes a well-proportioned five feet seven to five feet nine man, light-flanked, broad-shouldered, all "wire and whipcord," with strong arms, muscular but hollow thighs, riding between nine stone seven to ten stone seven, is the one best calculated to look well on a horse and to get all that is necessary out of him. The "tall, plump, brawny youth" Somerville spoke of is another individual who does not, as a rule, make a good show in the saddle. Some tall men, notably Colonel Anstruther Thomson, look remarkably well and are fine horsemen, but it must be borne in mind that the longer the stirrup leather is, the more difficult is it to keep the leg and foot steady. Tall men, especially those with abnormal length of limb, should remember the necessity of educating their thighs and knees to take a firm grip of the saddle, and of keeping their bodies steady.

Though we have not yet got so far as the trot, I shall here refer to a very objectionable fore and aft pendulum movement of the leg from the knee downwards which grinds the calf of the leg against the saddle flaps to the detriment of both. Sometimes the knee takes part in this odious un-workmanlike "swag" friction motion.

There is a prevalent idea that tall men soon tire their horses, but as much more of the weight in such cases is carried below the stirrup bars than in those of men of less length of limb, this notion will not bear investigation. Why they tire their horses sooner is that their elongated stature brings with it an increase of weight; the shorter the length, in the absence of rotundity, the easier it is kept stationary; but some of our best cross-country performers have been over six feet in their stocking soles. Mr. Thomas Assheton Smith, the mightiest hunter that ever wore a horn at his saddle bow, was a twelve stone man, five feet ten inches high, athletic, well-proportioned, very muscular, but slight.

Before discussing the proper length of stirrup, I would say a few words on the important subject of riding without stirrups. If a man contemplates becoming a perfect horseman, and will not be content with mediocrity, he must accustom himself to regard the stirrup as a mere accessory support, and not as an absolute necessity. In my remarks on early tuition, I have endeavoured to explain the several advantages claimed for this ancient mode of riding. The cavalry recruit is permitted the use of stirrups for a short time only after having had some forty lessons. He is taught to leap without stirrups, and the more he rides without them the greater is his strength, the closer the grip and the better the balance. It is only towards the close of his long spell of instruction that he is permitted to ride with stirrups and to take up his bit rein. No horseman can have perfect

freedom of hand till his seat be firm, and this grip, combined with balance—both essentials—is only to be acquired by riding, as the famous Numidian cavalry of Carthage, stirrupless. The late Major Whyte-Melville quotes one undeniable authority as a noteworthy exponent of the advantages of this practice as a groundwork for beginners. “The late Captain Percy Williams, as brilliant a rider over a country as ever cheered a hound, and to whom few jockeys would care to give five pounds on a race-course, assured me that he attributed to the above self-denying exercise that strength in the saddle which used to serve him so well from the distance home. When quartered at Hounslow with his regiment, the 9th Lancers, like other gay young light dragoons, he liked to spend all his available time in London. There were no railroads in those days, and the coaches did not always suit for time; but he owned a sound, speedy, high-trotting hack, and on this “bone-setter” he travelled backwards and forwards twelve miles of the great Bath road, with military regularity, half as many times in the week. He made it a rule to cross his stirrups over his horse’s shoulders the moment he was off the stones at either end, only to be replaced when he reached his destination. In three months time, he told me, he had gained more practical knowledge of horsemanship, and more muscular power below the waist, than in all the hunting, larking, and riding-school drills of the previous three years.”

According to the strict rules of the riding-school, the proper length of the stirrup leathers is determined by the sole of the stirrup iron touching the lower edge of the ankle-bone when the foot hangs loose. Another method of determining the suitable length of stirrup leather is to place the tips of the fingers of the right hand against the bar to which the leathers are hung, and measuring from the bottom bar

to the armpit; when the sole of the stirrup-iron reaches the rider's side under the armpit the adjustment is correct. When taking a gallop across country, or over broken rough ground, the stirrups should be taken up two holes, and when starting on a long journey it is advisable to do the same. This will ease both horse and rider. When long in the saddle the rider will find much relief by at times taking his feet out of the stirrups and letting the legs hang loose, toes pointing downwards. He should invariably adjust his stirrups prior to mounting, and see, unless some malformation of limb has to be provided for, that both are of a length.

All stirrup leathers should be double barred; that pattern of buckle permits of the easier alteration of the leathers and allows them to lie flatter under the upper flap of the saddle. On no account must the end of the leathers be run through the space between the bars, it must lie back flat on the flap, at an angle, passing under the rider's thigh.

THE AIDS.

In horsemanship the *aids*, so called, are the almost imperceptible motions and practical applications of the bridle-hand, or hands and legs, through which the wishes of the rider are conveyed to the horse in order to determine his movements, turnings, and paces, and by which he is taught to obey the bit, and is given a light mouth. Their object is, through certain indications, to make the rider understood and obeyed by the horse, and it is necessary that these indications should be such that the rider can employ them instantaneously and with certainty under all circumstances. They should be so simple and so marked that no man can mistake, and no horse misunderstand, them. Obedience to hand and leg is the foundation of a horse's education; it

will not suffice that he should own the mastery of one, he must be amenable to both, for without invariable, unhesitating obedience to both he cannot be a perfect riding-horse.

For obvious reasons the voice, except it be in the form of the word of command, is not permitted to rank among the *aids* in the military riding-school, but with every other class of horse it is fully entitled to be regarded as such. Many an old troop or battery horse knows and obeys the command as readily as the trained man on his back.

The different *aids* are called in requisition in the following manner, the supposition in most cases being that the horse is being ridden in a snaffle or on the bridoon.

Walk.—Slacken the hold on the bit by turning the little fingers of both hands forwards towards the horse's head, both legs at the same moment and together being pressed to the horse's side, giving the word to move with the accompanying k-l-k. When the horse has moved off bring his head in, arch his neck, do not let him poke his nose out, let the hands resume their former position, do not let him saunter in a slovenly manner, but step out smartly well up to the hand. Do not press him beyond his best walking pace, and be careful that the pace is a true one, not bordering on the trot or amble.

Halt.—Simultaneously with the word *Whoa!* or *Halt!* bring the little fingers towards the breast, turning the nails of both hands inwards and upwards in the direction of the body. See that when halted he stands evenly on both hind legs.

Rein back.—Properly speaking, this movement to the rear should be performed with the bit, and in using it great care must be taken not to jerk the mouth. Before attempting this practice with a novice, he must be prepared for it by

being made to stand well reined in, so that the rider's hand may have the necessary bearing (called *appui*) on his mouth. On giving the word *Back!* feel both reins lightly by working the little fingers towards the breast, previously pressing both legs to the horse's sides to raise his forehead. The prevalent idea with many is that in reining back the horse's weight should be as much as possible thrown upon the hind legs, and that his haunches must be drawn well under him in a sort of sitting posture. This, however, is wrong. We want the horse to step or walk backwards collectedly in a straight line, not to run, hurry, or stagger back out of hand with more or less pain and difficulty, frightened and excited. Now, with all his weight in addition to that of his rider thrown on his hind quarters, and his hocks bent under him at an angle of forty-five degrees, he is less able to use them and to step back, and his temper is roused to resist the *aids*. He will probably lay his ears back, hug his tail, show every sign of sulkiness or fight, and will, as likely as not, rear. Under such circumstances the hands must be at once eased off, and both legs applied to regain his balance forward, for till he stands up again fair and square the attempt must not be renewed. With temper and firmness, unless the conformation be at fault, most horses may in a few lessons be taught to step to the rear by means of the *aids*, but some will obstinately refuse compliance with the rider's wishes. In this case the best plan is to subject the obdurate animal to the Galvayne system. Should the horse take kindly to the movement the rider must be careful to ease the reins after each step, to at first exact only a few steps, increasing by degrees, to be careful that the haunches are not thrown to one side or the other, and that the whole weight does not fall on one of the hind legs suddenly.

The Canter.—The *aids* to be used in this pace are fully discussed in the paragraphs on that subject.

Right or Left Turn.—Preparatory to turning a few *bending* lessons will be found useful. Their object is to teach the horse that when he feels the right rein he must turn his head to the right, that pressure on the left rein implies that it must be turned to the left, and that when both reins are felt he must arch his neck or “rein in.” During these lessons he is not permitted to move off his ground. When the bend is complete he should be taught to hold his head in that position without restraint, and must not be permitted to throw his head back hurriedly into its original position, it must be brought back quietly by the rider’s hand. In turning to the right or the left, the horse is kept up to his bit by the pressure of both legs, the pressure of the one on the side to which the turn is to be made being the stronger.

Pressure of the Leg.—This necessary *aid* is best acquired by circling the horse on his forehand and haunches, without which it is difficult for the rider to be perfect in its application, or the horse thoroughly obedient to its pressure. By circling the horse on the forehand he learns on the application of the leg to move his haunches to either hand, and by making him circle on his hind legs we prevent him from moving them to the right or left. Without a series of diagrams it would be almost impossible to describe and teach these instructive lessons of the Baucher *méthode*, which entirely upset the system of the old school. If a copy of the “Training of Cavalry Remount Horses,” by the late Captain L. E. Nolan, of the 15th Hussars, who fell at Balaclava, be obtainable, I would counsel the reader to procure and carefully study it. To that gallant officer, more than to any other, do we owe the present excellent horsemanship of the British cavalry.

Undoubtedly the best method a beginner can follow in acquiring the scientific application of the various "aids" of hand and leg is to join a military school. There, in that sequence of mounted movements known as the "single ride" he will, with attention, soon learn every variety of turn, inclination, and pace. He will there be taught that the simultaneous application of hand and leg is the groundwork of good horsemanship. The leg pressure must not be a heavy clinging of the limb, or a clumsy kick in the ribs from the heel, but an elastic pressure or "feel" of the muscles. The movement of the hand, though almost imperceptible to the spectator, must communicate itself distinctly to the bars of the horse's mouth. The great skill of a horseman in the management of the bridle hand consists in not making the bit to be felt too severely, and in moderating its effect by the mildness and pliability of the hand; or, in other words, in not employing more strength than the horse actually requires, and in checking or yielding by degrees, but never harshly or suddenly. The effect of the rein on the bit should be lively and certain. Under no circumstances must the rider contract the habit of "riding in the horse's mouth," or, more plainly, that of seeking support and balance from the bridle. The pressure on the bit should be just sufficient to give a steady and graceful carriage to the horse's head. In order to secure exactitude of bit action, the reins must be held of the same length, the cannons of the mouth-piece exercising, to an ounce, the same pressure. Nothing irritates, in the first place, a horse's mouth so much as constant dead pressure upon it; and the irritation in time begets callousness.

Most horses, if carefully taught, in obedience to the will of the rider, signalled by leg pressure and the attitude he assumes, respond at once by breaking into any pace and

turning in any direction. All that is required is patience and system on the part of the instructor. The Bedaween of the desert are not, in our acceptation of the term, good horsemen. Their seat is cramped, and their bridle a halter, with a piece of chain as a nose band. They have neither bit nor spur, yet in full career their horses pull up into a dead halt, start off again at full speed, turn and wrench with all the fire and activity of a Waterloo Cup greyhound, and obey the slightest motion of their wild masters. In a very few months a well-bred English horse can be trained to be as observant of his rider's dumb motions as the pure-bred steed of Nejd, or the equally high caste "air drinker" of the Maharaina. There is nothing the Arab can teach his terse, swift, and mettlesome companion of his tent that we cannot, if so minded, teach the descendants of the Darley Arabian, the Godolphin Barb, and the Byerley Turk. Our horses are, under kind intelligent treatment, eminently teachable, but their high spirit is often broken by brutality and impatience. The horse possesses great nervous sensibility, and is easily disposed to the various impressions of fear, affection, and dislike. The rider should endeavour to establish a sort of mesmeric lingual influence over his horse. Nothing is better calculated to calm and steady a horse, to make him obedient to his master's will, to prevent an accident, or to reassure a frightened animal, than the confidence he feels in the voice he is accustomed to hear, in tones of kindness, reproof, or commendation.

"Soothe him with praise, and make him understand
The loud applauses of his master's hand." *

This is the secret of the Arab's proverbial whispering in his horse's ear.

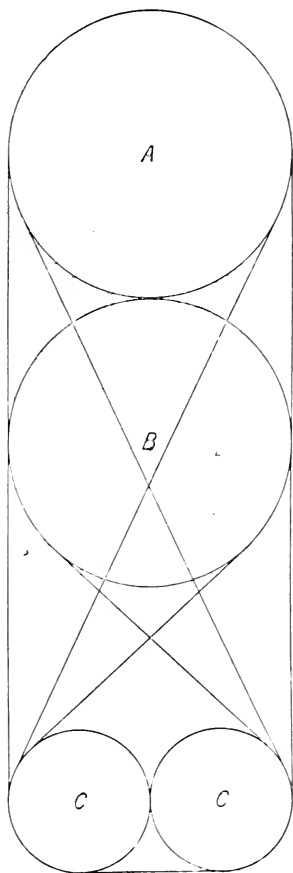
* Dryden.

THE WALK.

Much valuable instruction is gained from that apparently simple pace, the walk, which, of course, is the first ventured upon, and ought to be practised for some time before any of the other paces are attempted. It is in this slow pace that the rider acquires the fundamental lessons of seat, the aids, of turning, inclining, stopping, reining back, and so forth. The novice, therefore, will do wisely to practise all these movements at the walk, always keeping his horse well up to his bit and exacting a quick animated step, free from even a suspicion of ambling. The feel on the mouth should be such that every beat of his action is delicately but distinctly felt. The horse must not be permitted to move forward the moment his rider springs from the ground or is in the saddle; a well trained animal should not stir till he gets the "office" to walk—the slight pressure of both legs and the feel of his mouth equally with both reins. The rider's hands, not more than six inches apart, should then be down just in front of his thighs, with a good long hold of the reins behind the pommel. This is not strict riding-school teaching, but the position is unrestrained, it gives the horse's head due liberty, and looks well. He should ride in a perfectly straight line, diverging neither to the right nor to the left.

The exercise of the circle, which can be practised in any convenient open space as well as in a riding-house, will be found to greatly assist in giving firmness and grip with balance, also in perfecting the hands, and in developing the aids of body, legs, and whip. In India almost all the school work is *al fresco*. A piece of ground one hundred and twenty feet long by fifty feet broad should be staked or

otherwise marked out, and to this the practice should be



confined. The accompanying diagram describes the lines to work on. The two large circles, A and B, are each fifty feet in diameter and can readily be described by means of a lawn-tennis marker; the smaller ones, C and D, are necessarily each twenty-five feet in diameter. The intersection of the circles and the termination of the diagonal lines are the points where the ground is to be changed from one circle to another. The rider need not confine himself to working in one circle, as this becomes monotonous and irksome, and moreover soon brings the horse into the treadmill habit of working it, reeling it off by rote. He should never be aware of the rider's next move or intention except through the truth and correctness of the aids.

After travelling round the large circles, he should be guided to perform the figure 8. The number of circles may be multiplied and their diameter diminished, the rider, from

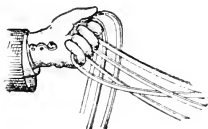
time to time, diversifying the track and changing ground diagonally from one circle to another. The number of permutations and combinations to be described on this limited area are numberless. The greatest exactness, uniformity and delicacy must be observed in their execution ; each and every circle or change must be mathematically correct. The pace and time must be uniform, and the horse, in order to readily obey the hand, must be kept well up to his bit. A visit to any circus will show the tyro that in order to preserve the poise of his body the horse must lean towards the centre of the ring proportionately to the size of the circle and the speed at which he is working. Naturally, the rider must conform to that inclination ; both must travel in the same plane. In describing the circle, the inward rein is lowered and slightly borne upon with an even pressure ; if it be held unsteadily, or jerked, the horse will not strike a true circle. He will require also the support of the outer rein and, probably, the aid of the outward leg, or a slight touch on the flank from the whip, which, under any circumstances, will remain in the rider's right hand.

Most horses will take their signals from the inclination of the rider's body. For instance, suppose in working these circles and changes the rider wishes to circle to the right, he turns his body slightly in that direction, drawing the right leg a little back, and advancing the left so much forward. The hands, I have said, should be low down, slightly apart, and in rear of the pommel. I place them in this free-and-easy position because such a hold of the reins makes the rider sit square in his saddle, and for another reason, which is this :—In guiding a horse, pressure on the off side of the mouth guides him to the right, and a tightened near rein inclines him to the left. Every one

knows this, yet in almost every case one-handed riders, by exerting a rein pressure on the side of the neck, expect him to forget all the teaching of the breaker and to do the very reverse. Colonel Greenwood, late of the 2nd Life Guards, writing on this subject, says, "When you wish to turn to the right, pull the right rein stronger than the left; this is common sense. The common error is precisely the reverse. The common error is—when you wish to turn to the right, to pass the hand to the right. By this the right rein is slackened, and the left rein is tightened across the horse's neck; and the horse is required to turn to the right when the left rein is pulled. It is to correct this common error, this monstrous and perpetual source of bad riding and bad usage to good animals, that these pages ('Hints on Horsemanship') are written. I never knew a cavalry soldier, rough-rider, riding-master, or any horseman whatever, who turned his horse, single handed, on the proper rein." Again: "The soldier who is compelled to turn to the right by the word of command, when the correct indication is unanswered, in despair throws his hand to the right. The consequence is, that no horse is a good soldier's horse till he has been trained to turn on the wrong rein." Without the same excuse for it, the same may be said of all ladies and all civilians who ride with one hand only, and of almost all who ride with two hands; for, strange to say, in turning, both hands are generally passed to the right or left; and I have known many of what may be called the most perfect *straightforward* hands—that is, men who, on the turf, would hold the most difficult three-year-old to the steady stroke of a two-mile course and place him as a winner, to half a length, who, on the hunting field, would ride the hottest and the most phlegmatic made hunter with equal skill, through all the difficulties of ground, and over every species of fence,

with admirable precision and equality of hand ; or who, on the exercise ground, would place the broken charger on his haunches, and make him walk four miles an hour, canter six and a half, trot eight and a half, and gallop eleven, without being out in either pace a second of time—but who have marred all by the besetting sin of side-feeling, of turning the horse on the wrong rein. The consequence is, that they can ride nothing which has not been trained to answer wrong indications.

When riding with one hand on a double bridle, it is expedient that each rein should lie between two fingers. This is not the rule, but it has two advantages ; the one, that all the inner sensitive surfaces are exposed to the sense of touch, the other, that a much stronger hold is obtained. If the bit reins be divided by the third in lieu of the little finger, the reins will then be properly divided, and the hand more alive to the feel of the horse's mouth. The reins, therefore, should enter the left hand in this order : The right bridoon uppermost, between the index and second finger, the right bit between second and third, the left bit between third and little, and left bridoon under the little finger. The mass of spare rein, brought up through the hollow of the hand, leaves it in the following reversed order, falling over, like the mane, the off-side of the neck, all being tightly stopped by the pressure of the thumb, thus : Left bridoon uppermost, touching the thumb, the left bit next, then the right bit followed by the right bridoon touching the first finger.



In the event of the right hand being requisitioned, the bridoon rein, off side, is taken between the second and third fingers, and the bit, if need be, between the third and little

fingers, or, if preferred, the outside of the little finger rests on it, both reins being stopped by the thumb, as before, over the second joint of the index finger; or the thumb can advantageously be left free. Thus on either hand there will be an equal tension of the four reins, and the horseman will be in the best possible position to control and direct the horse.

When riding an animal with a fine or sensitive mouth the horseman cannot be too cautious as to how he uses the bit reins. The movements of the hands in bearing upon either rein are precisely the same, save that in handling the bit, on account of its greater power, a greater delicacy is requisite. A well-bitted and handy horse can, when the rider has all the reins in the left hand, be readily turned to the right, provided he is going up to his bridle, as follows, and the movement is almost imperceptible. Turn the wrist downward so as to bring the heel of the hand nearer the body, at the same time drawing the elbow back just sufficient to bring a trifle more tension on the off reins. Should the horse not at once respond, a touch with the right heel well behind the girths will send his croup over to the near side and bring his fore hand round in the desired direction. In order to turn to the left, the action must be reversed: the wrist is turned so as to bring the nails uppermost and the knuckles downwards; this will bring pressure on the left reins, which, by bringing the elbow forward and letting the hand go over a couple of inches or so to the right, will be increased; the application of the left heel will then complete the turn. But by far the most certain method is to take the reins in both hands. Except when a horse is well trained, and works well up to his bridle, the effect of the reins, when held in one hand only, cannot be depended upon with the same certainty as when both hands are em-

ployed. The cavalry soldier must, of course, have his sword-arm free for the use of his weapon—sabre or lance—but with civilians there is no need for such freedom of the dexter hand.

Nothing that I know of is so well calculated to give the novice unyielding rigidity of hand as to take his first lessons outside a wretched stale old drone more fit to do night work with a "growler" than to carry a saddle. In Australia, when a bullock gets bogged, the bushman fixes one end of a strong rope to his horse's tail, and the other is made fast to the beast's horns, and the beeve is speedily hauled out. Many of the old "crocks" provided by riding-masters—so-called—have as much feeling in their mouths as in their tails, and the effect of riding such jaded callosities may be readily imagined. What "give-and-take" movement can there be with a dead pull on a mouth as hard as the nether millstone? what better recipe for destroying sensitiveness of hand and elasticity of wrist? what greater inducement to the beginner to ride in the plodding slave's mouth? On the other hand, there is no more certain way by which to unsteady and unnerve the pupil, than to put him on high-spirited, excitable, fidgety, restless horses, or on those with mouths so light that they, unable to face the bit, in order to get the pressure off the bars and into the corners of the lips, go with their noses stretched out like giraffes—"stargazing," as it is termed.

"Hands" such as possessed by the late Fred Archer are natural gifts. To a few, a very few, is given the power of immediately adapting them to the peculiarities of any horse's mouth, and this exquisite sensibility of touch is more freely bestowed on the gentler sex. This much-to-be-envied power may be by long and varied practice developed into a high art; but if the germ be not implanted nothing

approaching perfection can be attained. Though the in-born talent can neither be communicated nor self-acquired, still the means of forming a fairly good and useful hand can be imparted, and by practice and study a certain amount of cultivation arrived at. Archer began riding as a child, and the finest exhibitions of handling of horses I have ever seen preponderate among those who have been in the saddle from their youth upwards. My readers must not on this account despair ; for though that indescribable finish, which a few of either sex can lay claim to may be denied to them, the safety, grace, and excellence of ordinary riding is, with few exceptions, within the reach of all.

To preserve a light, easy feeling upon the horse's mouth the hands should not be clamped on to the reins like a vice, but only sufficiently closed to prevent the reins slipping or being drawn through the fingers. The alternate relaxation and contraction of the fingers on the reins, though all but imperceptible, will be reciprocated by the horse ; a sort of electric current, so to speak, is by this operation established and continued between the hand and the bars of the mouth, any sense of "dead pull" is done away with, the mouth does not become heated and hardened, the horse's attention is kept on the *qui vive*, and he moves pleasantly under full command. The hand must be one continued active spring in correspondence with the motions of the horse's head, and the lighter the play of the spring the better. The hands that control with the most delicate touch always hold the master-key. *Force contre force* may sometimes be called for ; there is no rule without its exception, but with horses the light hand wins the day.

THE TROT.

Once more, and without apology for so doing, I refer to the "up-stirrup" practice so strongly advocated and so constantly put into practice by that fine horseman, the late Captain Percy Williams, of that good old fighting corps, the 9th Lancers, as the shortest cut towards attaining a thoroughly firm and workmanlike seat. Nothing shakes the beginner so quickly and so thoroughly down into his saddle. As a groundwork for beginners there is nothing like "up stirrups." I do not advocate the doing away with these aids entirely, for without them no one can, in our saddles or in any other that I know of, ride to the best advantage; but to give the tyro grip with balance they, in the A B C of equitation, should be left in the saddle-room. When the cavalry recruit is first allowed these luxuries they are invariably a hole or two longer than they will be eventually fitted, so that his dependence on them as "hold-fasts" may be limited, and that he may bring every muscle into play to secure his equilibrium. No man can lay valid claim to the title of horseman till he feels himself thoroughly at home in the saddle under all emergencies without stirrups.

We take it for granted that the pupil, by close attention to the instruction he has already received, and by constant practice, has acquired a close, strong, and flexible seat, and that, together with grip and balance he has, to some extent, mastered the "aids," the action of hands and legs being simultaneous. Without stirrups the trot is the most difficult of all paces. The position of the body of the rider, with or without stirrups, must be precisely the same, the toes raised and the feet nearly parallel to the body of the horse. There

is a tendency of the toes to droop and point outwards when the foot is not supported by the stirrup irons, which position



THE TROT.

not only eases off the due pressure of the inside of the knee and thigh, transferring it to the calf, but produces a constrained and unsightly appearance.

The rider must bump the saddle, there is no help for it ; but the jolting will do his liver good, and strengthen the muscles of his stomach. He must rise and fall with the pace of the horse ; but a good deal of the "bone setting" may be got rid of by allowing both body and limbs to be perfectly flexible and free from restraint, except so far as to preserve the proper position in the saddle and to guard against the tendencies above referred to. With the bridle in both hands, using the bridoon reins only, his first trot must be slow and of short duration. He must not seek support from the bridle, or by clinging, like a sailor shinning up a bare pole, to the sides of his horse, but must sit well down and endeavour to find his seat by the aid of the balance alone. If nature has endowed him with round thick thighs and short muscular legs, why then he will have a *mauvais quart d'heure*, and a rough, slippery fifteen minutes it will be. Men with long flat thighs will take to the novel situation, if not nervous, like young ducks to water. Once perfected in the trot, all the rest is comparatively plain sailing. To beginners first lessons must be slow and of short duration, and the horse selected to take them on had better be well bred, with springy pasterns, and an elastic yielding spine. Many tyros, whose muscles and interior economy are unused to the effort, will soon tire, others become numbed, and in warm close weather I have known not a few suffer from giddiness. Under such circumstances, an immediate halt, with a friendly grip on mane or pommel, is allowable. Of course the rider, say what the instructor may, will at first endeavour to promote a rise at the expense of the bars or angle of the horse's mouth. Some there are who, if allowed stirrups, will rise in them to make the horse raise a trot, not having learnt the fact that the trotting of the horse induces the rising, not the rising the trot. Others work their arms

and commence ducking up and down, like feminines dipping in the sad sea wave.

After, as in the walk, a course of "single-ride" and circling as advocated in this chapter, the rider will have mastered the primary difficulties of the trot, and he may now, at the close of each day's practice, be indulged with stirrups a hole or two longer than he will, perhaps, care for. As he improves, he will, according to the action of the horse, be properly fitted in respect of length of leather. The stirrup will be brought to meet the foot—the leg being in its proper position—not the foot to the stirrup. At first he must not be encouraged to rise in his stirrups, but to sit well down in his saddle—the whole of the body springing from the elasticity of the balls of the feet bearing on the stirrup together with the flexibility of the ankles and knees. Having found his balance, he may then, with such grace and ease as he can command, gently rise and fall with the action of the horse—taking care not to exhibit too much daylight between himself and the saddle, also, as already protested against, seeing that his feet do not "swag," or swing forward, as he falls into his seat, or, pendulum-like, travel back under him as he rises. A very ugly and, amongst old gentlemen, prevalent trick or habit the pupil should be warned against, viz. the conversion of the elbows into wings wherewith to aid the body in adjusting itself to meet the bump. It always, to me, conveys the impression of an ugly old duck emerging from some horse-pond, and on tip-toe flapping his pinioned wings.

Once the rider has acquired the art of rising on the leading leg, has learnt to overcome the mysteries of the double bump, and can collect and extend his horse to any speed he wills, he may for greater ease, taking some living George Rice for his model, slightly alter his seat. Without roaching his back or thrusting his chin out, he, still well down in his saddle,

may incline his body from the loins just a little forward, bringing his hands inwards towards his waist. The hands—wrists rounded so that the nails are towards the body—remain stationary, the body, as it rises and falls, approaching and then retiring from them—the greatest distance between the hands and the waist being, as the body seeks the saddle, say four inches. At the extreme of the rise the lower waistcoat button will touch the hands without disturbing them. This is an essentially quiet style of riding; the rise and fall is minimised so as to be almost imperceptible; it gives spring to the shoulders, elbows and wrists, and favours light, sensitive handling.

In seeking to catch the cadence of the rise the rider should be up in his stirrups when the off fore leg is down; the time being taken from this foot. The rise must not be made suddenly, or with a jerk; the impetus must come from the horse. It is far more elegant to underdo than overdo movement. A man jumping up and down in his saddle, like a stamp in an ore crusher, must be a most uncomfortable load for the poor beast whose vertebræ he is pounding. A horse at the trot must not be permitted to hang on the rider's hand, or to dawdle in his pace; the pace must be true. Should he go "unconnected," *i.e.* half cantering and half trotting, it is impossible to keep even motion with him. If urged beyond his pace he will what is termed "break up," and go all abroad, perhaps break into a gallop. In such case he must be pulled up, steadied, and once more, with his head in, made to step clean, light and evenly. He must not on any account be rated or punished, the fault was not his; he was asked to go faster than his legs could carry him. A few caresses and kind words will "gentle" him. In this little island eight-and-a-half miles an hour is as fast as a common hack or park trot need be,

if well done : we leave "under the thirties" to our go-ahead transatlantic cousins.

THE CANTER.

From the trot the horse naturally springs into the canter, that is if the rider knows how to prepare him for it. I must here refer the reader to the chapter on Action, in which this armchair pace is fully described. How often do we see a "muff" endeavouring to put his horse from a trot into a canter. First a dig in the ribs with one heel, to be followed by a jam from both—klk ! klk ! klk ! a chuck with one, then with both bits at the poor brute's mouth, and an inviting rise in the stirrups. The trot becomes a faster and more unconnected trot, still no canter, the pace degenerating into a sort of a go-as-you-please indescribable double-shuffle—a cross breed between the gait of a galloping cow, the rack of a Jerusalem jackass, and the "flippant shtep" of an Irish pig with a lead to its hind leg. Another fumble with the reins, more back-heeling, spiced with a little red-hot profanity perhaps, and a "rib-binder" from the whip, drive the quadruped into a sprawling gallop, wrong leg leading, the reins are here, there and everywhere, bunched up all of a tangle, and the Mr. Washball, to save a runaway or a cropper, has to pull up as best he can.

The Canter is an artificial pace, during which, in a repetition of short bounds, the forehand rises first and higher than the quarters. Though the easiest of all to the rider, it is the most tiring and trying to the horse. The horse being light in hand and well balanced—having previously, when in the hands of the breaker, been tutored in Bending, Reining-in, and in obeying the pressure of the leg—can be made to strike a canter from the halt, walk, or



HOW NOT TO CANTER.

trot. The great secret in striking off is to take the weight off the leg you wish the horse to lead with. Should the horse be at all awkward in this pace, the best plan is to give him ten days' or a fortnight's instruction in the open-air riding-school, suggested at page 59. In a state of freedom a horse almost always leads, in his three natural paces—the walk, the trot and the gallop—with the left leg, only changing to the right to turn to that hand; for this reason it is advisable to give him his first few lessons working entirely to the right. In cantering to the right increase the pressure of the legs, touching him, if need be, with the spur, restraining him with the reins, preferably the curb, and at starting throw all the weight possible on the near hind leg. The excess of pressure on the mouth should be exerted by the left hand, that on the horse's side from the rider's right leg. This excess of bearing on the near side of the mouth is not to turn the horse to the left, but to bring all the weight on the near side. Always place the horse in position before asking him to strike off. In this position his off-legs are at liberty, and the forward impulse, communicated by the aids, compels him to use them. The light, playful action of both hands raises his forehand, the pressure of both legs makes him bring his haunches under him, and the prick of the spur sends him forward. Care must be taken that he does not bore on the bit, but that it exerts a reining-in influence, otherwise the leg and spur will only communicate a forward influence without the essential bringing in of the haunches, when the effect on the hind quarters is lost. In cantering to the right the off fore-leg leads, followed by the off hind; in cantering to the left the placing of the legs is reversed. Teach him to work in a circle, to commence with, and then on the straight line. Once perfect in working in these two directions, then teach

him to circle to the left, to change legs on the move, to strike, either leg leading at your option, a canter from both the halt and the trot, and to turn to the right and left without alteration of pace. The canter, though collected, should never be so slow as to effect the lightness and spring of the horse's action, and must not be permitted to develop into a hand-gallop. In bringing the horse to a walk, do not permit him to fall first into a trot. Plenty of "Reining-back" practice will tend to get the horse well on his haunches and to develop the use of them; further, it accustoms the animal to collect himself, to trust to the rider's hand and leg for guidance, and teaches him to yield to his master's will. Never continue the canter too long; being an unnatural pace it soon tires the horse and shakes his forelegs. The hands must be constantly feeling the mouth in order to retain the head and neck in their proper position, without in any way counteracting the forward impulse communicated by the pressure of the leg and the occasional gentle reminder from the spur, if inclined to get "behind the bit," or disinclination to go well "up to the hand." A horse may canter as much behind the bit as he pleases, provided he does not flag, and at once, in response to the pressure of the rider's leg, goes forward to the hand. Some well-trained horses canter handsomely be the reins ever so loose. If a horse be inclined to lean on the bit, the best plan is to yield to him, to press both legs and touch him with the spur, by which means he will at once come on his shoulders. A sudden halt from a sharp canter may result, in the case of young horses especially, in throwing out a curb or otherwise injuring the hocks; it is advisable therefore to slacken pace before halting.

When a horse has struck the canter truly, the rider's chief object must be to collect the pace. With this in view he

should keep his hands low, with a long, easy hold of the reins in both hands, and his legs close to the horse's body, whose hind quarters must be kept in a straight line with the forehand. The motion of an easy canter is as comfortable as that of a rocking-chair, but when the action is *false*, *i.e.* disunited with the fore, or disunited with the hind legs, it is the very reverse, and immediately makes itself felt. There are three distinct movements in the canter which are false: First, when in cantering to the right, the near fore foot leads, followed by the near hind. Second, the horse is said to be "disunited with the fore," when in cantering to the right the near fore leg is leading. Third, "disunited with the hind legs," when the both hind feet do not make the same length of pace, the off hind remaining or being put down further back than the near one. All riding horses, from the race-horse to the child's pony, should be taught by the pressure of the rider's legs to bring their haunches under them on all occasions, whether at the halt or at the speed. To correct false or disunited action, the most certain method for the beginner will be to pull up into a walk and then strike off properly again. But if this is not, especially when riding in company, convenient, the rider must pull him up into a trot, feel both reins to the left, the horse's head being kept slightly bent to the right, firmly close the pressure of the left leg, touch him with that spur, and throw as much weight as possible into the near stirrup. This will bring his haunches in and rectify the fault. In the second instance, in order to raise his whole forehand, close both legs on him, let him feel both spurs, feel both reins to the left, his head still slightly inclined to the right and throw the weight on the near fore leg. In the third case, the object is to impede the action of the near hind leg to bring that of the off hind further under him and so restore his balance. His head, therefore,

is kept straight with a good hold, and firm pressure of the left leg with application of the left spur sends his quarters flying over to the offside, and he must change. In all these applications of the *aids* the horse's temper must be taken into consideration. It is of importance that impulse communicated to the horse by voice, pressure of the leg, or spur, should be tempered with judgment and knowledge of his temper so that the result sought for may be obtained without the risk of his getting beyond the control of the rider's hand. In the canter especially, the spur must be applied with caution and delicacy.

THE GALLOP.

In the gallop, as compared with the canter, the horse no longer throws himself back on his haunches with his fore-legs lightly touching the ground, but throws the greater part of his weight on his fore-hand; the hind-quarters, thighs and hocks now being called on to exert their full propelling power. For this reason, therefore, it is essential that the hunter should be well-formed in front of the saddle. That, in addition to this, he should be deep in girth, strong over the loins, or couplings, with fully developed gaskins, goes without saying. The head has to be brought down to its proper level so that his eyes become the lantern of his feet. The great mistake most men make in galloping, downhill especially and over rough broken ground, is in not giving their horses enough play or liberty of the head. In another part of this volume I have assigned to the Australian stock-rider the position of the first horseman in the world. I should not recommend one of these colonial centaurs to steer a two-year-old for the Criterion, or a three-year-old for the Derby or St. Leger; did I possess a likely nag for the Grand

National I should not offer him the mount ; he would be very much out of his element in the Row, and might not, during his first season, shine in the shires ; but taking him all in all, for covering long distances of ground, for skill in sitting thoroughly wicked and dangerous horses, and in riding them through thickly timbered country, over break-neck fences and trappy ground, he has no match. In a mountainous, log and boulder strewn country, full of scarpd rocks and dangerous gullies and ravines he shines preeminently.

It is on record, how that Jack Shirley, the whipper-in to the Tedworth Hunt, was one day observed on his famous horse "Gadsby," following the hounds at a rattling pace straight down hill, with a large open clasp-knife in his mouth busy tying a whip-cord lash to his whip. The old trained hunter, by throwing his legs forward and his body back, knew that he was safe in galloping straight down the turfey incline, and so did hard-riding Jack Shirley. What was seen with the Tedworth might be witnessed any day and every day in the bush. The stock-rider, in an ordinary buck-saddle, with a snaffle bit, has to be ever on the alert to round in some break-away steer or to turn some pugnacious bull. His horse, too, when once he is broken to the game, is as clever as a sheep dog : he has full liberty of his head and uses it. The reader will not dream of galloping in Rotten Row or on the Queen's highway, but there is no reason why he should not, when so disposed, enjoy a "breather" on the Downs, or over any good sound galloping ground ; indeed, should he aspire some day to don "pink" he must accustom himself to the gallop. On light springy turf, such as that of the Heath, at Newmarket, he may give his horse his head and let him stride along, getting up in his stirrups, grasping the mane, and going slowly up the last bit of

rising ground ; through heavy ground he will ease him and pull him together, but he must come *fast* and *straight* down every declivity. I learnt this when hog-hunting on the low rocky mimosa-covered hills of the Deccan, when he who hesitated was lost, so far as first spear was concerned. At the gallop, both hands must be on the reins : the rider need not follow any prescribed rule in the matter of holding them, so long as he keeps his hands low.

Though I do not advocate men as a rule riding like jockeys, *i.e.* standing in their stirrups, still that position undoubtedly eases both man and horse. The long stirrup leather does well when the ground is not broken, but when uneven surfaces, such as ridge and furrow, water meadows, and among ant-hills, the leathers must be shortened a hole or two. There are degrees of raising oneself in the stirrups ; it cannot well be underdone, and is very commonly overdone. All that is required is that the weight should be taken off the seat and cantle of the saddle, so that the loins and propellers may have full scope for unhampered action. If the reader will compare the long easy seats of some of our crack jockeys—men jockeys, such as Tom Cannon, Webb, Watts and others—and those of the “dolls,” who usurp all the cream of the riding, to the detriment of the turf and the horses, he will see what I mean. These men do not get their backs up like angry cats, do not display a lot of daylight, and do not keep their seats off the saddle by holding on by the reins. When a horse is going over broken ground he must, of necessity, to accommodate himself to its inequalities, shorten or lengthen his stride. In such case the rider, then requiring all the hands nature and art has given him, must sit down in the saddle, allowing the horse, as much as possible, full liberty of fore hand, so as to measure his own distance.

DISMOUNTING.

When the horse has come to the full stop, or halt, transfer the whip to the left hand, slide the left hand down the rein till it meets the horse's neck, and twist a lock of the mane round the thumb or forefinger. Disengage the right foot from the stirrup; place the heel of the right hand upon the off side of the pommel-flap; and, supporting the weight of the body upon the right hand and left foot in the stirrup, bring the right leg gently backwards over the hind quarters, being careful to clear the hip and croup, the right hand gripping the cantle as the body descends on the near side. When the descent is to be on the off-side these positions are reversed, the right hand having hold of the mane, the right foot in the stirrup, and so on.

There are more expeditious methods of dismounting than the above, all requiring more or less agility, which may be practised with advantage. When the horse is at a halt, or walking slowly, the rider, leaning a little back, may disengage both feet from the stirrups and throw his right or left leg, according to which side he desires to alight, over the horse's neck, sliding down with his hip next the horse's shoulder. If he means to come down on the near side, the reins will be in his right hand, and *vice versa*. This will land him with his face to his proper front. When throwing the leg over the horse's neck he must be careful that its head is not suddenly thrown up.

Another speedy way in which to leave the saddle is to draw both feet from the irons, to place the heels of both hands on either side of the pommel, and, taking the spring from the hands, elbows, and shoulder, to vault off the horse's back, landing in a forward direction level with his fore-feet.

Constant practice in this last mode of dismounting will be useful in teaching that, in the hunting-field, very essential knack of falling clear of one's horse.

SPURS.

“He tires betimes, who spurs too fast betimes.”

Parash, the ancient Egyptian for “rider,” is said to have been derived from the Hebrew root, to prick or spur; so that “the persuaders” have been used and abused for some three thousand years. I wonder how many accidents have occurred during the past centuries, how many good horses have been ruined, how much money lost, and how much devilish temper and bile let off, by the cruel, needless, senseless application of the armed heel? In horsemanship there is no subject more worthy of consideration than this use and abuse of the spur; and I was pleased to find that a well-known and thoroughly competent sporting writer, “Borderer,” had, in an article in *Baily's Magazine*, written with his usual force on the cruelties perpetrated by many riders, male and female, by the untimely and far too free application of the rowels. Though Frederick the Great was of opinion that his troopers did more execution with their heels than with their sabres, and that the horses' weight and initial velocity made more impression on either cavalry or infantry than the keenest blade or the sharpest-pointed lance, we are not now writing with a view to charge squares, or, like our heavies at Balaclava, to ride clean through a serried column of dragoons. Moreover, we are of opinion that spurless horsemen, mounted on well-bred chargers, if their hearts be in the right place, can ride through any square or mass of men, *provided* they get within striking distance alive—a contingency of some considerable difficulty

in these days of quick-firing guns, repeating rifles, and smokeless powder. A well-known hunting man related the other day the following anecdote, which goes far to show that, in many instances, spurs are by no means necessary to induce young horses to face awkward fences. "Some years ago I was riding with hounds in company with Major Whyte-Melville. There was a scare amongst several loose colts, which ran down a green lane, turned and jumped over a nasty, complicated fence, with timber, and a blind hedge and ditch—not one fell. He exclaimed, 'Had those colts been subject to a bad hand and tight curb-chain, they would all have fallen.'"

The uses of the spur are few, its abuses many. Man, of course, must maintain his supremacy, and there are occasions, oft and many, when a combination of cool determination, plenty of time and patience, and a little sharp punishment, are required to curb some mutineer or to quell some outbreak. Without prompt and feeling punishment resistance may grow into a vicious habit, or, at least, a wilful propensity which must at once be curbed. I have mentioned the treatment slowly measured out by the Yorkshire Tyke to the horse that positively declined to go the road he was wanted. But we have not always the time to sit hour after hour, inwardly cursing the perverseness of equine nature. The lesson of obedience has to be short, sharp, and decisive. The prescription must be compounded of steel and catgut. The horse, with an angry snort, an attempt to unseat you, and a straight up-on-end rear, shows fight. "Beware of entrance to a quarrel; but being in, so bear't that the opposed may beware thee." Realize these words of Shakespeare, and execute sharp sentence. Anger in a man, as in a horse, is a short madness, so during the contest retain perfect temper; do not permit

yourself to get into a passion, or to drift into cruelty. Fight it out all along the line, but fight calmly and with judgment. First of all, before proceeding to extremities, speak to him in a stern voice—he will understand it—“Who-ho, then! What are you at, eh? Steady!” and so forth. If he persists, then the time for the legitimate use of the spurs has arrived; sit firm, bring down your whip, or, better still, ash-plant, on his ears and over the shoulder, on the side he declines to turn to, and let him feel the rowels in earnest; strike with both heels simultaneously immediately behind the girths—it is not given to every man to be able to drive in both spurs together—and, if necessary, repeat the dose. You must not be beaten, for horses that have once found out that they can please themselves as to which road they shall take are never pleasant hacks.

Another occasion when the spur may be advantageously used, is when a horse, not pumped out, that can jump, balks at his fences and obstinately refuses. When a good game animal refuses it is because he has had enough of it, and dares not to trust himself. Many obstinately decline to face a fence, from the fact of their having been invariably spurred when ridden at the obstacle, and, as often as not, from having their clumsy rider's spur stuck into their arms on landing and getting away again. Can it be wondered, then, that, under these circumstances, many horses, especially thin-skinned, sensitive ones, detest the sight of a jump. It is with the horse that can jump when he likes, and only when he likes, that the spur can best deal; those that can jump and won't jump must be made to jump. A friendly hint from the rowels very often convinces a wavering horse that his rider quite means him to fly the obstacle in front of him, and this is the case especially when water has to be cleared.

The spur should be the *last* and not the *first* resource of the rider. Unjust, ungenerous, ungrateful punishment has broken many a brave heart, and crushed many a gallant spirit; it has converted many a noble nature into that of a savage. Though in the army the recruit is allowed spurs before his feet ever feel a stirrup, the propriety of which may be doubted, I would not permit any man to ride with them till he is far advanced in the scientific application of all the aids of hand and leg, and till he has been well instructed in jumping and riding all sorts of horses, with and without stirrups, over a rough country.

As compared with the whip, the spur, as a punisher or "waker-up," has the advantage of being "the spur of the moment." It comes without warning; the horse cannot watch for it out of the corner of his eye as for the whip; he, if both are applied together, as they ought to be when a forward movement is demanded, cannot swerve, and though more dreaded it inflicts less pain. The rider should learn that a prick from a sharp rowel—and all rowels kept for use should, like the probe of Josh Billings' "muskeeter," be "fresh ground and polished"—is quite as effective as a violent stab. Many sleepy, lazy horses, especially those that are slovenly walkers, are all the better for an occasional superficial prick, just sufficient to awaken attention. In the canter, too, not a few require an occasional touch of the spur to make them go pleasantly up to the bit. To spur a dead-beaten horse, especially one that has done his best, is absolute cruelty.

Of spurs there are several varieties. When riding in Newmarket or Butcher boots, or in leggings, the common hunting or swan-necked hunting pattern will be found the most convenient. For park work the plain box-spur, with either straight or swan-neck, in Latchford's patent

boxes, or the Gentleman's box-spur, also either straight or swan-necked, are most in use. I prefer the plain, straight, round-necked pattern, with hunting spike rowel.



THE RIGHT SORT.

LEAPING.

A pupil should invariably be put on a thoroughly made, safe, and pleasant hunter; one that goes quietly and collectedly at his fences, and that does not know how to make

a mistake or refuse. Such a horse will certainly teach the novice how to ride *him*, and will, at the same time, greatly assist him in riding others. If a man aims at becoming a thorough workman over a country, either to hounds or "between the flags," he must learn to ride across any shire in the United Kingdom, from Fife to Cornwall, from Donegal to Cork, and on every variety of horse from the galloping, long-striding, thoroughbred of the Shires to the thick-set blood "big-little-'un," suited to the mountains of the Principality or the forest of Exmoor. He will soon learn the difference between negotiating a light-flying country and a deep-holding or rough one, between an open and an enclosed one.

Before the rider attempts jumping he should have acquired a good firm close seat, well down into the saddle, centaur-like. He should have no hankering after cobbler's wax, no inclination to part company with his horse, despite rearings, plungings, kickings, swervings, and such-like reprehensible performances. In these pages I have had occasion to refer to the balance-seat, for without balance there can be no really elegant horsemanship, but the necessary grip of the saddle must not be sacrificed. Those who attempt to ride over fences by balance alone will find they have as much as they can well do to maintain their seat over a rasper, especially if there be a drop at landing; and a sudden swerve or decided refusal will most likely entail a dissolution of partnership. I must stipulate for the rider being perfectly at home in the saddle, for to ride properly at and over a fence, to land cleverly, and to get away again speedily, he must feel the mouth with the proverbial "pack-thread" rather than with the leather rein, and to give his horse room and liberty to collect himself before taking off—the hands must be divorced from the seat.

Some men, when they have formed their seat, ride best with long stirrups, some with short. The best plan, in fencing, is to ride with that length of leather which is most convenient and easy, remembering that when too long the foot-hold on the irons is difficult to retain, and that for support the rider might as well dispense with them and their weight. In the hunting-seat proper the knees form the grip and hinge, the inside of the calf of the legs the grasp, while the thighs enable the body to rise and fall with the undulating fore-and-aft motion of the horse as lightly as a well-balanced carriage on its springs. The stirrups should, therefore, be of a length sufficient to enable the rider to raise that nameless portion of humanity just sufficiently clear of the saddle to let this system of springs work freely, without bumping, when occasions arise demanding the entire removal of pressure and weight from the cantle of the saddle so that the horse's loins may have full play. The rider, by merely rising in his stirrups, should at once throw his whole weight on to his knees, the lower part of his legs, and into the stirrups, into which the foot should be thrust well home. We hear a good deal of a "handsome long seat," but, well as it looks, it is not a strong seat, nor one calculated to ease or assist either horse or rider. What is wanted is that *just* seat, compatible with an easy, erect, workmanlike attitude, which enables the rider to humour himself and his mount by almost imperceptible changes of position with a sort of ball-and-socket movement.

Having secured a good jumping nag, a snaffle hunter if possible, the beginner will commence with the smallest obstacles, both as regards height and width. I am not so much afraid of his falling off as of his unduly interfering with the liberty of the horse's head. From the very first he must learn to abstain from attempting, by aid of the bridle,

to give his horse the smallest assistance. Though, by firm handling of the bridle, the horse as he nears a fence must be made to feel that there must be no refusal, and that swerving will not be tolerated; yet the instant that he is about to gather himself for the effort, all bit-pressure must be slacked off, and he must be permitted to negotiate the obstacle in his own way. There is no mistaking the indications a horse telegraphs to his rider when he means jumping. When he comes at his fence cheerfully and determinedly, pricking his ears, and collecting his stride so that the powerful sweep of his haunches may be brought to bear, he is certain to try, and by his momentum almost as certain to land over it.

If horses possessed the gift of speech they would, on nearing a fence, be it a flight of sheep hurdles, a stiff "oxer," a high, strong and spiteful-looking bull-finch, an awkward stile, or water, exclaim, "Pray give me liberty of head, and ease off that abominable pressure on my chin, unless you want to cramp my jumping powers, throw me down, and come yourself an 'imperial crowner.'" We hear of men *lifting* their horses clean over big fences. It is an expression and nothing more. How can any one, seated on a moving object weighing, say twelve to thirteen hundred pounds, to say nothing of his own ten to sixteen stones, lift, without any purchase, over half a ton off the ground some seven feet two and a half inches, the height cleared recently by the Canadian gelding Filemateur? When Emblem cleared thirty-six feet three inches at Birmingham, and Chandler covered a still greater distance at Leamington, they did so by their own unaided enormous jumping powers and momentum, their riders did not lift them the decimal of an inch. A lately executed instantaneous photograph demonstrated the fact that even in the trot the horse's all four

legs are at times in the air together off the ground, and numbers of sun pictures have proved the gallop to be a succession of bounds. Nothing short of a winged horse can be "*lifted*" over his fences. The action of the hands and arms in "lifting" may induce the horse to increased effort as he is about to spring, but in the sense the term is generally applied it is senseless. In a vast majority of cases this interference with the due freedom of his movements will flurry him and prevent his taking off at the proper time and place.

The pupil is on a thoroughly made hunter, and if "on the bare earth exposed he lies," the fault will be his own; he must either tumble off or, by awkward handling of the reins, cause the horse to jump short or otherwise bungle the fence, and so bring him to grief. He must begin with something small, simple, and easy, which he must learn to do well. The horse, I take it, is one of those that can be depended on to jump in cold blood. Many of the best that ever crossed a country in the wake of a pack of hounds utterly repudiate the idea of "larking" or "schooling." On some old hunters the presence of hounds produces an excitement instantaneously recuperative of physical powers—all their prostrated energies suddenly revive, groggy stiffness and staleness give place to sprightly eagerness, and, like "the antlered monarch of the waste," they sniff the tainted gale, and listening to the cry that thickens as the chase draws nigh, are eager for the fray. But in his sober hum-drum moments of cold blood this same horse may positively decline to look at a fence of any kind. Many contend that all horses dislike jumping; are afraid of it. Such is not my experience. Some are so fond of it that no enclosure will keep them within bounds, and I have seen extraordinary leaps, not the product of fright, taken by all sorts and conditions of horses, from the thoroughbred yearling to the Shire colt.

The confidence or the courage of the rider depends, not so much, in the bulk of cases, on his own inherent nerve as on the character, strength, action, and cleverness of the horse he bestrides. A bold, big, and safe fencer generally transmits some of his qualities to the man on his back. That hereditary possession of "a spare leg," or the wonderful power some horses possess of being able to save themselves from a fall under almost all circumstances, transmits a feeling of safety, and wondrously reduces the size of the fences. Rest assured there is great virtue in the "fifth leg."

Let the tyro begin with a low sheep-hurdle or leaping-bar, not higher than the horse's knees, closely and thickly interlaced with or incased in gorse, and placed in a narrow lane, a gap in a fence, or in a gateway. In riding at the jump he should take both hands to the reins with a long but steady hold, keeping his head straight at the fence. Commencing at a walk he should break into a trot, and, in the last few strides—more than likely the horse will, of himself, quicken his pace as he nears the jump in order to gain impetus—into a canter, keeping the whole attention fixed on the spot selected to jump. *Where* he should jump is your affair, *how* he should clear it is his business.

When quite certain that he has made up his mind to "have it," without relaxing the hold of the bridle, quietly by leaning slightly forward, shift your weight on to your thighs, knees, calves, and stirrups, by which precaution the concussion or "hoist" of that sudden upward jerk or effort necessary to the horse to clear it is avoided, and all jar to carrier and carried is prevented. As the horse alters his position in the air, or "reverses," his head and fore hand being lower than the quarters, the rider's body, if the reins be not held too short, will, by leaning back, naturally and automatically resume its seat in the saddle. When the

horse has topped the fence, and is on his downward journey along the parabola he is describing, he extends his neck, and should the rider's hold of his head refuse to relax and to humour this extension motion, then the poor animal, on landing, will be embarrassed by finding the said rider perched on his pack-wax a foot or so in front of the saddle, his neck encircled by the gentleman's arms in perfervid embrace. The result may be that both come to the ground. It is not easy, should the horse at once resume his pace, to crawl or wriggle back into the saddle, and the effort generally ends in a "pip."

Had the rider been possessed of strong arms, "hands of iron," and a firm unyielding seat, and had he been permitted to use a curb-bridle, there would probably be a *fiasco*, and especially so if the fence had been ridden at at any pace. Denied that forward stretching-out liberty of head, the horse, pinched by the curb, with his chin in his chest, "props," *i.e.*, sticks his two fore-feet on landing firm into the ground; held by the curb he is unable to "get away," or, in other words, to pick up his fore-feet and resume his canter or gallop, consequently the weight of his own body, and that of his rider, multiplied by the initial velocity, revolve in a circle round the firmly planted hoofs and a somersault, the man below, the horse above, both on their backs, is the unpleasant *finalé*.

One of the greatest difficulties the tyro has to overcome is the inability, at first, to yield to the extension of the horse's head without being pulled forward out of the saddle; he will persist in "riding in the horse's mouth," or holding on by the reins. In order to obviate this tendency as much as possible, a good plan—one only, however, to be put in practice when the horse can be depended on to jump for certain, or when the pupil is well advanced and well shaken

down into his saddle—is to take such a long hold of the reins that the hands are brought back as far as the rider's hips. This ensures plenty of scope, for not only are there several inches more length of rein, but the elbows being bent there is the additional play of a straightened against a flexed arm. The horse, as he goes over and reverses, will avail himself of the slack; the hands, as his fore-feet reach the ground, will, without any wrench, be drawn in front of the body over the pommel of the saddle, and the seat will not have been disturbed.

After some practice the beginner should learn to drop the reins altogether, to go over the fence with his hands in his pockets, or "trussed" with a walking stick passing across his back and between his elbows after the manner of the back board. Having practised with stirrups he should, as confidence comes, endeavour to do without them. The height of the fence will be increased by degrees, and the pace at which it is ridden at varied. He will walk quietly up to it and let the horse take it standing, or he may take it at a trot, both of which operations will be found very different from the easy swing of the canter, and especially so if the horse be short in back and body, and what is termed a *buck leaper*.

Almost any horse, particularly a fresh one, full of jumping powder and "beany," or a youngster full of life, if cantered at a small prickly fence will skip at least fourteen feet, landing as light as a feather, without his rider feeling aught but a pleasurable sail through the air; but the upright rear, followed by immediate reversion, coupled with the violent effort and hoist of the propellers is a motion of a very different and much more *unseating* kind. The shock to the rider, till he learns how to accommodate himself to the jerk of the descent, is considerable, and this adapting of the body

and grip is only to be acquired by practice on all sorts of horses. It must be learnt, for, with the exception of water, double post-and-rails, too close to go "in and out," or big fences with a wide ditch either on the take-off or landing side, all jumps must be ridden at slowly.

I have elsewhere described the peculiar gate-jumping proclivities of Jack the Whip's Irish *vaulter*, and of my own mare "Up-she-rises." To be thoroughly *au fait* the horseman must be equal to sitting such almost perpendicular performers as if glued to the saddle, and without much of a strain on his gripping or balancing powers. Having become proficient over one hurdle he should learn how to negotiate a double, or what is termed "in and out clever," or "the double event." A fence of this kind may be readily improvised by placing another gorse-laced hurdle some eight or ten feet from that in the gateway, further in the field and connected with it by wings. At first the two jumps in rapid succession, especially if there be any hesitation or dwell between them, will loosen the hold on the saddle, but that will be speedily overcome. The first attempts, if made at a smart canter, will be found easy enough; it is when the horse trots slowly up to the double that the cobbler's wax is necessary. A landsman gets his "sea legs" by a *lex non scripta*, and, by the same unwritten law, the horseman maintains his equilibrium in the saddle when his horse is pitching in and out. It is all plain sailing so long as the horse forges ahead, but should he take it into his head to balk, to jump the second hurdle side-ways, or to jump the wing, and the rider be trusting entirely to balance, he may safely calculate on being shunted over the horse's head or spilt over his shoulder.

In riding at high timber the pace must be slow and collected. If a horse, not trained to steeple-chasing, be



A Workman.

STANDING AND FLYING.

rushed at a strong gate or a stiff post and rails, he will probably either take off too soon or too late, in either case heavily striking the top rail, which, failing to give way, will turn both over a regular crumpler. As height and width require different efforts, it is needless waste of muscular power to make him exert both when one will suffice. Of all animals the deer tribe are the biggest and best fencers; and a hunted deer, when about to charge park palings or some unusually high obstacle, will almost invariably slow down to a trot. I call to mind an exemplification of this. The Indian antelope, once it has made up its mind to make a certain point, cannot be turned from that resolve. At the grey dawn of a December morning we, a long column of cavalry in file, were on the line of march, crossing, in pursuit of the rebel, Tantia Topee, one of the extensive black cotton plains of the Central Provinces. A *tola* of antelope came galloping down on our right flank, evidently bent on crossing the rough country road along which we were riding. The men shouted at the deer as they came speeding on, but they would take no denial, and jumped through the line wherever an interval or opening presented itself. One corps, the Aden Horse (Major-General Henry Moore, C.B., was then, as a lieutenant, in command of the troop) was marching in good order, well "locked up," and a black buck, finding no opening, dropped into a trot, and then with one mighty bound flew clean over two of the sowars' heads.

Men who go out *calf*-hunting with the Queen's must have observed how the mutilated half-tame bucks always slacken speed when about to jump a very high fence. The late Thomas Assheton Smith, the possessor of the most bull-dog nerve in the saddle and out of it, one of the few, the very few, who occasionally rode for a fall, going at places which he well knew no horse could leap over, never rode fast at

his fences. "When a man rides at fences a hundred miles an hour, *depend on it he funks,*" was the oft repeated opinion of this *preux chevalier*, this "*grand chasseur* SMIT." When a horse goes at a great speed he cannot rise to any considerable height from the ground. Never ride a beaten horse at stiff timber, for he is almost certain to breast it, and a fearful somersault may result. Double post and rails, if they are pretty close together, may be taken in the stride; they are usually not very high, and must be ridden at with good pace in order to get sufficient impetus for the horse to spread himself sufficiently; but, if to be taken "in and out," must be approached leisurely, otherwise he will land too far over the first rail and too close under the far one to permit of his clearing the latter. This is another description of fence to be avoided on a tired horse, and especially so when the posts are not far apart.

Very few men care to take a line of gates, and yet they are seldom as high as most of the fences an average horse clears without an effort, and the taking off is usually sound. Stiles, usually placed in cramped awkward corners, are almost invariably low, but unbreakable. They must be approached at a walk, a trot, or at a slow canter, for horses are apt to be very careless at them. Moreover, both landing and taking off are generally on or from puzzling ground, without sufficient elbow room, with a ditch and narrow plank for foot-passengers.

Why both men and horses, both first-class performers of their kind, should shirk water is unaccountable. In the case of the rider, deference to the thermometer and love of his clothes may act as a deterrent, but, surely, for the horse no such pleas can be advanced. At timber, such as it is impossible to surmount, the noble brute will not refuse; send him at a seemingly impenetrable bull-fincher, the bottom

growth of the thorns as big round as a man's leg, and he will crash through it like a rocket, or get "hung up" in the attempt; at the ox-fence with its double ditch, a bank, a pair of hedges, and a stiff, low, oak rail he disdains to turn tail; but the cold glare of water, which, without an effort, he could skim over in his stride appears to paralyze him. It is a sort of rubicon he may not cross. If the footmarks of a blood-hunter, one such as we find in the Shires, be measured as he gallops over sound turf, it will be found that at every stroke he covers twenty-two feet. At Meerut, North-west Provinces of India, the fourteen hands two inch high Arabian "Champion" covered twenty-one feet at each stride. Yet, strange to say, it not unfrequently happens that a mere ditch of glittering water, over which a boy on a pony "good at water" would fly with consummate ease, often stops an otherwise perfect fencer.

It is the naked ugliness of the water that creates this aversion to the water jump, both in the man and in the horse. I have seen a man come down to a willow fringed brook like a bird on the wing, his heart seemingly hardened, but as he nears the chasm, like Bob Acres, the courage oozes out at the fingers' ends; the horse, only too willing, perhaps, feels and answers the irresolute pair of hands, the gallop getting slower and slower dwindles into a canter, and the two slither and slide into the muddy clay-bottomed brook together, and serve them right. But the same horse and rider will not hesitate one moment if the same expanse of water be fringed and fronted by a thick low hedge, and will clear it in faultless style. People say you cannot go too fast at water; and to judge by the exhibitions one sees at Islington and other shows this is true; but I take leave to differ. That horses, unless ridden very freely, are apt to refuse I admit; it stands to reason also, that to carry a horse

over wide water a strong impetus is essential; but I insist that, let the pace be ever so great at which the horse is brought down to the jump, he must be collected before actually reaching it. If rushed right on to the bank at the verge of speed he cannot possibly measure his take off, and, if the bank be rotten, may flounder like a behemoth in Limpopo, right into the middle of it, or chest the opposite bank. Spin him at it, let him understand that he has no power to resist your will, that he must go where resolutely directed, and bring him to the brink primed but collected.

Some rogues, when they first catch a glimpse of the polards, or a sight of water, make up their minds to cut it if possible. When mounted on "*a brute at water,*" the rider must hold his head in a vice so that he cannot refuse, a few gentle reminders from the spurs will excite his courage, the pace must gather as he approaches the glittering streak or wintry flow, then a vigorous lift and "high over!" will land him in the next field—if he will but make an effort. With such a brute the maximum of speed must be in the last few strides, for any attempt to steady him on the brink would be seized hold of as an excuse for refusing. In short, in riding at water, the horse should be taught that there is no time for making two bites of the cherry; that he must not go in and out, but over. It is, I grant, a very difficult thing to slacken speed with any horse not "*good at water.*" When a dirty, muddy brook, or small river, which meanders or rushes between two perpendicular loamy banks, ten or twelve feet below the level of the field, is deep enough to drown both man and horse, and "dark as Iser rolling rapidly," the prospect is not over-inviting to either biped or quadruped.

Stone wall jumping, on the back of an Irish horse, or on the back of most horses, Arabs especially, after some prac-

tice, is perhaps the easiest and safest of all. There are no drains on either side; the horse sees what he has to do and knows how to do it *con amore*; they can be measured to a nicety. Some of the walls one meets with in Ireland are ugly customers; the longer they are looked at the bigger they grow, they are to be jumped but not looked over, and yet the nimble natural fencers of the Emerald Isle top them without an effort, flying them, no matter how high, but almost invariably displacing a barrow-load of the top stones by a parting kick from the hind feet. Their riders, too, knowing no fear, send them at these seeming posers at a hand gallop, and yet few chip their knees. A horse accustomed to hunt with the Galway Blazers would skip over our Somerset, Gloucester, or Oxfordshire walls. Properly speaking, when a man is not in a great hurry, a wall should be ridden at slowly, as recommended in the case of high stiff timber. A good wall jumper is not, as a consequence, clever at rails or gates. Banks, save in the case of Irish horses, "after the manner born," must be taken on and off slowly. A clever English hunter, one of those blessed with that handy "fifth leg," will soon learn how to accommodate himself to this kind of fence, but many, unused to it, will attempt to fly it, and so come to grief.

In Ireland gates are not so common as with us; the connection between fields is frequently a gap built up with stones, after the manner of a roughly improvised wall. Having grazed one enclosure, the brood mare, a great *lepper* in her day, sees a nice tempting bite on the top of the bank, so hops on the top of it followed by her foal. Having grazed the top, she takes a fancy to spy out the nakedness of the land in the adjoining field, and drops quietly from her perch, clearing a drain *en route*, and possesses herself of it, the foal again following. So the child is brought up

as it should, and does, go ; and from constant practice, when at maturity, charges these huge but safe fences at any speed from a walk to racing pace, seldom making a mistake. He can hop or crawl on and off like a goat, jump on, and, when broad on the top, turn and go along the bank, or will charge it in the most resolute fashion, merely dwelling on its crest for less than a second to bring his powerful haunches again to bear.

There is but one fence I would counsel the reader never to attempt under any circumstances, unless it be to escape the attentions of a mad bull or some such follower—that is, a deep drop leap into a hard road. All well-trained hunters should lead and ought to follow well through cramped places. An ugly drop into a road is pretty certain to result in a bad fall and broken knees, and at such a fence the rider is fully justified in dismounting and leading by running his whip through the rein. The horseman who “dares do all that may become a man,” need not fear being twitted for nervous over-caution.

The Irish train their horses by leading them over the high banks and walls with a long rein, a man bringing up the rear with a driving whip. After a few practical riderless lessons of this kind the colt learns the use of his legs, and perfects the schooling he has been receiving from earliest days. A boy is then placed on his back and the leading-string tuition continued. After a few rolls together they become *au fait* at the business. This, in my opinion, is the very best method to be followed in teaching lads how to sit a fence, only, in the case of my pupil, I would substitute an active, sharp blood-cob or pony, narrow in the back, for the untrained colt. Seating him on a 5lb. steeplechase saddle, with a blanket rolled up in front, firmly strapped to the D's, and no stirrups, I would have him led by an active groom—a

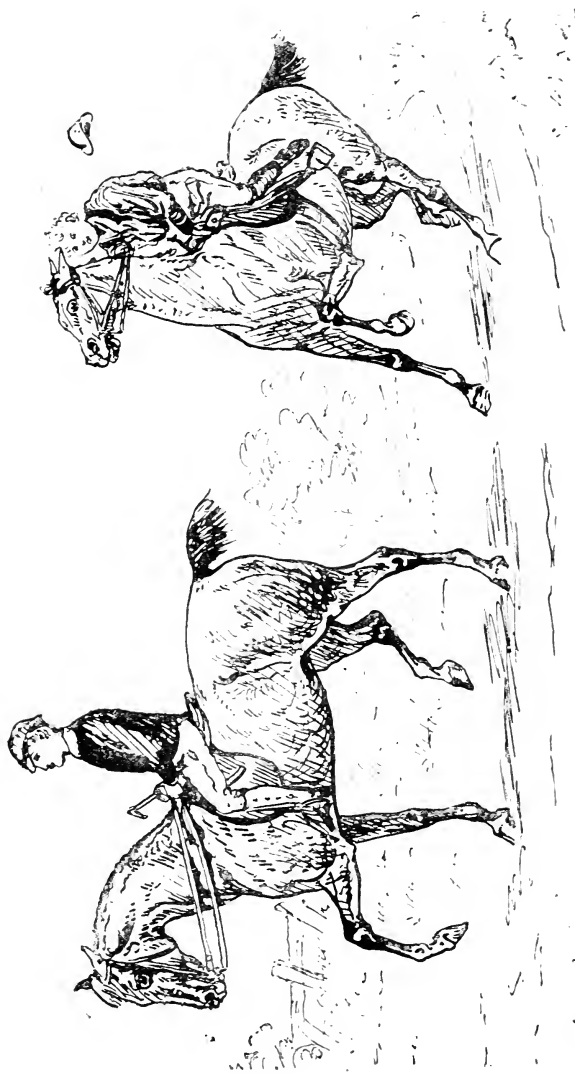
fast runner and good at jumping and scrambling—over all sorts of low fences. After a bit the youngster would be allowed the use of reins and an easy smooth snaffle, care being taken that he should, on all occasions, take a long hold of the horse's head, keeping his hands back at least as far as the outer seams of his breeches. Such a course of breaking in will prove invaluable, and the boy, if his pluck be that of the ordinary English lad, will look upon the performance as "a jolly lark."

CHAPTER III.

TEACHING THE YOUNG IDEA.

IN the introduction to this little work much stress has been laid on the advantages of early tuition. I have quoted one Arab proverb, and there is another equally to the point: "The young branch is made straight without much trouble, but the old wood can never be straightened." Before putting a child on a pony we must not only be very careful, as I have mentioned in my remarks on these miniature quadrupeds, that it shall be narrow across the back, and possessed of light, easy action; but it must, in addition, be very carefully trained, and paddock fed. I purposely use the words "miniature quadruped," for the animal to carry children should be a pony, and not a dwarfed horse. As compared with horses, ponies are possessed of more brain-power; from having to shift for themselves from foalhood they are more independent, and therefore more tricky. Let the pony for children have as much Arab blood in him as possible, this Eastern strain being quieter, more com-

INSTRUCTED AND UNINSTRUCTED METHOD.



W. B. G.

panionable, not easily frightened, more patient, and indifferent to liberties. These desirable qualities are hereditary.

The Russian or Siberian pony, now so common in this country, is one to be avoided. There is no mistaking this Muscovite visitor. He is invariably a cream, or dirty yellow, verging on chesnut, in colour, long in the body, straight in the back, with upright shoulders, very narrow chest, and a steep, mean quarter, small donkey feet, and a very short, unyielding fetlock. Two of his marked peculiarities are a short head, with the eyes placed low down from the ears, almost equidistant between muzzle and poll, giving the idea of an exaggerated, disproportionate height of forehead; the other, that the chest appears to grow and extend itself, like a tap-root, down the inside of the forelegs. Though a very Caliban among ponies, this little commoner, with his rug-like coat, is as clever and tricky as "a cart load of monkeys," and up to all the pranks of a fresh yarded Australian Brumby.

The pony is a clever, teachable little fellow, and if taken in hand young can be taught as many tricks as a performing dog. But what is required for children is extreme docility; and until it be trained to be perfectly safe to handle in every part of the body, to carry anything alive or still placed on it, to permit the little ones to crawl under it, and to take no notice of being pulled about in any manner and in any direction, it is not fit for beginners to practise on. No nursery pony should ever taste oats. On grass in the summer, and hay in the winter, with the addition of a few roots, it will keep its condition and do all the work required of it. The distances some of the Australian run or bush-fed horses cover is almost incredible. If our horse-owners would but grow the new forage plant, *Lathyrus Silvestris*, they would curtail their corn-chandler's bills to an extent

that would agreeably startle them ; for this pea has been analyzed, and is found to contain all the feeding qualities of the best New Zealand oats, and as green fodder, hay, or in the shape of either sour or sweet silage, is eaten with great gusto.

When a good child's pony is not to be procured—though an advertisement in the *Queen*, or some respectable society journal, will generally supply the want—the best plan is to purchase some attractive, quiet little fellow, almost if not quite unbroken, and educate him at home. It is not advisable to make the purchase from a mob of those bred in a state of nature, and fresh from the Shetland Isles, the Welsh hills, or the Forest, wild as hawks. Preference had better be given to those that have been some little time in captivity, and have become reconciled to and familiarized with the various sights and sounds of civilized life. To railway trains especially they must be accustomed, and the best way to create indifference to their rush and screaming whistles is to turn the pony out in a field adjoining the railroad, attaching his feeding-trough, filled with some tempting carrots, to the fence next the line, and placing a crib with some sweet hay alongside it. Frequently lead him over and under railway bridges and let him stand there, as well as at level crossings.

All his exercise—and he must invariably be well exercised before young children are put on him—should be on the high road, a crowded one for choice, so that he may not shy at carts, carriages, bands, and other strange objects and sounds. He should be trained to stand fire without flinching. The sense of hearing, very acute in the equine tribe, requires education as much as any other. In a perfectly trained animal the whole five senses—seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling, and tasting, must be thoroughly educated ; he

must do all that is required of him readily, well, and safely, without the faintest sign of temper. Should he enter into conflict with man he must be forced to retire baffled and defeated. A little forty-two inch mite can, if so minded, make a stubborn resistance.

Children—boys especially—are prone to be tyrannical and often cruel. Parents would do well to impress on their olive branches that “humanity to animals is a duty reposing on the same foundations as the claims of man to humanity.” It appears to me that the abominable treatment the unfortunate sea-side donkeys are subjected to must have a very bad effect on their infantile riders, and that the officers of that admirable association for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals are often far too lax in their supervision of these long-suffering, over-worked, and shamefully maltreated four-footed slaves.

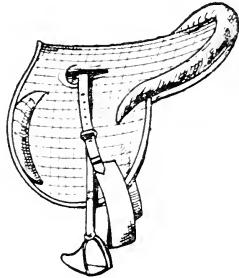
A very able writer on the subject of early tuition, which he strongly advocates, a gentleman who has taught his own youngsters, says, “the boy who takes his first lessons on a cart horse, or a donkey, will spoil his bridle hand, and rarely get light and sensitive with it afterwards.” In this I fully concur. He adds, “We found the best way to teach the use of the reins was from a gig, or some one-horse vehicle. We fixed the pupil securely between our knees, so that either he or she should have no need to attend to their own security, and putting a rein in each hand, we left the little one to steer, and on a very fine mouthed horse, to see the effect of his right or wrong movements. After a good many journeys had been taken in this manner, the child, sometimes driving and sometimes watching us, was generally fit to be trusted with the reins on horseback, supposing that he had, with frequent short rides, learned to feel little anxiety about his own seat, and to keep his arms moderately still.” Here again I am with the writer.

Another good plan is to place a child anxious to ride, as most of them are, on the pommel of the saddle in front of you and let him hold the reins. The horse must be a very quiet animal without a suspicion of a shy or a bolt in his composition. A steady, thoroughly dependable groom or coachman may be trusted to do the same, but the less children are about the stables the better, where they are certain to be in the way, may get into danger, and probably will hear bad language. The governess should never be permitted to interfere with the riding lessons, for the chances are a hundred to one against her knowing anything about horses or their habits, and a thousand to one against her being a qualified instructor in the art of equitation. I have already stipulated that children's ponies should be perfectly broken and trained, paddock, that is grass, fed, and that under no circumstances, save as a bribe, should they ever taste corn. To this I will add that regular exercise is also necessary. Many ponies, and horses too, when kept at regular steady work, are sober and steady, which, after hours of idleness and high keep, get above themselves and become unruly.

As a general practice children commence learning to ride to pilch-pads, of which I give illustrations.

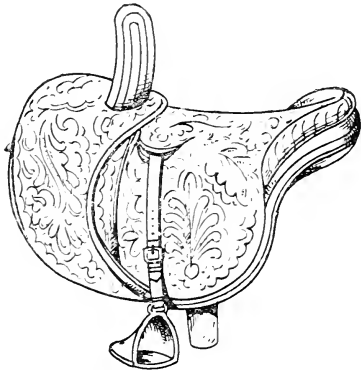
It will be observed that the one for the girls and boys combined, is provided with only one head, and that a knee roll takes the place of the leaping crutch. The head screws into its socket, and can be transferred to the off side, where there is a corresponding receptacle. These pads should be constructed, as much as possible, on the straight seat principle; in fact, but for the expense, miniature side-saddles should be used, one for near and the other for the off-side seat. Such little saddles are now made by Messrs. Champion and Wilton, perfect in shape, and, minimize, if not abso-

lutely do away with, the possibility of injury to the spine. Pads for boys give the pony a too great width of back, they do not give so correct and firm a seat as the cross saddle, and are not nearly so easy to sit on. I recommend a light racing saddle, without knee rolls, made of fast-dyed drab or brown buckskin, as more clinging than pigskin. It should be fitted with Ds in front, to which may be strapped a neatly rolled blanket about three or four inches in diameter coming down to the child's knees. This will give confidence and prevent falls.



To commence with, no stirrups should be allowed to either sex, and for some time at least girls, appropriately dressed, should ride on the cross saddle entirely.

The reader is referred to my remarks on this system in the companion volume for ladies. Some children take to riding like young ducks to water. All, more or less, have an aversion to lessons or to anything in the form of tuition. Born with a full wide stream



of original sin pulsing in their veins their desire to do those things which they ought not to do, and not to do those things which they ought to do is very strong.

One man can lead a horse to the well, but twenty cannot make him drink. Those children whose bias does not lie in the direction of ponies—mighty few by the way—should be encouraged to learn not as a task “the daily round,” but as a pastime. The ride on the paddock-pet should be considered *the* treat, the blue riband of the day’s amusement, something to be looked forward to, and to be withheld only as a punishment. Our rôle is to convey the lesson so that it be no more irksome than practice at lawn-tennis; that it is playing at riding and not studying it. All little ones live in a sort of dreamland in which they picture to themselves what they will do when grown up. The boy has his hero, the girl her heroine, and, as often as not, the sexes are reversed. We must, “unbeknowed” to them, educate them up to their riding standard of perfection. The spirit of emulation takes the boy right up to the cannon’s mouth, and the same power converts the delicately nurtured girl into a Grace Darling. We may have to give confidence and courage where nervousness and timidity reign, to implant a feeling of safety and contempt for a fall, and to create a zest for what appeared a bore.

Children should never be allowed to tire themselves in the saddle, and when the colour quits the girl’s cheek, especially if she be delicate and growing, that must be at once taken as a sign that her energies are being exhausted—she must dismount. It is impossible to lay down any hard and fast rule as to the age at which children may commence learning to ride, so much depending on the individual strength. The preparatory essays may, as I have said, date from earliest childhood—from the ride-a-cock-horse period—and boys, if strong, will take no harm at any age, but the girls’ teaching had better be deferred till the sixth or seventh year. Many of them, however, from

natural bent take the lead in all romps and pastimes, and bare-backed, astride, or in any fashion that seems to them best, outvie their brothers.

At first, the boys and girls should be put up, but soon will learn to mount themselves, and for this purpose the pony is trained to stand in the ditch, by the side of a low wall, a sufficiently high step, a bank, or anything that will furnish the necessary elevation. They should be encouraged to practise mounting, as well as riding barebacked. After a bit, as the boys grow, they will learn when the pony is at a trot, to lay hold of the mane with both hands, and from either side, to vault on his back or clean over him. Nothing is easier so long as he be under weigh. Note the riders in the circus, they always swing themselves on to the back or saddle when the horse is in motion.

When children are kind to their ponies it is marvellous how close the bond of union between them and their four-footed friend becomes. The Arab mares and their foals let the young Bedaween take all sorts of liberties with them. I have seen a little riding lad in a racing stable seek protection under his mare's legs—a by no means placid-tempered animal—from the bullying treatment of the other urchins. Sir Francis Head in his "Horse and his Rider," mentions a visit to the farmyard of a Mr. Roff, on the Brighton Road, near Croydon, where to his surprise he observed a lot of children playing with a yearling colt, which allowed them to crawl between his legs and fondle him in various ways, just as if he was a dog. On riding into the yard to inquire by what magical means the little quadruped had been made so gentle and tame, he was informed by the worthy old farmer who owned the colt that his wife, kind to all her beasts, had for many years been yearning to add to them a pet colt; that accordingly he had bought her one, and that she had

tamed it. With uxorious pride he added "she could tame anything." Though disapproving of children being about the stable, there can be no harm in their visiting their pet in his paddock, hovel, or loose box, taking with them some little treat, and spending an hour or so with him.

Children are by no means light-handed, and are much given to ride in the pony's mouth—that is, hold on by the bridle. The rubber-coated flexible snaffle bit will give them all the command they need over a well-trained pony, and will, at the same time, save his mouth. The rein, a single one, should be narrow, soft and pliant as kid, and held in both hands. At first, perhaps, the better plan is to give no reins at all, but let the little rider preserve the balance by holding on to the roll in front of the saddle.

During the first few lessons the pony must be led by a light long rein buckled to the off ring of the bit and passing under the chin through the other ring to the instructor on the near side. For a day or two he had better keep close to his little pupil and confine the pace to a walk, giving only a very little instruction. An apt child with some nerve will soon shake down into the saddle, may be led about at full extent of the eight foot rein, and from a walk may be coaxed into trying, for a few paces only, a slow jog-trot. These rudimentary lessons are best given in the paddock and out of sight of mamma, should that lady not be a horsewoman. If present, her over anxiety will only distract the child and implant fear where no fear is.

From being led on foot, as progress is made, the next step in advance is to mount a good steady reliable horse, and to lead from the saddle. The child may now for the first time—the use of the reins as already explained having been carefully taught—have the bridle put in its hands. Keeping the pony on his right hand and at a good distance,

though level with his horse—if too close, a sudden start might unseat the child, and throw him among the horse's feet—the pupil, led at a walk, must now be taught to keep his hands steady, and to put his earlier teaching into practice. Confine the first lessons to careful instruction in handling the reins, how to incline and turn to the right or left, to circle, to turn about and to stop.

When the pupil is fairly proficient at the walk then try a jog-trot for a few paces. The instructor's careful attention must be directed to the endeavour to get him to preserve the seat rather by balance than by grip, to abandon the hold on the roll in front of the saddle and thus to have the hands free to guide the pony. At first he need not bother himself or his pupil about sitting up, keeping the elbows in, and so forth; all that will come in good time when the rough motion is got over, the little muscles have begun to adapt themselves to the up-and-down action which at first shakes loose and displaces every effort at grip, and the tender skin gets hardened. The child cannot learn everything at once, there is no need for cramming, *festina lente* best does it.

When a sufficiently firm seat has been obtained, quite independent of the reins, the pupil begins to acquire confidence, and can guide and control the pony, putting it from the walk into the trot, and keeping up the trot for half a mile or so without slipping, like a pair of compasses, first to the right side of the saddle and then to the left, half the battle is won. The child's enjoyment of the ride is the surest index of progress. The undulating motion of the canter will be appreciated as a relaxation after the jolt of the trot. Day by day the leading rein will be brought less into use, till at length the youthful rider is permitted to try its "prentice hand" free from the leading strings, first of all in some quiet paddock or field, and then in company

with its instructor on the high road, or in the park when nearly empty.

So far the child-rider has not experienced the luxury and support of a stirrup. As part of the pony's education ought to be to stand stock still the moment the rider is unseated, there is not much fear of a child being dragged. Still, as prevention is better than cure, all saddles should be fitted with the safety stirrup bar made by Messrs. Champion and Wilton. When these patent-safety arrangements are not used I prefer the boy's-clog-slipper to the open stirrup. The girl's length of leather should, as explained in the volume on ladies' riding, be such as to bring the left knee up against the lower and padded face of the hunting head; a boy should ride with a somewhat short stirrup or clog, and with a bent leg, otherwise he will find himself riding on the "fork," standing astride over rather than sitting down in the saddle; he will, with long stirrups, not be sufficiently seated, will be too forward in the saddle, and so be liable to lose his clog. No doubt the foothold of the stirrup is much firmer than that of the clog.

With boys and lads I do not counsel any coddling. The English boy—and in the term I include Scotch and Irish—as a rule is a young dare-devil requiring curbing. We have the testimony of the Duke of Wellington as to the gay light-hearted manner in which our British boys, fresh from the playing fields, marched on that June evening some seventy-six years ago, to tackle the war-worn Old Guard of France, and how the gallant young fellows bore themselves throughout that long and bloody day. When our boys are twelve or fourteen years old, they, if broken early to the saddle, are fit to ride anything, and the more of all sorts they practise on the better. Plucky youngsters of this fibre, those who with years will develop what Carlyle termed "the silent fury and

aristocratic self-possession" of their race, will go anywhere and do anything. What we have to do is to teach them how to play the game like gentlemen and not like butcher-boys.

Lads such as these are frequently puzzled as to the style of seat they should assume on horseback. If they take upon themselves the studied *manège* teaching, they are alarmed at being chaffed for aping the military school—a no very bad school as I have endeavoured to show. If they shorten their stirrups, double themselves up "all-of-a-heap," and turn their toes out, they are often charged, and rightly so, with riding like tailors. When I see a lad with his shoulders up to his ears, elbows stuck out, leaning over the pommel of the saddle as if he wanted to go a bit faster than the horse, his heels in, one rein held tighter than the other, handling his horse's mouth roughly, and urging him beyond the true verge of his pace, I dub that lad a butcher-boy.

The great difficulty is to ride like a true sportsman, avoiding any *outré* characteristic. It is utterly impossible to adhere to any strict rule as to the correct seat for general horsemanship. The seat must be varied in accordance with the circumstances in which the rider is placed, but under all conditions, it can be graceful and easy. The perfect horseman can appropriate to himself every style of seat. The only man I ever saw who could ride well over a big country with the then prevailing military seat—long stirrups and sitting on the "fork"—was the late Earl of Cardigan. At the head of the 11th Hussars the leader of "The Six Hundred" was perfect in the saddle, as military riding was then understood, but his lordship's seat with the Quorn was strangely out of place. The same seat cannot be preserved on any and every horse. All affectation of a peculiar style of riding on ordinary occasions is to be eschewed; it is bad form.

I have seen a man steal down Rotten Row slightly raised

in his stirrups, his body bent gracefully over the pommel, his hands well down, the points of his elbows near the centre of his body, his head just a trifle inclined to the near side. He is steady in his saddle as if nailed to the flaps, is merely lightly feeling and steadying his horse, and his legs dropped neatly down his sides into rather short stirrups are motionless. The animal he is on is going well within himself, smoothly, and with an even striding movement, devoid of all impetuosity; his head is in its proper place, with handsomely bent neck. At a mere indication from the bridle he at once drops into a trot and so into a walk, cool, and collected. The horse and man are on excellent terms, but the exhibition, perfect of its kind, is out of place in the Park, though just what one would expect from a crack gentleman-rider at Sandown or Aintree.

On another occasion we see the same horseman in a very different attitude, one neither neat nor graceful. He is on a resolute, lurching, leather-mouthed brute, carrying his head low, and "fighting for his head." The evil eye and the position of the ears, together with the frequent reaching forward and downward of the head, shows that this time the rider has "a handful" to deal with. He must give and take with such a puller, or be hauled out of the saddle on to the withers. He is sitting upright in his saddle, and his arms pulled out nearly straight; the feet thrust well home in the stirrups are, in order to obtain a strong purchase, placed in front of the girths as far forward as the horse's elbow, and he is on the alert to yield the body forward to give to those impatient snatchings at the bit and borings of the head between the forelegs. To pull up such a brute he has to throw himself back in the saddle till the whole body from foot to head is in an inclined plane, and as straight as animated clay can be.

Yet another time, and we watch this gentleman mastering a hot, fly-away "star-gazer," and note how he accommodates himself to the altered circumstances. The impetuous and excitable animal comes along, his nose in the air and head flung from side to side, impatient of control of bit and martingale. His ears are in constant motion, turning to every point of the compass, as if expecting the spring of some evil beast; he fights at the bit and climbs in his fore action, and comes yawing along in anything but a straight line, bounding from side to side. Our friend is now seated well down, and far back on his saddle, the body with a backward inclination, the reins are held wide apart, his elbows are at his sides, and his feet further forward than in what may be termed the elegant position.

Finally, we have an exhibition of how to handle a lurching sluggish goer, and how to adjust the seat to his lazy habit of going. He comes up the ride, hugging the rails, his ears laid well back along his poll and his tail switching. He has no vice save that of laziness. His rider has to galvanize some life and "go" into him, so sits down in the saddle, keeps his heels back so as to have the spurs ready and handy to administer an "awakener," and is shaking him up and lifting him at each stride.

From this it will be seen how necessary it is that he who aims at perfection should ride every variety of horse. Of the four seats depicted above, that first sketched, with the stirrup leathers lengthened a hole or two, will answer all purposes in the hunting field or in any other field when galloping over turf is the order of the day. It is affectation and folly for a man to pose as being what he is not. When any of our flat race or steeplechase cracks don silk, they ride like jockeys, but, on the road or in the park, they drop everything that smacks of the racecourse. Men of the first

flight across the big pastures of the Shires, when they change their hunters for the blood hack, and discard leathers and top-boots for trousers and Wellingtons, let down their stirrups and adopt a medium seat adapted to road riding.

With so many blood galloways about, there is no excuse for a boy of riding proclivities not making himself thoroughly efficient in the saddle. Under his light weight these beautiful and clever animals can go anywhere and do almost anything. If his friends are prepared to pay the piper he can be mounted to perfection, for, irrespective of these *multum in parvo* pieces of equine perfection, he has many a clever thoroughbred at his disposal. Many a disappointing selling-plater is to be picked up for an old song which would carry him on the road or in the park to perfection, and make light of his burden in the fastest and longest run of the season.

CHAPTER VI.

VICE.

REARING.

ROUGH handling of the bit rein in the case of a high-tempered horse is often an incentive to rearing. Some rear from excitement, impatience, or in play. Slight rearing, except on smooth flag-stones, though decidedly disagreeable, is not dangerous; but confirmed high "getting up," the protest of a stubborn horse, is one of the most dangerous of equine vices. There are violent modes of frightening young horses out of the habit, but with old confirmed offenders a radical cure is very problematical. A well directed stunning blow on the ear brings some to their senses, but the danger

of this violent measure is that an ill-directed one may land between the ears and produce poll-evil. In my younger days I cured one vicious brute addicted to this vice by breaking a soda-water bottle, in a leathern envelope, over



GETTING UP.

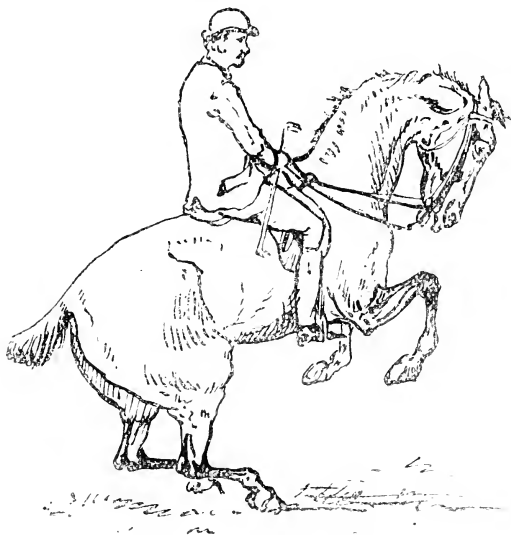
his head when pawing in the air, and, in so doing, came near blinding myself. Such drastic measures require a determined, reckless rider.

Horses addicted to rearing generally do it when forced to go in any direction contrary to their wishes, or on being prevented going where they do wish. The first act on the part of

the offender is a dead stop, followed by backing, with, perhaps, a vicious kick or two. Then he raises his forehand a foot or two off the ground, balancing himself on his haunches. Directly he rises, you should lay hold of the mane with the left hand, lean the body well forward towards the neck, and give him all his head, carefully refraining from bearing on the mouth. As he descends, if the display indicates temper, just before his feet touch the ground, rip the spurs well into him, at the same time administering one ! two ! three ! from a severe cutting-whip under the flank. To this smart, quick, and decisive punishment he will probably plunge forward, or may resort to plunging with kicking, so see that before he is quite down you are firm in the saddle. If his temper be thoroughly roused he, more likely, will rear straight up on end and walk about on his hind legs, like a performing bear, playing the castanets with his fore feet. This is dangerous work for both man and horse. He must on no account be touched by whip, spur, or bit while up, or, the chances are, he will fall back on the top of you to your injury and that of the saddle ; he may also break, or at least rick, his own back. Punish him as much and as severely as you please as he lowers his forehand, for he cannot rise again till his fore feet again reach the ground ; but sit still, leaning all your weight forward, till the descent commences. When sensible that he is about to topple over backwards or sideways, take your feet out of the stirrups and throw yourself clear of him. A moderately active man, with his senses about him, ought to land on his feet.

Fortunately, an extreme rearer seldom kicks. Should the brute roll over, if you are on your legs, give him a good trouncing before he can rise. In the case of a slight rear, I have known the slipping of the right hand along the bit

rein till it nears the mouth, followed by a strong downward bearing to the right, by throwing the horse off his balance, nip the vagary in the bud. The running martingale does some good, and there is a rearing bit, of which, however, I have no great opinion. McKenny's saddle-attachment is, in most cases, most effective, in that it prevents the



THE SADDLE ATTACHMENT.

horse from getting his head into the position necessary to a straight-up-on-end rear. Its action is explained in the illustration, in which the attempt to get up is frustrated at the outset.

Should rearing in a modified form be merely the playful letting off of a little too high spirits or impatience, do not in any way punish the horse ; ride him in a McKenny attach-

ment, let it act when he does attempt to rear, and stroke him down, gentle him, and talk kindly to him when he leaves off his nonsense and does as you want.

Upon the horse's coming to the ground the rider must be careful not to take hold of his head too suddenly, and, if riding with a double bridle, on no account to touch the bit rein, for this, assuredly, will send him up in the air again. If the horse spars with his fore legs, there is little danger of his falling backwards, but when he rears with them, and his feet bent under him, after the fashion of a dog standing up to beg, danger is to be apprehended. Professor Galvayne's No. 2 twitch has been successfully and publicly tried, on various occasions, notably at Durham, on an inveterate rearer and plunger, "Cicily," by Ruperra.

A horse that is given to rearing, even in its mildest form, is no "mount" for a lady; and if the habit cannot be eradicated by the Galvayning system—a system to which all good-looking, inveterate vicious horses should be subjected—then "get rid of him."

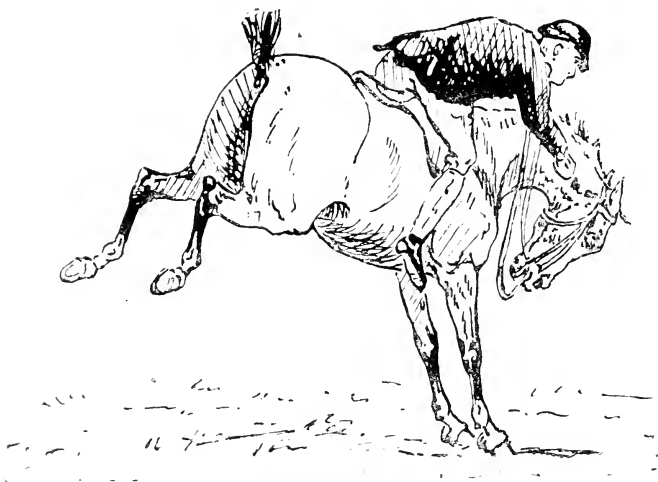
KICKING.

On a horse suddenly taking to kicking, first ascertain that he is not bothered by a fly, and see that the saddle does not pinch or hurt him, as badly-stuffed ones are apt to do. A hard, unyielding stuffing will dispose the most gentle animals to kick, and always aggravates the vice in those viciously disposed to lash out. There is very little danger to the rider in this disagreeable habit; but, in a crowded ride, such as Rotten Row, or in the hunting-field, when a mob of mounted folk are crowding through the same gateway, or "skirting" down the same lane, the peril to other riders and their quadrupeds is considerable.

When a horse stands still, lays his ears back, shows the

whites of his eyes, tries to get his head down and his back up, hugs his tail, and begins wriggling his hind quarters, then, if a sharp peremptory "what are-ye-at-eh?" and a sharp catch at the *bridoon* fail to exorcise the evil spirit, be prepared for a kicking bout.

Some horses are very cunning; they cannot lash out in full vigour so long as the head be kept well up, so, in



HAVING HIS FLING.

order to get it into the most effective kicking position, the object in view being to get rid of the rider, to dislodge him, they not only kick violently in order to loosen his grip and hoist him out of the saddle, but, having gained this initial advantage over him, continue to lash out as they go, eventually parting company with their burden. Once the rider is out on the pommel his control over the reins ceases, down goes the head, and each succeeding lift accentuates

his descent, making the dissolution of partnership a certainty. A kicker such as this—a refractory, resolute and determined animal, with confidence in his ability to get rid of his load—will lash out furiously and soon tire himself. The rider must sit firm and sit fast, keeping the heels or spurs away from his sides, and rate him soundly in a loud voice. Horses are very knowing in finding out, whether their master is on their back or not, if he be nervous or “full of fight.” The contest must be one as when Greek meets Greek. Get his head up at once, by mere strength of arm or by a sudden and severe snatch at the bridle, and punish his mouth till he ceases his antics; do not use the spurs, they do more harm than good, but let him feel the whip severely over his ears and neck. He will fight hard for his head, determined, if possible, to get it down; but it must be kept to a point of elevation at which it is impossible for him to kick with both heels at once. Draw the bridoon through his mouth—in the case of an animal of this sort it should have a sharp twist on it—and back him. If a big field, ploughed for choice, be handy, turn him into it, urge him into a gallop, and let him have his kick out. By hauling his head in (here the McKenny attachment again comes in very handy), placing your hands with a firm clench on the bridoon rein on the withers, and getting up in your stirrups, jockey fashion, your seat being clear of the saddle, you may let him kick himself straight almost without your feeling the jar. When he is thoroughly tired, take him back to the place where the exhibition of temper commenced, and force him, by fair means or foul, to pass the spot; let him thoroughly understand that he has met his master. Though a horse is rarely cured of the propensity to kick, this one will understand that with that particular rider on his back the game is not worth the candle, and so will not try the

trick on with him again. I never yet met with the horse whose head I could not get up with a twisted snaffle. We all think highest of our own bantlings, and so, perhaps, I may be pardoned for recommending Kerr's model bit, with a twist on the mouthpiece as being, in the opinion of the inventor, well adapted for getting a determined kicker's head



WELL STOPPED !

up. For such unruly brutes I attach smaller rings to the butt of the mouthpiece inside the large rings to which the bridle and reins are stitched. Through these smaller rings passes a long rein which acts as a nose-band, crosses under the chin, and so reaches the rider's hands, converting the snaffle into a kind of gag-bit.

If a horse takes to kicking standing, and refuses to

advance, a good plan is to apply the whip smartly down the shoulders, at the same time twisting or turning him round on his own ground till he is dizzy.

STICKING-UP, OR REESTING.

Sticking-up under the saddle is what *jibbing* is in harness, and has been described as the result of too much faith in his own and too little in his rider's powers as against want of confidence, in the case of jibbing, in his own power. In the Introduction, we have seen how the patient but determined Tyke encountered and conquered on the "everything comes to him who waits" tactics.

Horses given to this habit of "reesting," as it is termed north of the Tweed, which means that they are self-willed, insisting upon going just where it pleases them, and nowhere else, are difficult to deal with. Each has his own peculiar fad: one positively declines to go away from home, another insists on pulling up at a certain point, and beyond that stubbornly refuses to budge; a third insists upon going up some road, or taking some turn in the reverse direction to that which his rider wills; a fourth has a disagreeable trick, no matter who may be in the saddle, of depositing the equestrian on his back in the middle of the road at a certain favourite point. Unfortunately this determined "sticker-up" is given to rearing, plunging, kicking, and mayhap is handy with his teeth.

With such an awkward customer a long and careful course of instruction in backing is necessary. The movement is an unnatural one—some take to it kindly, others are most unwilling to "rein back" a single step. The lessons can best be taught at home. If he is badly broken, and does not answer to the bridle and the voice, his "backing" instruction

should be on the Galvayne method, a system only known to the professor and his pupils, and which I, for palpable reasons, may not here disclose. Go to Neasden, pay your two guineas, or whatever the fee may now be, and learn that in dealing with awkward horses all that is required is a little common sense and the knowledge of how to apply it.

When properly broken, as he will be under this system in a very short space of time, ride him to one of his favourite *resting* haunts, and, on his making the slightest attempt at any of his vagaries, at once apply the reversing gear, back him and spin him round till he reels under you, then, before he has time to recover himself completely from his vertigo, back him over the same ground, past the point of contention, and the chances are that he will for that once, at least, forego his desire to "stick up," and will do as he is bid. Even without backing, though that is the trump card to play with such an awkward hand, progress in the desired direction may be made by spinning him, by means of a horizontal pull, in the direction he wants, carrying his head, when you mean him to proceed, beyond the point he had made up his mind to go. The spinning must be continued till he is thoroughly confused and quite thrown out of his calculations. When he has had a full dose of circling, all thought of resistance will have vanished.

Should the rider lack confidence in himself to do battle with and subdue an obdurate, inflexible brute—one endowed with an extra load of "cussedness"—he may put the following bewildering lesson into practice. Previous to starting on his ride, having provided himself with eight or nine feet of stout, strong, and dependable cord, made of four or five strands of the best whip-cord, and some well-tarred spun-yarn or waxed string, he, on the first symptom of the coming sticking-up performance, should dismount,

and cross the stirrups over in front of the saddle. He will then, in the quietest manner possible, proceed to teach the rebel that man's dominion is a power not to be trifled with. Fasten the cord to the off cheek ring of the snaffle, and pass it under the chin through the near ring. Take up the hair of the tail, if there be enough of it, and tie it in a double, two-turn knot, making all secure from slipping by serving it with the spun-yarn or waxed twine. Be very careful that the knot cannot come undone. If the hair be too short, then wind the yarn tightly round it, close to the dock, turning up the ends into the roll. Bring the end of the cord back from the bridoon, divide the hair into two equal parts, pass the cord through the division and, with a slip knot, make the head fast to the tail. The horse's head should be drawn so that it faces to the rear. He will then be fixed in a position akin to that of a playful puppy with his tail in his mouth. In the case of a full grown horse the distance between the knot on the tail and the muzzle should be about five feet. If averse to having his tail handled, the rider, to be quite prepared for the fray, and in order that the lesson be short, sharp, and decisive, had better have the knot on the tail tied before leaving the stable. Start the horse waltzing round and round, and keep him pirouetting till, from exhaustion and giddiness, he shows signs of tumbling or lying down, then cast loose the knot from the tail, take the cord in the left hand held loosely, and be on his back while he is bewildered and his brain confused and dazed. He will by this time have learnt that "what's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander," and that there is little use in kicking against the pricks. Under this strange distracting circling, or rather revolving on the centre, system, he will come back to his right mind and become as obedient as a well-broken spaniel, the favourite reesting-place will no longer

possess any attractions, and he will proceed on the rider's way a sadder and a wiser animal. Should this circumlocution treatment not be sufficiently drastic—repeat the dose.

SHYING AND STARTING.

When not occasioned by defective vision, shying is either a constitutional infirmity, a vice, or the outcome of high animal spirits. We take the last cause first. A high spirited horse over-primed with too liberal allowance of oats and short of work, is taken out. He is in "rare fettle," the hot blood courses through his veins, he is in exuberant spirits, as frolicsome as a kitten, "fit to jump out of his skin," and, in the language of the stable, "beany." He rejoices, and is exceeding glad, goes as if scorning to touch the ground, flies his flag gaily, gets his head in the air, snorts, and every motion tells his rider that the sprightly beast is ready to jump with joy. Presently he pricks his ears forward and, looking intently forward, as if some lion were in his path, he cranes and stiffens his neck, and his light corky dancing walk changes into a cautious sort of march. The object that has riveted his attention and from which he is prepared to shy, is merely a heap of road metal, or perhaps no more than a leaf, yet he either spins round on his hind legs or shies from it, starting aside like a broken bow. All the time he has been preparing for a shy, a start, or a bolt. There is no mistaking the signals. As likely as not there may be no object at which he may have an excuse for shying, but as he means to have his fling out he pretends to be afraid of something not visible. Anyhow his bound aside is as sudden and vigorous as if a royal tiger with an angry roar, or rather grunt (for Mr. Stripes grunts or growls when he charges) had sprung upon him. The horse's antics, no

doubt, are unpleasant, but surely no rider in his senses would punish the mettlesome, frolicsome, dumb animal, for having his bit of a lark.

An habitual shy can be told the moment he exhibits his vice ; he will, from having been frequently punished, make a long, and possibly dangerous rush past the object that alarms him. Such an offender is difficult to deal with. When the indications of an impending shy are evident, a good plan is to immediately pull him up and to let him stand looking at the object of his fear, speaking kindly to him in a reassuring tone. Finding it does not move, he will soon approach it, though perhaps giving it a wide berth, and, like the Priest or the Levite in the parable of the good Samaritan, passing by on the other side. On no account force him on ; let him stand and look at it till he has not only ceased to fear it, but to take any interest in it. He may pass the dreaded obstacle without any signs of timidity, but should he still show any aversion or nervousness, appease his apprehensions by talking to him and patting him, and in approaching it incline his head away from it. Once past it, turn him round and walk him by it again, and when his dread of it has disappeared, coax him up to it, let him walk round and round it, smell it, paw it if he will, feel it with his upper lip, and if possible walk him over it.

The usual and most unhorsemanlike method is, by dint of bridle and spur, to force the horse up to, or hold his head towards, the object of his dread, to "cram" him past it, and then to flog and spur him, so that, on the principle of adding fuel to the flame, he has two fears to contend against—that of his own imagination, and the reality of certain punishment. When his head is forcibly directed toward the object, his hindquarters are naturally turned from it, and in that position, he with the greatest ease shies or backs

away from it, possibly dropping his hind legs into the ditch by the roadside ; whereas if the opposite rein be pulled, his head is drawn away from it, he may make a rush forward, but he cannot swerve laterally. Having ascertained the objects of his special aversion, you should by every means possible familiarize him with them. If pigeons are allowed to fly and flutter about the stable, they will perch on the horse's back and head and work wonders in the direction of calming his fears. Some horses have a great objection to passing a decomposed carcase of an animal ; even if they cannot see it, the putrid smell appears to affect their highly sensitive olfactory nerves.

Should the rider be in a hurry and mounted on a bad confirmed shy, he must, on being warned of his intention, take a firm hold of the bridle in both hands, and draw the bit sharply through his mouth, squeeze him with both legs, turn his head away from the object, giving him the spur on the side away from the *bogie*, and at a sharp pace rattle him past it.

Some horses are very awkward when meeting or being overtaken by vehicles. In Great Britain any conveyance meeting you passes on your right hand. My advice to the reader is when mounted on any animal, no matter how perfectly quiet, staunch, and well-mannered, on seeing anything unusual approaching, to get his horse well in hand. Should he evince any symptoms of alarm and fix his gaze on the coming object, speak reassuringly to him, bear on the near rein, and pressing him with the left leg, touch him with the spur on that side. "A stitch in time saves nine," so pull his head gently towards the hedge, wall, pavement, or whatever may hem you in on the left side, distract his attention as much as possible, and endeavour to meet and pass the object without his seeing it. The same applies to any object overtaking

you from behind. You both are aware of its approach, he does not see it, but you can. As before, your first object, having got him by the head, is to divert his attention, and then to turn his head to the left, inclining your course in that direction also.

The most awkward position a rider of a confirmed shyer can be placed in is when he, at short notice, finds himself meeting a rapidly driven vehicle in a narrow road or lane. He is painfully aware that the brute will shy and become ungovernable, also he begins to be aware that the fast nearing driver cannot, or will not, pull up. There are visions of a capsize into the ditch or the fence, of imminent collision and of serious damage to all concerned. What is to be done? He must just put his pride in his pocket, go about, and seek safety in flight. There is only one other way out of the dilemma, and that is to put the horse at the fence, landing over it into the adjoining field, and leaving the road to the vehicle. Of the two I prefer the clean ignominious retreat. If there be no time to turn, or the horse is inclined to "stick up" or "reest," there is no help for it but to pull his head towards the approaching object, giving him at the same time a sharp dig with the spur on the same side. This will send his quarters away from it and towards the fence, then as the critical moment arrives another drive from the off Latchford will straighten him a bit, and he will pass clear. The rider, if he wishes to save his knee, must never ease-off the right rein. The horse will have sense enough to keep his head and the point of his shoulder out of harm's way. In the case of being overtaken under similar straits, all the rider has to do is to keep in front of the carriage till the road widens, or some friendly cross-road, bay, or open gate presents itself.

No young horse properly and intelligently broken in should be guilty of shying.

BUCK-JUMPING AND PLUNGING.

Though none of our home-bred horses get the length, as do the Australians, of bucking the saddle right off, over head and forelegs, without breaking the girths, yet some of them are very awkward customers when they are determined not to be ridden. A "double-first," at the art of buck-jumping will, at the shortest notice "sling" any man short of an Australian stock-rider. Good sound girths, man, saddle and bridle, if stuck to, are all "slung" of a heap by the mighty efforts of the horse. He will bound straight up into the air—not a long bound, but a buck, tuck his head between his fore legs, so that his face looks right on the ground, roach his back like a hedge-hog, spin half round in the air and come down with all four legs stiff and unyielding as bars of cast-iron, landing with a "prop," the concussion of which makes his rider's jaws crack. Without changing his ground, this delightful saltatory performance, with a few wriggles and rapid lateral jerks thrown in, is repeated with surprising rapidity; buck follows buck in rapid succession, interspersed with certain spinnings round on the hind legs, till the rider's sticking-on powers are tested to the fullest, his teeth feel pretty well loosened and his spine rather the worse for wear. The wind-up of such a bout is that the rider suddenly finds himself cleaving the air as if hurled from a catapult, and if he can quietly endure, as depicted in this wood-cut, he will overcome the most determined performer.

During these vagaries the horseman is absolutely powerless; all he can do is to stick to the saddle if he can. A soft sheepskin or numnah under the saddle has been known to cure some buck-jumpers. As compared with this energetic

“notice to quit,” the plunger’s efforts are as child’s play. With some horses, young ones especially, it is a mere frolic, and as such is harmless. When about to commence the game he will shake and throw his head about, exhibiting impatience of restraint, he will dance, sidle, and fling himself about, endeavouring, at the same time, to “force the hand” which, as explained elsewhere, is the act of suddenly



THE LAST RESOURCE.

throwing the head forward with a view to release the mouth from the constraint of the bit. A certain amount of liberty of head must be accorded when he plunges forwards and sideways, but on no account must he be permitted to get it down between his forelegs. The rider must sit back and sit fast, keep his horse’s head up, and let him have his lark out. The vicious plunger is an animal of another sort, he,

like his first cousin the buck-jumper, means that his rider should be "slung." He is quiet enough during the process of mounting, and lets him remain so long as he is not asked to move on, but when the mandate comes to make progress, he forthwith "sets to" in downright earnest. With an angry snatch at the bit, back come his ears and down goes his head, he hugs his tail like a hound under the lash, swells himself out, hogs his back till it is arched like a camel's, and without further preliminaries—these don't take much longer than a second or two—he plunges forward with mighty bounds. Here again there is little for the rider to do save to stick on and keep the sulky brute straight. This is the display of a pure unadulterated sulky disposition; the American word "cussedness" best describes it.

Violence of temper may be gentled down by firm and judicious treatment and handling, but these sullen dispositions can never be eradicated. Such an animal, if tackled by a determined rider, is generally found to be a hung-hill, hare-hearted brute. Such a one should be taken into a deep clay, ploughed field, and there provoked to a duel. The clay would afford good foothold, but no "jumping powder." Armed with a severe Newmarket flogger and long hunting spurs, the horseman, holding him by one hand, will rain stinging cuts over his head, ears, neck, shoulder, and flank, lancing his sides all the while, till he gives up the contest. The treatment may be cruel, but such a horse is nothing but a cow-hearted bully, and should be flogged like a garrotter.

When riding a plunging horse use the Fitzwilliam girth, or have three girths to the saddle, two fairly tight, the third slacker, so that in the event—a very probable one—of the two braced ones giving way, the third may hold the saddle.

In concluding my few notes on VICES, I wish to accentuate

my already recorded opinion that, under no circumstances should a lady ride a horse addicted to any of the besetting sins referred to in this chapter, nor ought she to be seen outside one possessing any fault likely to compromise her safety. Nevertheless, it behoves her to be armed at all points, and prepared to control all sorts of steeds. Should she, unhappily, be called upon to baffle the misbehaviour of some unruly animal, she must, above all things, studiously preserve her calm, collected, presence of mind. The least symptom of nervousness on her part will at once communicate itself to her opponent, and the response will be more energetic rebellion. On no account must the feel on the mouth be abandoned to seize hold on the crutch or pommel; the relaxing of the reins, except in the case of rearing, means certain defeat. Should any vice suddenly develop itself, such as will not yield to gentle treatment, then the task of bringing the offender into subjection must be left to the so-called "rough-rider," or to Mr. Galvayne and his pupils. Certainly the administration of severe punishment or coercion is not the province of the lady.

CHAPTER VII.

BITS AND BITTING.

THERE is a key to every mouth, provided the rider knows the high art of applying it. What are termed "fine hands" are inborn rarities to be developed only by long and patient practice with all sorts of animals. A perfect hand is what in pianoforte playing the "touch" is in contra-distinction

to "execution." How often does it happen that the light hand of a woman softens and controls, with a kind of magic touch, the temper of the most fretful steed, when, the moment a man gets on his back, the same horse becomes an ungovernable brute?

The best bit and bridle for a horse is, of course, that which is best adapted to the particular work he is required to perform. The Bedaween Arab sets little store by speed, but places a very high value on what the Scotch term "jinking," and coursing men "wrenching"—his life depending on this ability of his mettlesome mount. And yet he, like the warlike Persians of old, frequently has no bit, but guides his horse by the shaft of his long lance and restrains him by a chain nose-band. In the frieze of the Temple of Minerva, in the Acropolis of Athens, the horses are represented as ridden without bridle or saddle.

Allan McDonogh, whose name as one of the finest steeplechase riders of all time will be handed down hand-in-hand with the charming Brunette, steered Sailor to victory over a very severe course at Bandon, having, for the last mile and a half, nothing but his whip to guide with. The "chaser" had breasted a high bank and, in rising, broke the throat lash, the bridle coming off in his prostrate pilot's hand. McDonogh, a good faller, was in the saddle before the horse had righted himself, was soon in pursuit, and crowded on so much sail that Sailor actually took a "boreen"—a narrow lane between two stiff banks—in his stride. The riders of the other horses, seeing him bridleless, tried to run him out at the turn, but the masterful jockey was equal to the occasion, and, almost climbing out onto the fast speeding Sailor's neck, clasped his nose, so guided him round the post, and, with a straight course in front of him, made all the rest of the running—winning easily.

For cavalry purposes, where so much depends on the charger being taught to halt or stop, turn, wheel, and "reverse," at full speed, all of which necessitate his being well in hand so as to be thrown instantaneously on his haunches or to change his legs, the curb-bit is of paramount necessity, otherwise his rider could not give fullest effect to his weapon. The Australian stockman's horse or the Indian "pig sticker" can do all this, and more, in a plain snaffle, but the one always has his eye on the break-away bull, steer, or cow, the latter on the bristly four-footed bandit. The polo pony soon takes as much interest in the game as his master, and learns to keep an eye on the ball. Not so with the cavalry soldier, who for the first time, and probably for the last, makes the acquaintance of his foeman on the field of battle. We see illustrations of mounted swordsmanship at our so-called military tournaments; but these exhibitions are as like the actual stern reality as weak tea is to spirit above proof. In the *melée* all depends on a powerful, active, and handy horse, completely under control, on the rider's firm seat and balance, on his strong arm, knowledge of his weapon, and unflinching courage, and last, but not least, to a bit of luck and the absence of a stray shot.

Curb-bits and curb-chains are all very well when the horse has to be slightly thrown on his haunches with his head in a certain position, but when loosed in the easy freedom of his speed, "upon the pinions of the wind," on turf, light soil, and over fences of almost every description—always excluding a hot eager mount in Crampshire—there is no bit to compare with the snaffle. A snaffle bridle hunter is a luxury I shall treat of in another volume. Sir Francis Head, writing on this subject, sensibly remarks, "When a horse is enabled, like a soldier whose stiff stock has just been unbuckled (a relic of barbarism no longer in

use), to drop his head to its natural position, he not only goes safely, but without risk of cutting his fetlocks over ground deeply covered with loose impediments of any description ; and, accordingly, in Surrey, it has long been a hunting axiom that it is the curb-bridles which, by throwing hunters on their haunches in a false position, cause them to cut their back sinews with those sharp flints which, in a snaffle bit, they can clatter over without injury." That admirable horsewoman, Mrs. Power O'Donoghue is in favour of a double-ring snaffle, which is termed "the improved Newmarket snaffle."

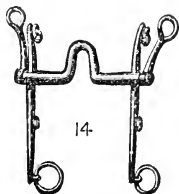
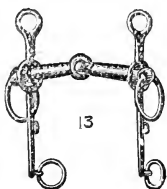
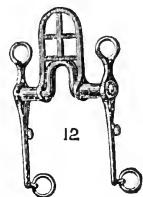
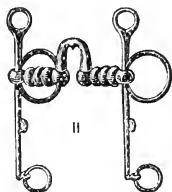
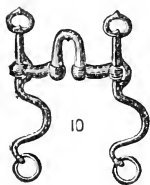
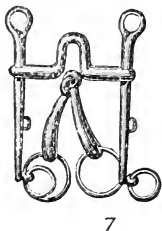
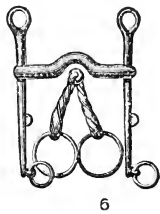
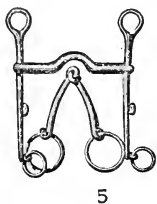
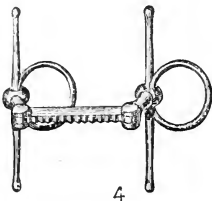
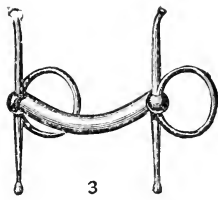
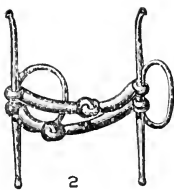
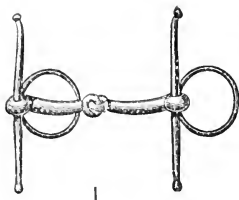
I have always found, during a somewhat lengthy experience, that the unmanageableness of certain horses is, in a large majority of cases, due either to over-biting or to the proverbial "hands of iron" which, among men especially, are the rule rather than the exception. One of our at one time crack steeplechase jockeys, who shall be nameless, but who has been on the back of many winners, from that of the Grand National downwards, has such a heavy unyielding hold of a horse that any animal, no matter how silky of mouth, entering his stable, leaves it a hard dead puller.

I do not subscribe to the very generally accepted opinion that there are as many degrees of mouths as there are horses, and that, consequently, each individual unit of the equine race requires a particular bit made to suit him. Were such the case, then "touch," or deft handling, would be of little effect, and the loriner's inventive faculty would know no rest. Already the bridle-bit maker's genius and ingenuity has been pretty freely exercised, for since the days of the Roman emperors (Theodosius is represented in an ancient sculpture riding with one warranted to break the jaw of the bull-headed Bucephalus) up to the present there are no fewer than some six scores of bits all said to act like a charm on

bolters, runaways, pullers, dead mouths, *et hoc genus omne*. The purchaser can be provided with anything from the plain hunting (Fig. 1) and the easy "Mulling" mouthed snaffle (Fig. 3), the saw-faced, double-jointed instrument of torture known as Woods' snaffle (Fig. 4) to the Chifney (Fig. 14) with its enormous leverage, or the powerful combined double snaffle, "The Champion," of Messrs. Champion and Wilton. New patents are being constantly applied for, claiming to be the best bits in the world; and that these cranks, fads, or notions are, in the words of the advertisers, of course "constructed on purely scientific principles" goes without saying.

It is not only the horse's mouth that the rider has to control: he has high courage, and often temper—the latter in nine cases out of ten the outcome of bad and stupid treatment—defective setting on and carriage of the head, and peculiarities of action to deal with. Few, if any of us, have given such practical and careful attention to this important subject of Bits and Biting as did the late Don Juan Secundo, a brilliant exponent of the *haute école*, and the inventor of a bit bearing his name. The Segundo bit was held in high esteem by that prince of lorumers, the late Mr. Benjamin Latchford, of St. Martin's Lane.

This Spanish centaur made the horse's mouth his special and close study for a period of many years, bringing superlative horsemanship, exquisite hands, rare intelligence, and a fine temper, to bear on the handling of this little understood organ. Attentive investigation and mechanical genius enabled him to determine, on fixed principles, the precise form and method after which each part of the bit should be shaped and put together so as to accommodate itself to each class of mouth, thus rendering the horse easy and pleasant to ride, and the bit, though mild, thoroughly effectual. To determine these principles he first of all studied the anatomy



of the mouth, externally and internally, observing precisely where and how the various bits exercised their control, where and why they produced irritation and soreness, and where, by exercising an excess of pressure, they by degrees deadened and hardened the bars. His aim was the maximum of power to the horseman with the minimum of pressure on the bars and chin. At the same time means had to be devised by which to do away with the aptness of the tongue to interpose itself, as a sort of cushion, between the bars and the mouth-piece of the bit.

The mouth, so far as it is affected by biting, consists of the lips, the bars, the channel, the palate, and the tongue. The bars—that toothless portion of the gum of the lower jaw, which is between the molars and the tush in the case of the horse, and between the molars and incisors in that of the mare, and on which the cannons of the bit rest—vary in shape considerably. If fleshy, round, and low, the mouth, unless tenderly handled, is almost certain in time to become dead. When moderately sharp and thin they constitute what goes towards making a good mouth, but if lean and very sharp, especially in the case of a hot or high-couraged horse, they are almost certain to form a very tender mouth, best suited to the give-and-take handling of a lady. These remarks also apply to the chin. A large tongue is objectionable from its already stated aptitude to prevent the free and exclusive action of the mouth-piece on the bars, by which, while defecting the controlling power of the bit, it is itself often severely injured. We know how sensitive this organ is, and what agony a wound of it entails. It became, therefore, necessary that the liberty or *port* intended for it should surround it horizontally, besides being of sufficient capacity for it to be lodged with ease.

A bit is composed of four principal parts or pieces—the *Branches*, which are divided into two parts, the one A, the butt or end of the mouth, upwards to B, the top-eye, called the *Cheek*; the other extending downwards from the butt A to C, called the *Leg*. In proportion as the cheeks and legs of the bit are long or short the horse will carry his head either high or low.

The *mouth-piece* is divided into three parts, namely, the *cannons*, which extend from 1 to 2, the *heels* from 2 to 3, and the *arch* or *port* for the tongue, 4, 4, 4.

Mr. Segundo was led to classify all mouths under four heads, namely, three defective, and one good mouth. To these he added two additional, resulting from falsely placed heads, making six in all, thus:—

1st class—Runaway, or very hard-mouthed horses.

2nd class.—Hard-mouthed horses, or those bearing heavily on the bit.

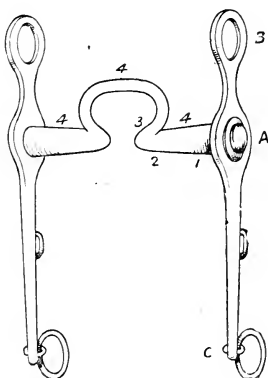
3rd class.—Good-mouthed horses.

4th ,, —Very tender-mouthed horses.

5th ,, —Star-gazers, or horses that carry their heads too high.

6th ,, —Borers, or horses that go with their heads close to their chests.

In order to deal with class 1, runaway or very hard-mouthed horses, the leg of the bit is of great length and inclined forward, also the curb-chain is very severe, being composed of enchainned links, the bars of which are angular,



THE SEGUNDO BIT.

With class 2, the leg is somewhat shortened, and in a straight line with the cheek, the curb also less sharp and angular. For good mouths the legs are still shorter, the links of the curb quite round, interwoven, and of regular width. A special bit is designed for very tender mouths and for colts. As the curb chain has to act on the most sensitive chin, it is made wide, with interwoven links, in order that the too sensitive horse may bear upon the bit without shrinking from or being hurt by it ; in other words, that he may " face his bit." An elastic curb-chain is recommended for the very tenderest chins. For star-gazers the curb-chain is of the same make and proportions as that for good-mouthed horses, in order that the horse, which has been punished by severe curb-chains and is touchy and tender about the chin, may not throw up his head and carry it like a giraffe ; and that, in case of a natural defect of setting on of the head, he may yield to the leverage of the long legs of the bit, without being worried by the curb-chain. In combating the propensity to bore, the curb chain is on the same principle as that recommended for hard-mouthed horses, or such as bear heavily on the bit, the legs being considerably shortened.

The *curb-hooks*, of which that on the off side of the cheek is termed the *S*, that on the near side the *hook*, call for a passing word. As it is important that the curb-chain should always lie on the chin—each class of bit, according to the length of the cheek, having a hook of a different size or length—the length should be measured from the point of attachment with the top eye of the cheek to the centre of the cannon or butt of the mouth-piece. In the proper adjustment of the curb-chain depends the whole action of the bit. Close attention to the following rules is, consequently, recommended :—See that the bit be the exact width of the horse's mouth, to prevent it slipping either to the right hand

or the left, and the heels of the mouth-piece from hurting or pressing more on one bar than on the other. The proper place for the mouth-piece is about half an inch above the tush of the lower jaw. In the case of hard-mouthed horses the curb-chain should be rather tight: for good-mouthed horses, star-gazers, and borers, neither too light nor too loose; for very tender-mouthed horses, rather loose than tight.

An important point in the action of the Segundo bit is that the mouth-piece has a partially rotatory movement on its branches; or, more plainly, the branches move upon the ends or butts of the mouth-piece to the extent of a quarter of a circle. For this movement the inventor claims the following noteworthy advantages:—1st, It enables the horse to keep the mouth-piece always in its proper place, independent of the branches, the slightest movement of the tongue sufficing to introduce it into its port or arch, and thus fix it in that position which is best suited to the former. 2nd, The friction of the mouth-piece against the bars, occasioned by every pull of the bridle, which, by constant repetition, hardens them, is hereby almost entirely, if not altogether, done away with. 3rd, Were a vicious horse to seize the bit, or one of its branches, with his teeth, he could still be made to feel the bit, because, the branches acting independently of each other, and of the mouth-piece itself, the curb-chain may be brought instantly into play, and the horse under its subjection. Thus those fatal accidents, hitherto of daily occurrence, which proceed from the rider or driver being unable to stop his horse on account of the action of the branches being suspended, are sure to be avoided by means of the rotatory movement given to the mouth-piece. 4th, It frees the tongue from all oppression, and the horse from the necessity of putting it out, or of drawing it over

the mouthpiece, because the port has sufficient room to allow the tongue to move with ease, an advantage of which it would be deprived if the mouthpiece were without this movement.

Amongst horsemen generally there are erroneous views as to the action of the port. It is commonly believed that when the mouth-piece, by the elevation of its port, bears against the palate, the rider or driver has greater command over the horse ; so the poor quadruped is tortured by barbarisms such as gridiron swing and stop ports, sliding ports, solid gridiron ports, Turkey ports, and other devices designed to bear against and bruise the palate. The power of the bit depends solely on the proportion of the branches. A too low and small port, however, is as bad as one that is too high, for it acts with similar violence on the tongue, squeezing it between the cannons of the mouth-piece and the bars, and forcing it to assume an unnatural position. When a horse is seen to loll out his tongue, or to be constantly gaping or opening his mouth, depend on it the poor animal is seeking relief from some defective construction of the bit. The habit is a great annoyance, but the owner has it in his power to eradicate it.

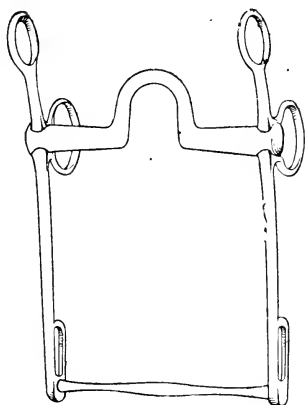
Anyone noticing the hansom cab horses of the metropolis must be convinced of the prevalence of a habit of boring to one side of the street and of perpetually hanging on one rein. There is nothing more irksome, not to say dangerous, to rider or driver than a one-sided mouth, nothing more difficult to cure. It arises in the first place from one of the bars becoming more callous than the other, owing to greater use being made of one rein than of the other, producing, by unequal pressure, greater friction on one of the bars. Reins of unequal length may cause this defect of mouth. When once the mouth assumes this one-sidedness, the horse,

desirous to relieve the sensitive bars of the pressure, turns his head to that side, and the more the rider or reinsman pulls in the contrary direction, the more the horse persists in his vice. Sometimes, but very rarely, horses are met with, which, from malformation of the mouth, have one bar higher than the other, a defect producing considerable irritation, but in the great majority of cases, the habit is created by bad hands holding on to a bad bit, by careless and inattentive riders and drivers. Only a skilful and experienced hand can successfully combat this habit, hence it is that we see so many good-looking horses condemned to the slavery of the cab-rank. The most efficacious means of cure is a radical change of bit, and it alone can lessen the acquired defect. A snaffle bit, a piece of chain being substituted for that half of the mouth-piece which rests on the callous bar, has been recommended, as has been a bit of flannel wound round that side of the bit to which the horse is inattentive. Probably a snaffle smooth on the sensitive half of the mouth, and with a twist on the other would have the same effect. With change of bit must come change of hands, and they must be those of a master of his art.

If a bit does not suit a horse he will, by restlessness, throwing his head about, yawning, going "one-sided," carrying his head either too low or too high, by slabbering, and by various dumb motions, speedily apprise his rider of the fact. Mr. Benjamin Latchford—whose name is a household word among horsemen as bridle, bit, stirrup and spur maker, one of "the good men of the mystery of loriners," a craft or guild having its ordinances dating back to the times of Henry II., son of King John—gave it as his opinion that "the horse has naturally no vice, and that every description of vice found in him is created by the treatment he receives from those in whose care he is placed." To illustrate this

doctrine, one to which I heartily subscribe, he, out of hundreds of cases, quotes two, which will bear repeating. The Mr. John Tilbury referred to was as well-known in the horse world as is Mr. Edmund Tattersall to the present generation. "At the time when John Tilbury, of Pinner, Middlesex, kept many first-class horses, an intimate friend of his, whose town house was in Berners Street, Oxford Street, and his country house at Richmond Hill, had a beautiful black horse; he was a full-sized animal of splendid symmetry, and his pace not amiss, as he always took the cab with his master, mistress and tiger, without the use of the whip, from one house to the other within the hour. He came to me, after unsuccessfully trying all the bits Mr. Tilbury had; and, by Mr. Tilbury's recommendation, he told me the horse had worked extremely well for some considerable time, but for the last six or eight months had carried his head on one side—so much so that he was sure he could not see his way properly. I told him I thought the horse was over-bitted; he was quite sure he was not. I showed him an old Stanhope bit, with a very easy mouthpiece, which I offered to lend him to try. It was very old-fashioned and of scarcely any value. He said, 'Do you want to see my cab smashed and one or more killed?' I asked him whether the horse was a kicker. He said, 'No, he is not.' Then I offered to get into the cab myself and drive; but he said my life was of more value to society than his, and it would appear cowardly of him if anything were to occur; so, after an hour or so, he consented to try the bit. I put it on, he drove away, and in half-an-hour called to ask me to lend it to him for a few days. I told him to keep it for a week or a fortnight. He came in about a fortnight after and asked me the price of the bit. I told him I would make one for him with the cheeks to match his carriage bit, which

was a very handsome one which I had made shortly previous. He was very pleased with the bit, and paying me the high price of his carriage bit for it, said it was the cheapest article he had ever bought, for with it the horse ran as straight as an arrow, and that the bit and horse should never be separated while he lived." The other instance, and perhaps the more convincing, was in the case of a gentleman, born and bred in the hunting field, but not overburdened by the cash balance at his bankers', who bought likely, but seemingly unmanageable horses, for, say twenty guineas. By patience and kind perseverance he would find the right sort of bit, and, by strict attention coax the horse away from any and every vice he found it had previously contracted. Calling on Mr. Latchford, in order to purchase a No. 2 Segundo bit, he related the following story: "I gave twenty guineas for a horse I have now sold. I



THE STANHOPE BIT.

never give more than twenty guineas, and when I sell, my price is invariably one hundred and twenty guineas. The horse I have just sold I purchased for twenty guineas, because no one could ride him. First I found the bit to suit his mouth, then, with kind treatment and proper exercise, I soon had the best hunter in the field. A young nobleman, with three or four good hunters, was very vexed that he could not keep up with me. He bought my horse, which, of course, I sent to his stables. The next time out the horse was no better

than his others; another day, and still the same. He cursed, he swore, and, in his passion, said he would have the horse shot. Of course the gentlemen of the hunt would not allow such a thing with a horse they had seen work so well, so he sold me the horse for twenty guineas, and I put my old bridle on the right bit and took the lead as before, which so exasperated the young nobleman that he challenged my education in riding; said he could ride as well as I could, he had been taught by as good masters as I had, and a great deal more of such intemperate language, and, after some five or six good runs, said he must have the horse, for he could no longer be left in the cold. So next time we went out, being very near each other, and seeing that he was very much out of temper, I offered to change seats—I to ride his horse, and he to ride mine, and all went well. He was delighted, and on our return he gave me a second one hundred and twenty guineas, and I sent the horse to his stable—bridle and saddle, just as he was—with instructions always to use him in that bridle and saddle, and no other; and, as I have another horse the No. 2 Segundo bit suits so well, I am come to buy one.” Mr. Latchford adds, “No part of God’s creation is more varied—consequently requires more patience and kind attention—than the horse’s mouth and temper.” In that gentleman’s opinion, an opinion deserving the greatest respect, he found the Segundo bit, with the exception of the Melton bit (Plate A, No. 5) to suit more horses than any other, and to be in greater demand. If I may venture to hazard an opinion, somewhat opposed to that of this long practised expert, I should say that the Melton pattern, good as it undoubtedly is, in a nice tender mouth, would be greatly improved by the substitution of the Segundo thick-heeled port.

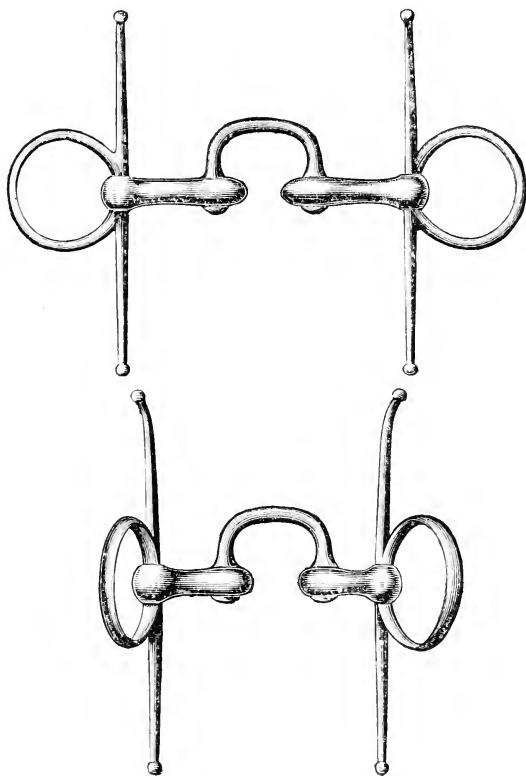
The limited space at my disposal will not permit me to

enter as fully as I could desire into this important subject. In a future volume devoted to DRIVING, I shall have occasion to discuss it more fully.

On page 139 are illustrated the various riding bits in common use, and of these I have no hesitation in emphatically condemning No. 4, Wood's snaffle, and No. 12, the Bentinck bit. No. 1, the plain snaffle, No. 2, the double-mouthed snaffle, and No. 3, the Milling-mouthed snaffle, are three useful bits, of which No. 2 is the most powerful. Nos. 5, 6 and 7 are three varieties of bit and bradoon, or bridoon; the first, of the type generally used for steeple-chasing, and sometimes in flat racing; the second, the Leicester bit, with twisted bridoon, is essentially for hunting, as is the third, which has a port and plain-mouthed bridoon. No. 8 is a hunting bit, with slide mouth, which is sometimes fitted with rollers, seven in number. All the above, with the exception of No. 4—which is only introduced as a sample of what cruel artifices man can be guilty of—are used for light or medium mouths. Nos. 9, 10 and 11 are three varieties of Pelham bits, the two first the Lipping Hanoverian and the Lipping plain-mouth respectively, the third the straight-cheeked Hanoverian. The Lipping patterns, both used with one rein only, are single-reined curbs, or “hard and sharps,” the port being jointed to the mouth-piece and the cheeks revolving on the butts as in the case of the snaffle. These joints and port do not deaden the mouth like the common curb bridle when used alone, and, on the whole, these bits in light hands are good hack bridles. For general use, always reserving a good word for a true fashioned Segundo, I am not in favour of single-reined curbs. No bit looks better or is more effective than No. 11, the straight-cheeked Pelham, always provided the hands are light. For hack-cantering the modified Hanoverian Pelham, is sufficiently powerful for

most purposes, and I never met with a mouth so tender that would not face it. This bit is a compromise between the snaffle and curb, with elongated leg-branches and a ring at the ends of the butts or mouth-piece for the second rein; to the top-eye of the cheek the curb is affixed. The mouth-piece should have a low port with plain mouth—no rollers, olives, twists, etc. The cheek, which is constructed to turn, should, in my opinion, be straight, as looking more workmanlike. That some, ladies especially, prefer what are termed the Ladies' Hanoverian, the Ladies' reversed Hanoverian, the Pad Check, and Snoko-Pelhams, is a mere matter of taste. This variety of bit is too little understood and too seldom in use. A well-trained horse ridden in a bridle of this description, in the hands of an expert, will, with the mere pressure of the leg, and the unspellable "klk," at once break from a walk or trot into the canter. It is, as will be seen on examination, no more encumbrance in a horse's mouth than the snaffle, with this advantage, that, by taking up the lower rein, it is a mild or strong curb bit. This double-reined Pelham has another great advantage over either of the Lipping patterns, that it does not require such fine sensitive hands. It has been objected to Pelhams that they make horses go heavy in hand, but the fault lies with the rider, not with the bit. The Bentinck, No. 12, is a device of the wicked to bruise and injure the horse's palate. No. 13, the Stockton bit, is a combination of the snaffle mouth-piece, the revolving branches of the Segundo with a little slide, and the double rein of the straight-cheeked Pelham—a useful bit. In the Chifney, No. 14, the curb-chain is attached to the permanent hook on the cheek of the bit, forged on to it, the head-stall of the bridle going on to the eye of the loose cheek. The leverage so obtained, especially if the chain be

of angular links and the horse's chin sharp and thin-skinned, is enormous.

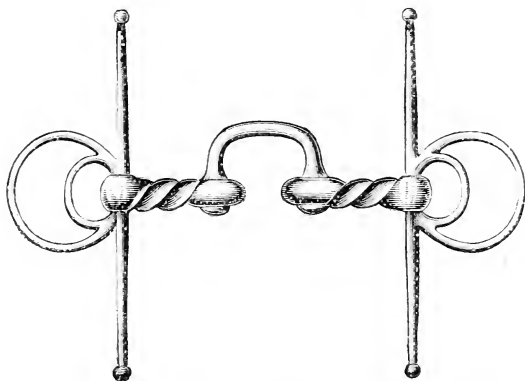


CAPTAIN KERR'S MODEL PATENT BIT.

Of gag-snaffles there are several, but I shall only mention that invented by Mr. Sydney Galvayne, for which he claims that it completely subjugates runaways, either under the

saddle or in harness, can stop the horse in its own length, and can with safety steady a rusher at his fences.

I venture to submit the claims of an invention of my own, which, when used in conjunction with a nose-band, will be found to exercise control in combination with comfort. It is a combination of the double-jointed snaffle, the Pelham, and the Segundo port. The lightest snaffle bridle horse goes handsomely in it, finding in the port a liberty or har-



CAPTAIN KERR'S MODEL PATENT BIT FOR RUNAWAYS.

bour for his tongue; he cannot insert his tongue between the cannons of the mouth-piece and the bars of his jaw, and if the mouth be over sensitive, the round smooth cannons are encased in white, tasteless, rubber. Should a confirmed bolter get the leg between his teeth, the action of the joints is such that it is at once wrenched from his hold. The snaffle can be mild or severe at the rider's pleasure. In the case of habitual runaways I make "assurance doubly sure" by adding a fast, loose, sliding, or roller loop on to the butt, as may be deemed best. A nose-band which may, in ex-

treme cases, be lined with curb chain, as is customary in Arabia, passes through these loops, the rein attached to it going direct, or crossed under the chin if extra pressure be desired, into the rider's hands.

CHAPTER VIII.

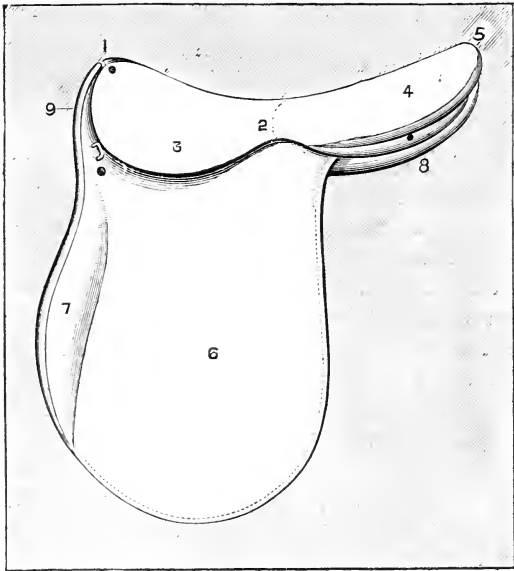
SADDLERY.

My impression is that every horse should have his own saddle, and that it should be as carefully fitted on him as the glove or boot of a dame of fashion. There are as many peculiarities of make and shape in horses' backs and withers, and in the placement of the shoulder blades, as in the formation of ladies' hands and feet. Of late years considerable improvements have been made in the structure of the trees, the ventilation, panneling and workmanship of both cross and side-saddles. There is a fashion in saddlery as in everything else.

The engravings following represent improved ventilating saddles manufactured by Messrs. Champion and Wilton. That weighing 5lbs., and therefore too small for general purposes, being built especially for polo, combines all that can be sought for in a first class saddle, viz. perfect cut and style, extreme neatness, with the best of materials, all carefully hand-sewn by permanent workmen, and complete ventilation; also it affords a close grip, giving the rider a secure and easy seat. The larger, full-sized one, is an excellent type of an ordinary riding-saddle stuffed in front of the knees. In comparison with the clumsy shoddy products

of provincial bunglers, these masterpieces of the saddler's art are as St. James's to St. Giles's, as a thoroughbred to a "coster's moke."

It is the worst possible economy to go to a cheap shop for saddlery, or indeed for any gear connected with saddlery. In these days of rapid tanning it is most difficult to get

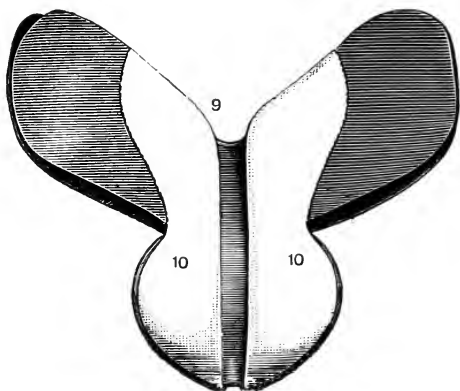


good sound wearing leather, and it is only the leading firms that supply this material. The reader must not be led away by tempting advertisements of clearance sales, of large purchases of bankrupt or only slightly soiled salvage stock, all, of course, by unnamed first-rate makers, in which saddles are offered at alarming sacrifices and at unheard of low prices.

Such rubbish would be dear at £5 the baker's dozen. An enormous quantity of machine-sewn saddlery is manufactured for the colonies and export, a little of it, by firms of good standing, is good, but a great deal is inferior, and the bulk good for nothing. This too is to be avoided. A good price must be paid for a superior article, such as will look well, wear well, and give satisfaction to man and horse.

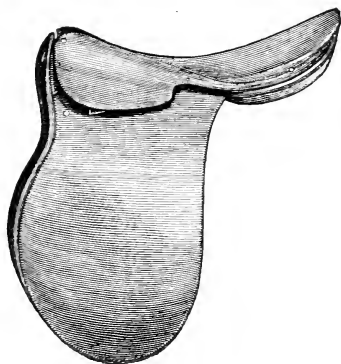
As it is convenient to be acquainted with the different component parts of a saddle, the reader is referred to the illustrations. 1,

is the head or pommel; 2, the twist; 3, the skirt; 4, the seat; 5, the cantle; 6, the flap; 7, the knee-roll; 8, the front and back facings of the pannel; 9, the gullet; 10, the pannel.



Polo - players insist upon having the light 5lb. saddles, though, roomy as the one illustrated is, I fail to see with what object, unless it be that they look neat. Be your weight light or welter, never order a small saddle for road, park, or hunting-field. A roomy saddle, in which the rider can sit with ease and comfort, one which the moment he is mounted gives him the proper grip, is also beneficial to the horse, because it spreads the weight he has to carry over a larger surface, the pressure per square inch being thereby diminished. In the case of a light weight,

except on the flat, a pound or two is neither here nor there, but a heavy man in a small saddle will cut the horse's back to pieces. Pressure from a too small or ill-fitting saddle will not only produce sore back, but obstinate



(5 LB. POLO-SADDLE.)

abscess, and ultimate fistula of the withers. In too short a tree a tall man must sit so far back on the cantle as to bring it down on the ridge of the back, the surface of the skin is abraded, a warble or sitfast is formed, and an operation necessitated. Sixteen inches from cantle to pommel is, I consider, a small size for general purposes, for small or medium-sized men, but

no heavy or tall horseman should ride in anything less than eighteen inches.

No doubt a quantity of stuffing in front of the knees acts as a sort of cobbler's-wax in retaining certain indifferent horsemen and old gentlemen in the saddle. A very little stuffing, to an extent hardly perceptible, may be permitted, but the plain flap is now in almost universal use. In making a sudden stumble or blunder, or in landing over a big and especially a drop leap, the rider, without losing his seat, may be projected forward two or three inches, and in the absence of stuffing at the knees he glides or slips forward without any strain or inconvenience the required distance; but, on the other hand, if the knees be arrested by the padding the muscles of the thigh are often so severely strained as to incapacitate the rider or to force him to ride for weeks in a

bandage. The plain flap is cheaper than the stuffed one, looks more workmanlike, wears longer, after a wet day dries more quickly, and is much the more pleasant of the two to ride on. When, in the case of a tall and especially of a light-legged man knee stuffing is patronized, he should order his saddler to carry the knee roll well down to the lower portion of the saddle flap. It stands to reason that the knee and shin of a six-footer must come much lower down on the flap than those of a dumpy.

Messrs. Champion and Wilton have recently applied the principle of cutting away the front part of the Tree, which has proved so successful to their side saddles. The new pattern, called the "Lane Fox," after the veteran master of the Bramham Moor Fox Hounds, gives the rider, as nearly as possible, a flat seat, adds greatly to his comfort, renders sore withers impossible, and adds to the appearance.

The same firm fit their patent safety-bar to any saddles. That well-known authority who writes under the pseudonym, "Brooksby," speaking of this invaluable invention, the outcome of long and close attention to the difficult problem, says, "I have at various times tested nearly every description of invention in this line, and up till now with the result that I threw away each in turn, preferring the risk of being hung up to the liability of finding myself stirrupless at least after every fall, and often without a fall at all. The stirrups would come away when I was *not* to be dragged; and on three different occasions, in my search for safety, I found myself called upon to enjoy to the full the luxury of riding a whole run with a single stirrup—in each instance, too, upon a horse that was only too ready to utilize the opportunity. Messrs. Champion and Wilton have spent five years in attempting to overcome the difficulty; and as I have fully tested and discarded their earlier shortcomings, as well as those of other

inventors in this direction, I am happy to be in a position now to say that I consider they have at length arrived at exactly what is required. Their patent bar will release a rider in any direction, when caught by either the stirrup or its strap, but so long as he is in the saddle (or within several inches of it) the action of the bar is rendered impossible by means of a small lever in the upper saddle-flap, the stirrups will only come out in case of a fall, and even then not by their own weight. The Fates gave me very recently the opportunity of experimenting much too closely on the working of the safety-bar in question, with the result that I untwisted my stirrup leather from my bent spur and refitted it to the saddle with a very strong sense of gratitude to Messrs. Champion and Wilton." To this I add that it is not in the hunting-field alone that the rider is liable to be thrown.

The stirrups most generally in use are the solid bottom, the Melton, the two-barred, the three-barred, the wide and narrow oval, and the solid bottom with Foljambe or Prussian sides. The selection is a mere matter of fancy. Many advocate the open-barred varieties as presenting less surface of metal to the sole, and, therefore, in winter, not striking so cold to the foot. Some prefer broad bottoms, others those narrow in the tread, and the majority like a heavy iron as, on the foot being thrown out of the stirrup, a weighty one more readily swings back to it. Personally speaking, I prefer a light stirrup, but then I ride with a comparatively thin sole to my boot, one that will bend slightly. I like to be able to feel my stirrup even when not bearing on it, and am convinced that a strong unyielding sole predisposes to loss of stirrups. There is one important point connected with the make of stirrups which the reader should bear in mind, and that is the construction of the eye, which should be flat, parallel to the bottom (barrel-eyed) so that the leather bears evenly.

If cut in a segment of a circle, the leather, accommodating itself to the curvature, assumes that shape, and is, therefore, difficult to alter in a hurry, and liable to give way at this point. For wear, the skin side of the leather should be outwards. The leather buckles should be double-barred.

Stirrup-irons should invariably be of the best wrought steel, and, like bits, only purchased from first-rate makers. Messrs. Latchford have been established since 1700, and are the senior wranglers and double-firsts of the loriners.

Though perhaps not quite so neat and natty, the girth known as the Fitz-William is preferable to the two narrow ones generally used outside the hunting field. This arrangement is composed of one double width of web with two buckles at each end, and of a narrow one, encircling and secured to the broad one by two loops or keepers, through which it passes. By this alteration perfect safety is obtained, for if all four buckles of the broad girth be carried away, the narrow one still retains the saddle in its place and prevents the released girth from dangling. In the event of the straps or buckles of the narrow girth being broken it cannot dangle either, being kept in its position by the loops. The extra cost is only five shillings—money well laid out.

The crupper, though now seldom seen outside the ranks of the army, or in harness, will be found useful for low shouldered ponies, with which the saddle will persist in coming too far forward and interfering with the action of the shoulders, and, in addition, causing the animal to stumble. Unless the reader goes to Mr. Chris. Wilson, of Rigmaden Park, Kirkby Lonsdale, Westmoreland, he will find it difficult to find a pony with good riding shoulders. The crupper, to be of any use, and still not to interfere with the liberty of the wearer, should admit of one, or two fingers at most, being run under the strap. Mr. Galvayne advertises a crupper which retains

its shape and prevents or cures soreness of the dock caused by chafing. Colt breakers should take a note of this.

Though not at present touching on hunting or steeple-chasing, I may mention that there are certain "herring-gutted" horses, *i.e.* horses light in the back ribs, that cannot be ridden up an acclivity without what is termed "running through their girths." The deep brisket and tapering cone-shaped middlepiece cause the saddle to slip back. To keep it, as much as possible, in its proper place, the breast-plate is used, and is, more frequently than not, buckled on so tight as to cramp the horse's action. Horses of this "tucked up" conformation should not be too tightly girthed. The saddle must be allowed sufficient play to regain its proper position. The object of the breast-plate is to keep the saddle from slipping too far back along the waspish carcass, and as the strain on it, and consequent pressure on the horse's shoulders, is frequently very great, even to breaking, it should be stuffed and stitched.

The ills that horse-flesh is heir to are legion, but of the whole too extensive range none is so thoroughly annoying as a sore back; the mischief is invariably traced to badly fitting trees. Although a very large percentage of properly constructed saddles will fit well bred horses in good condition, in order to effectually prevent sore backs, the horses liable to this equine complaint should be measured, and the woodwork of the tree modelled to the back. If this be done, a numnah, placed under the saddle, and the girths kept fairly tight, then a sore back becomes an impossibility. The "humanity" sponge-lined numnah, invented by Messrs. Champion and Wilton, are strongly to be recommended. Careful fitting and adjustment of the saddle undoubtedly reduces friction, and, in the majority of cases, does away with its baneful effects; but with some high-bred horses

the skin of the back is so easily irritated, that it will invariably become chafed under a long day's work, and injury be inflicted either at the withers or underneath the seat of the saddle. The peculiar feature of this excellent preventative and curative saddle-cloth, is in the adaptation of the firmer kind of Turkey sponge, the soft nature of which suggested itself to the inventors as an agent for counteracting the friction of the saddle. This invention keeps the most tender-skinned horse in a position to work in comfort. It is made in two varieties; either of bridle leather, lined at the withers with fine natural Turkey sponge, thus interposing a soft pad between the saddle and the withers; or of white felt, lined at the back as well as the withers with the same sponge, and intended for such horses as are apt to become troubled under the seat, as well as at the withers.

We now come to bridles, and there is a fashion in these as in everything else. Some ladies patronize bits with ornamental checks, stitched nose-bands, fly-flappers over the horse's nose, throat latches with loose appendages dangling below the horse's jaw, round reins and other *outré* incongruities. Now the only bit of ornamentation I can sanction about a well-appointed horse is a coloured brow-band, or front. On a rich dark brown I must confess to a liking for a bit of rich orange silk ribbon on the forehead band, it gives life to the countenance. Many ladies sport their favourite racing colours, and all, if not too loud, light up the horse's head, especially if it be a lean, clean-cut, blood one of the Arab type. All the rest, as in the general "get-up," should be as plain and quiet as possible. The reins must be pliable and fine in grain as a kid glove, and, like the bridle, stitched on to the bit. A groom who cannot clean and burnish a bit without soiling the reins has mistaken his calling. A multiplicity of

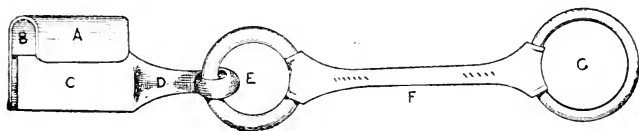
buckles and billets are unsightly and needless, but I prefer a buckle on each side of the throat-latch as doing away with that long end so often seen dangling down. When riding with the double bridle, the tyro is recommended, the horse being light-mouthed, to tie the bit rein evenly in a knot, dropping it on his neck. There is nothing "muffish" in this, for some of the best and most experienced horsemen, when riding high-couraged horses, ride only on the bridoon or snaffle (the difference between the bridoon, and snaffle is that the former has no cheek) the bit being handy to take up if needed. Grooms are apt to run the ends of the bridle head-stall too far through the loops, and so leave an unsightly surplus of loose leather. Another mistake these men are constantly making is to buckle the throat-lash, or latch, too tight. Nothing looks worse unless it be to let it hang loose below the lower bend of the jaw. It should be just tight enough to prevent the bridle coming off over the ears. Many a horse is maddened by the agony inflicted by a too sharp and severe curb-chain. The reader's attention is respectfully directed to the chapter on the Segundo system of biting. A runaway horse has been known to pull up of his own accord on the curb parting. Where a horse has a thin, fleshless, sharp-edged lower jaw, a leather strap, buckskin for choice, which, pipe-clayed, looks clean and neat, should be placed under the curb-chain, by which simple addition much pain is avoided without sacrifice of leverage on the cheek of the curb and chain.

The standing or head martingale, is an arrangement that can only be used in hacking and driving, and is both safe and serviceable in the case of an awkward brute that insists on getting his head up and star-gazing.

A great improvement on the running-rein martingale, is an attachment to the stirrup bars of the saddle, invented last

year by Mr. J. McKenny, the well-known veterinary surgeon of Dublin. It is claimed for the patent that (1) it gives perfect control to the rider over the horse, be he badly broken, a hard puller, or ill-tempered; (2) it minimizes the danger of being thrown, either by the horse rearing, plunging, or shying; (3) simplicity in construction, and ease with which it is attached to and detached from the saddle. The diagram given below explains the structure and adjustment of the attachment, a pair of which costs ten shillings.

AB is a thin steel plate made to overlap and slide on to the stirrup-bar of the saddle. CD, another steel plate, flat at the end C, and riveted on to B, to which it gives a shoulder. At the other end, D, of this plate is a crank



neck with an eye-hole in it, through which passes the ring E. The neck, D, projects outwards at an angle of about 40° , and attached to it is a stitched round leather strap, F, connecting it with the ring G, through which the rein, coming from the cheek ring of bridoon, passes into the rider's hands. It is advisable to have that part of the rein which plays through this ring rounded. The mode of adjustment is to slip the flat side, C, under the stirrup bars, so that the rings come to the front, with the bent portion of the cranks outward, and pass the unbuckled ends of the rein through the rings G. If more power be required, an extra long rein can be buckled to the rings E, passed through the cheek-ring of the bridoon, and brought back into the rider's hands through the rings G. Or, in the case of the horse carrying his head

too low, the reins may, in similar manner, be attached to the bottom eyes of the bit.

Without admitting that this attachment can effect all its sanguine inventor claims for it, I think that the arrangement is one of decided merit. In the hands of a good horseman it can with ease control an unruly horse, and by its use, an inferior rider acquires efficiency. The rings do not interfere with the direct pull on the horse's mouth when the rider's hands are kept low and the horse goes with his head in its proper position, but immediately the position of the hands or head are altered, the rings become self-acting, and the rider's command over the animal vastly increased. For instance, when a horse suddenly takes it into his head to shy, bolt, plunge, buck-jump, or kick, pleasantries for which the rider is quite unprepared, he, by the sudden and unexpected jerk is thrown out of balance, sideways, upwards, or backwards. Be the list to port or starboard, or in any other direction, the attachment comes instantaneously and automatically into play, administers a severe chop to the bit, equivalent in force to the impetus given to the rider, while at the same time it enables the rider to retain his seat. This self-inflicted punishment is an effectual deterrent against a repetition of these pranks.

The effect on a horse kicking is admirably demonstrated by the artist (see page 123): the wicked little cob's head is drawn into such a position that his kicking is confined to mere lifting. In the illustration of the horse rearing (see page 119), the rider is in comparative comfort without much danger of the brute falling back on him. When a horse rears, the rider often loses his balance. I have seen many a one slip quietly down over the tail and land on his feet or in an undignified sitting posture. In his anxiety to save himself he irresistibly pulls on the reins, and in so doing his

hands get into such a position that the horse must topple over. Now, by McKenny's system the rider has only to stick to the ring rein to maintain his seat undisturbed, and, at the same time, to exert a downward pressure on the bars of the mouth. This attachment, *in good hands*, will be found of great service in breaking young horses and in getting their heads well into the counter. On the whole I consider it a

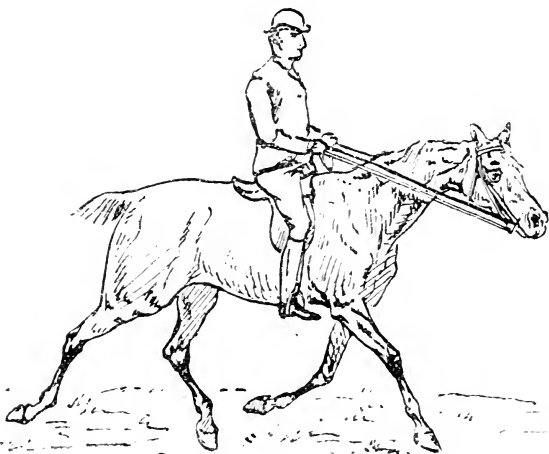


WITH ATTACHMENT.

meritorious addition to our list of efficient riding requisites, and it is equally effective, with a special attachment on the off side, on the side as on the cross saddle.

The ring-martingale is another appliance aiming at keeping a horse's head down, and is more commonly used in racing than elsewhere. When leaping, the tyro should never attempt to ride in one, for it requires to be used with nice judgment, and the rein passing through its rings either dropped or "eased-off" when the animal is gathering himself for his effort, to be taken up again the moment he is

landed once more on the ground and is in his stride. The stitching of the reins to the bit has already been recommended, but, when they are buckled on, the buckles should be guarded by a sliding piece of leather, longer than the diameter of the martingale ring, to prevent the rings sliding down on to the buckles and catching. Many very serious accidents have been caused by the neglect of this precaution; the ring remains fixed in the buckle, the horse

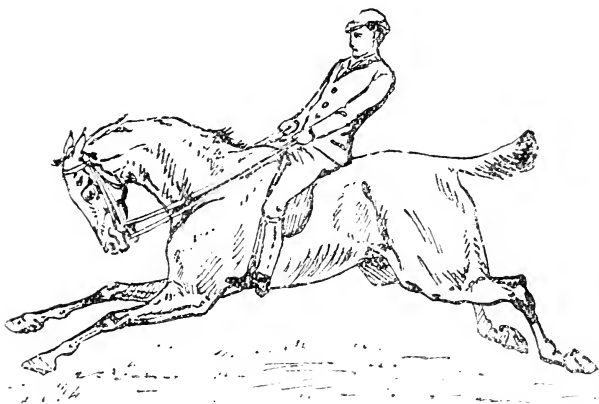


WITHOUT ATTACHMENT.

finds his head imprisoned in a one-sided manner—for it is seldom that both rings get caught—loses control over himself, and gallops into the first ditch, upsetting both himself and his rider.

A noseband exercises a marvellous effect on some head-strong pullers. A very hard-mouthed, excitable ex-steeple-chaser I used to ride with the Pytchley, though almost

frantic when ridden in a Melton bit and bridoon, and out of all control with snaffle alone, in a big field, unless allowed to go abreast of the leading hounds, a proceeding Captain Anstruther Thomson did not quite approve of, would go comfortably and collectedly in pretty light nose-band and plain thick snaffle. Some violent horses go very temperately in the Kerr model bit (see page 151), when used in connection with a tightish nose-band.



BOLTED!

CHAPTER IX.

HINTS ON COSTUME.

A GENTLEMAN need not, to ride well and to look well outside his horse, descend to the dress of a stableman. In Rotten Row, when the ride is crowded, no man with any

pretention to taste appears in breeches and boots, or in breeches and leggings, though these nether garments are quite allowable in the country. In the park, well cut riding trousers are essential, and in wearing them the stirrups should always be longer than when riding in breeches. Few, very few, tailors can build a pair of riding trousers well, so that they shall fit well up into the fork, and lie faultlessly over the boot without the slightest drag from the strap. My idea is that a horseman can generally be told by the cut of his breeches. A workman who is much in the saddle always insists on comfort combined with fit. He goes to men who understand their business, and who only supply the best of materials.

I can tell breeches turned out by such "top sawyers" as E. Tautz and Son, of 485, Oxford Street; Whiting, of South Molton Street, and others of their *calibre*, in a moment from the clumsy pyjamas of the ordinary tailor. These firms are careful that they should be nice and full in the thigh, fit to the knee as if moulded on that joint, and that—a very important point—the knee buttons be well in front and perfectly true. Great care is taken in giving exact and sufficient length, in keeping the inside seam of the leg straight and the outside seam full. The materials most in vogue for home wear are leather, *i.e.*, buck or doeskin, Venetian cloth, Bedford cord, Prussian twill, buckskin cloth, velvet cord, either white or drab, moleskin, drill and cantoon. For India and the colonies there are special materials, such as thin doeskin, kharki, and various twills. For every-day wear during the winter I prefer a mouse-coloured or grey very soft buckskin, substituting a doeskin of the same sad hue in the summer. These latter I especially commend to my friends in India.

Without suitable drawers, however, leathers of all sorts in

cold, wet weather sooner or later are apt to produce the pains and aches of Caliban, with various ills that flesh is heir to. These firms give particular attention to the make of these very necessary under-garments. They are of all the various stockinette materials in wool, cotton, or, preferably, of silk, and are made to fit every part of the leg accurately, so as avoid the possibility of wrinkles, and are fitted with a riding band of corded linen stiff enough to afford support to the loins. This band is a great comfort to the wearer, yet not stiff and unyielding like stays. Breeches or knickerbocker breeches of the drab velvet cord always look well, and are comfortable wear. A Queensland colonist strongly recommends Tautz's twill. It matters little whether boots or leggings are worn. Patent leather or brown leather Butcher-boots look well, but I prefer the Newmarket; whatever make they may be, the reader will do well to see that they fit close without pressure at the top where they join or overlap the breeches, and that there is sufficient room in the foot. Gloves should be easy; those manufactured by Messrs. T. P. Lee and Co., of Duke Street, Bloomsbury, are to be recommended.

CHAPTER X.

HINTS ON BUYING.

“What is the cause of the sudden coolness between Tom Jones and Susie Brown?” “Tom sold her father a horse.”

NINETY-NINE men out of every hundred who can ride or drive a horse fairly well, consider themselves fully competent to purchase him. Now, though even riding and driving

him moderately well is not an accomplishment vouchsafed to or attained by the majority of horse-owners, the purchasing part of the programme is by far the most difficult. The advice I would offer the majority of my readers is, "*Never buy for yourself.*" The friend, if he be thoroughly reliable—a *rara avis* in this greedy, clutching world—may, most probably will, by his superior tact, judgment, and experience, save you from five-and-twenty to fifty per cent. on the deal.

Having made up your mind to ask your friend to "find you something," and having fully explained what sort of animal you want, the work expected from the quadruped, and arranged as to price, give him *carte blanche* to buy outright. Do not suppose for a moment that such a man will bother himself to run through the various dealers' stables, to see what is up at Tattersall's, or perhaps train it into the country, merely for you to look at, find fault with, and reject. Speaking for myself, I would any day sooner buy for a downright good judge than for a know-nothing who rather fancies himself, and is above taking a wrinkle from one who has forgotten more, perhaps, than he ever knew. Somebody wrote very sagely that "pride costs us more than hunger, thirst, or cold." No inexperienced gentleman can cope with the tricksters and copers of the trade, and should he attempt it, will assuredly pay heavily for his folly.

No trusty friend available, the next best step, provided money be no particular object, is to go to some dealer of character or responsibility, state your requirements and figure, and place yourself unreservedly in his hands. If possible, get yourself introduced by some good and valued customer whose patronage is worth retaining. Men of this class do exist, but are hard to find. In purchasing from a dealer you must be prepared for a flood of eloquence, to be asked a price long beyond the horse's intrinsic value, and

to be supplied with an animal fit to show, but not fit to go. The nagsman who will ride him up and down the yard is pretty certain to be an artist in the saddle, one who, as he gets "the office," rides either to sell or to buy. As in this case the object is to effect a sale, the buyer must not be disappointed if the fine goer he saw at Mr. Topsawyer's marching in such grand form, and trotting as loftily as old Shales himself, on changing hands, settle down into a very ordinary performer. If satisfied, he should, before closing the transaction, endeavour to get the horse on trial for two or three days. Many dealers, if they know the animal they are selling to be a genuine article, will accede to this arrangement. It is never good policy to let the animal be sent home without previous examination by a veterinary surgeon. If the price to be paid be a high one, then a warranty of soundness should be exacted.

If, however, the intending buyer be thrown on his own resources, then, in guarding himself and his pocket, the following hints may prove of value :--

Never take any notice of those advertisements emanating from persons whose names are not in the directory, calling attention to some marvellous specimen of horseflesh fresh from the breeder's hands, a weight-carrier, brilliant fencer, up to twenty miles an hour on the road, carries a lady, very handsome, on short legs, and so forth.

Where practicable, it is advisable to buy direct from the breeder rather than the dealer. This method, however, is attended by the drawback that, as breeders like to realize as soon as possible, the purchaser may have to content himself with a young, immature, and half-broken colt or filly, of an age when many "go roarers." On the other hand, he may be pretty sure of getting something fresh and sound.

In treating with the ordinary run of dealers, sharpers who

make trickery their trade, the purchaser must enter their premises with the seeds of suspicion sprouting freely within him. He need not, by his manner or remarks, show any sign of want of faith, only, as the sailors say, let him "Keep his weather eye lifting." It is impolitic and in bad taste to say or do anything to insult the fellow who, till ruffled, will probably be most polite. Should any unsoundness or any objectionable fault present itself, it serves no purpose to remark on it, or decry the man's wares; better far let the horse be rejected with the simple remark, "It's not exactly the animal I want." These gentry, when they see there is no prospect of a deal, are very touchy and, as a rule, are adepts at slanging. In the event of the horse pleasing, to express one's self in that sense means an addition to the contemplated price. The Turks have a saying, "He that masters his tongue saves his head"—in this case substitute "purse" for "head." Endeavour, in the first instance, to see the horse *at rest* in his stable. Introduce yourself by saying you are on the look out for such and such a horse, and express your desire to have "a look round," otherwise the astute dealer, on learning your requirements, will at once order a saddle and bridle to be put on So-and-so. Should this look round be declined, rest assured that there is some screw loose about the horse it is intended you should see; it is pretty certain to be unsound, ill-tempered, or given to some evil habit.

Having gained admission to the stable and made your selection, watch him narrowly and quietly as he stands. You may detect him in the act of crib-biting or wind-sucking; he may stand with one toe of the fore-leg pointed or advanced, a sure sign that all is not right inside the wall of that hoof; if standing so that almost all his weight is thrown on his hind feet, in which position they will be placed well

under him, it may be safely concluded that both fore feet are more or less diseased; *vice versa*, if the hind feet are unsound, he will throw all his weight on his fore hand. A leg may be what is termed "knuckled over," or "used," *i.e.* flexed at the fetlock joint, a certain indication of over-work. Constant shifting of the weight from one leg to the other is another sign of tender, fevered feet and of general soreness.

Note how the groom goes up to him to strip him. Many horses, when in high condition and doing little work, will when the groom approaches them lay back their ears, partially lift a leg, and make a grab at the manger; but this may be mere play and make-believe devoid of real vice. If the horse be vicious, then the handling of the groom will betray the ugly fact. Instead of going up to him confidently, he will give his heel a wide berth, take every precaution against a pattern being taken out of his shirt or jacket, and will be on the look out for being jammed against the standings. Any dodging on the part of the groom is indicative of vice in some form, and nervous fear on that of the horse, a certain sign that he is in the habit of receiving punishment for it, or that the man is a savage. Take time over these observations, or you may be out of your reckoning; do not be "bluffed" out of the inspection, or hurried over it. Any "come ups!" and flicks with the whip are attempts to deceive. Peep into his manger and note any signs of "quidding," *i.e.* partially masticated and rejected food.

As soon as the horse is turned in his stall, be on the look out for stiffness, string-halt, lameness, and uneven action. It is difficult to keep the stableman from "figging" or "spicing" the horse as he leaves the stall, they are so adroit at it, and invariably have some of the "cocktail" condiment, ready for immediate use, in their waistcoat pockets. It is a practice I very much object to, and invariably protest against.

So far all being satisfactory, or fairly so, stand the horse on level ground up against a dead wall, look for broken knees, capped hocks, spavins, thoroughpin, splints, scars in the inside of the knees, above and below, produced by speedy cuts, side and ring bone, thickening of back sinews, difference in size of feet, rings round the walls of the hoofs, converging towards the heel, sand cracks, etc. Look carefully at the back part of the fore leg, along the pasterns, and above the fetlock for wounds caused by the operator's knife in unnerving.

If he stands well and true—many perfectly sound horses, especially those that have been in harness, or often and long in dealer's hands, are taught to stand in a straddling position, like a cavalry horse in India at his pickets in the lines—and his general conformation be pleasing to the eye, or sufficiently so, have him walked and trotted, with a long loose rein giving perfect liberty of head and movement, not merely past broadside on, but to and from you. If the action be fair and square, free from dishing, especially that form known as *dishing in*, which is dangerous, and otherwise true and sprightly, order the saddle to be put on.

While this is being done, have a look at his withers for fistula, and note if there be any marks on the throat of the crib-biting strap. It may be remarked *en passant*, that a cribber is not in the eyes of the law unsound unless the vice has militated against the horse's usefulness. Crib-biting and wind-sucking are two forms of the same pernicious habit. In the former case the horse lays hold of the manger or other object with his incisors, arches his neck, and draws in air with a peculiar noise; in the latter he presses his lips against the hard object, brings his feet together, and then, arching his neck, sucks in volumes of air without fixing his teeth.

The mounted tests should be on hard ground, and commenced at the *trot*. By commencing at this pace any hidden lameness is almost certain to show itself. Make the rider turn round sharply, then have him galloped to test his wind. The dealer who would venture to show a broken-winded horse must be an idiot; but there are not a few who in order to get to the windward of the buyer will, in the case of thick-winded animals, roarers, grunters, whistlers or pipers, try on what is known as the "long trot" trick. This dodge is executed by galloping the horse at some distance from and out of ear-shot of the purchaser, easing up in the return journey, so that the stress on the pipes being relieved, the normal breathing is resumed. High blowing is a habit of flapping the nostrils in and out of the nasal openings, and is not of much moment, but all other noises are disorders of respiration or inspiration. Most roarers grunt and cough. It is best to ride the horse yourself in order to discover these imperfections in breathing. A horse that has not a good wind is of little use for fast and severe work, though we sometimes find magnificent roarers, such as Prince Charlie and the expatriated Ormonde. Chronic cough asserts itself in the stable as well as out of it, and is generally hoarse and hollow. If in London, Hyde, Regents, or Battersea Parks will afford ample room for a fair trial; in the country there need be no difficulty on the score of elbow room. Ride him from the stable yard to the park at as smart a trot as the pavements and traffic will allow, to ascertain if he is alarmed at vehicles. In the ride make him keep company with other horses, and abruptly turn him away from them in an opposite direction; this parting company will try his temper and exhibit his docility. If a cross-grained, stubborn, wilful nature he will try to get his own way, and back, kick, rear, and plunge; in which case, the sooner he goes back

whence he came the better. If he shies have nothing to do with him ; it is a dangerous vice, the outcome of defective vision or nervousness. A sudden, abrupt shy has a strong unseating tendency.

When the purchaser has satisfied himself as fully as above recommended, he should, having arranged the price at something like thirty per cent. below that asked, call in his own veterinary surgeon for a crucial examination of the eyes, feet, and mouth. It will be this practitioner's duty to point out what unsoundness, if any, exists, and to give his opinion as to the extent, present and future, to which it may militate from the horse's usefulness. Horses are "kittle cattle," and the "tricks of the trade" many and clever. Despite every precaution there must always be an element of luck and risk attending horse-dealing. There is a strong tendency among dealers in horseflesh to hold back a something. The veterinary surgeon, be he ever so clever and experienced, is not omniscient. For all he knows, the animal may be subject to megrims or staggers, an affection fatal to a horse's use under the saddle ; or he may have dust or stone balls in his bowels, and so suffer from frequent attacks of colic or gripes. Many an unsoundness, bad habits, tricks, and objectionable features only crop up weeks after the purchase has been completed.

The tyro is often puzzled in his endeavours to determine the exact cause and seat of lameness. An experienced judge, with his practised quick eye, will be able to locate it almost at a glance ; but he learned his lesson, very probably paying dearly for it, and so must the novice. The following wrinkles may be of use. The lameness of a fore leg, either near or off, is indicated by what is termed "nodding" of the head, and is very much on all fours with the flinching gait or hobble of the biped when his poor feet are sore or

the shoe pinches. When the lameness is seated in the *near* fore leg, the moment the foot of that leg comes in contact with the ground the horse throws up his head and raises his near shoulder to ease the weight of his body off that side, and, transferring the centre of gravity to the sound side, then drops his head. Of course, this transference of weight is the reverse when the mischief lies in the off leg. When both fore feet are lame, the nodding may be very slight or totally absent; but the action will be very short and close to the ground, and the poor sufferer will go as tenderly and as cautiously "as a cat on the ice." In hind-leg lameness the nodding is very slight, and, as in the case of the fore legs, the quarter on the same side as the tender foot is correspondingly raised, the sound leg and foot being brought rapidly under the body with a sort of catching recovery, the latter being hastily brought to the ground. All round lameness will be accompanied by a very short, cramped, *delicate* action.

Under ordinary conditions, lameness may generally be traced to some malady or defect from the knee or hock downwards. There is a remarkable sympathy between the digestive organs and the sensitive structures of the hoof, and any inflammatory action in the body is almost certain to find its way to the laminae of the feet. Like ourselves, the horse goes suddenly lame from rheumatism, lumbago and sciatica. In chronic rheumatism the lameness shifts about day by day; lumbago confines itself to the loins; but another phase of a similar disorder attacks the muscles and fibrous tissues of the chest and shoulders, producing, in stable parlance, what are known as "chest founder" and "shoulder tied."

Certain copers more tricky than their neighbours resort to such petty practices known as "beaning" or "wedging," in order to disguise lameness. But these devilish, knavish tricks

are too palpable to deceive any save the most unwary. When a horse is lame on one foot the sound one is lamed by inserting a piece of iron, wood, or other hard material between the shoe and the sole of the foot, thus, by compelling the poor animal to distribute his weight equally on both poor feet, to stop "nodding" and disguise his infirmity. In other cases the sound foot is pared right down to the sensible sole.

In buying from an acquaintance or from any private source, if the purchaser's name and credit be good, there ought to be no difficulty whatever in having the horse sent on trial for a few days. A well-known authority tenders the following sage advice, "Never purchase a horse from a friend; nor from a litigious man, nor a petty lawyer; nor from one who cannot pay the expenses of a lawsuit." The law of warranties being so uncertain, and the capacity of fracturing the ninth commandment among the horse-dealing fraternity so illimitable, my advice is, never go to law on a horse case unless you have a fancy for squandering your substance on those harpies who thrive on "litigious terms, fat contentions, and flowing fees." Better far "make your loss" than get into the law courts. When a dealer demands payment before delivery, in the face of good references, then be more than ever suspicious, and insist on a trial. Never return a horse that has been paid for until the price be refunded; or, mayhap, you may lose the quadruped and have to whistle for your money; and, in sending him back, state plainly the cause why. If you have made up your mind not to keep him, and have, on the score of unsoundness or wrong description, valid excuse for so doing, state plainly where the fault lies and stick to it.

As possession is nine points of the law, delay payment, if possible, until the horse can be thoroughly examined and as thoroughly tried. Some horses, odd as it may appear,

develop vice when they get into a strange stable, are handled by strange grooms, and are put to work to which they are unaccustomed. This misbehaviour wears off, however, with the novelty of the situation and surroundings. Equity says, and fairly too, that no vice can be recognized that did not exist anterior to the day of sale; so if the animal be returnable let him be sent back at the earliest possible date.

I can remember purchasing, some years ago, a very likely horse from a well-known West End dealer, a man hard of hearing, but quite at the top of the tree. The horse was as likely a one to carry twelve stone to hounds as was ever foaled, and looked good enough to win the Grand National. He was described as being a perfect fencer, and one likely to win a big steeple-chase. I hacked him all the autumn and liked him immensely, got him into good hard condition, and one fine November day met the Pytchley on him at Badby Wood. After a weary bit of woodland hunting a fox broke cover, and I thought myself in for "a good thing." My blood ran faster in those days than it does now, somehow fences seemed smaller, so thought I to myself, "Now, Charles Payne, where you go to-day there go I also." But I didn't; for the brute had no more idea of jumping than a cow of fly-fishing, and gave me four consecutive bad falls, the last of which brought the warning from a hard-riding farmer, "Governor, if you persevere with that duffer, my word, he'll break your neck!" Next morning saw me in Piccadilly, bellowing down a certain ear trumpet, that though it might be the custom to load up the confiding stranger with the most picturesque and admirable lies, that sort of thing neither suited me nor my pocket; that I had bought and paid for a hunter, and a hunter I would have. That afternoon, accompanied by profuse apologies, I took back with me to Weedon one of the

cleverest little horses that ever faced a country, and a winner of the Goodwood Stakes; a rare galloper and jumper that, at the end of the season, found his way into the stables of a sporting Lord Chief Justice of England.

A horse bought from a dealer is almost invariably in big, flabby, show condition, and, if put immediately to strong or even moderately long work, will assuredly "go-all-to-pieces." He must, by judicious exercise and feeding, be brought by degrees into working condition. When not in trim the back is soft and tender and requires seasoning; this gradual conditioning is especially necessary when he is destined to carry a side-saddle.

No docked horses are allowed in the army, so by being docked, the sale of many a handsome, showy, charger-like animal is rendered less easy. Intending purchasers can always satisfy themselves as to this operation having been performed or not by examining the dock. In its natural state the hair grows thickly at the point or end of the tail, leaving no bare bald space, whereas, when the caudal guillotine has been used, the circular space at the end or butt is entirely bare of hair. There can be no possible advantage in docking a riding horse.

Some very good horses are to be picked up at auctions. At the end of the London season many of the best hacks are sent up to Tattersall's to be sold without reserve. At this and other first-class repositories, metropolitan and provincial, the horses are on view two or three days prior to the day of auction. The uninitiated had better go round the stables accompanied by some good judge. It is not a very difficult matter to find out some of the antecedents and particulars of the animals in the catalogue; the sharp-sightedness of gold is proverbial, and the universal solvent may here be used with advantage.

CHAPTER XI.

SHOEING.

“No foot, no horse.” *Arabian maxim.*

I do not propose to inflict the reader with a long and scientific description of the anatomy and functions of the horse's foot—the most important organ, from a rider's point of view, of his body. Undoubtedly the usefulness of the domesticated horse is mainly due to the strength, elasticity, and perfect soundness of the hoof; the feet, therefore, should always be objects of particular attention to the horseman. We daily see horses lamed and crippled by the ignorance and crass carelessness of shoeing-smiths, and undoubtedly navicular disease, a predisposition to fevers in the feet, and contraction are much more in evidence than formerly. A close study of the horse's foot will well repay any one who is “concerned about horses,” and to those disposed to read up the interesting subject, I can strongly recommend Dr. George Fleming's standard work on “Horse-shoes and Horse-shoeing,” and a very instructive pamphlet from the pen of Professor G. T. Brown on the “Structure of the Horse's Foot, and the Principles of Shoeing,” reprinted from the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England.

In order to clearly explain the remarks we are about to make, the following two diagrams of the structure of the horse's hoof are necessary. The one represents the sole, or ground surface, of the foot, the other the horny box or “horn-shoe,” as it is appropriately termed. In Fig. 1,

which depicts the fore-foot, it will be observed that the outer side, measured from the apex of the frog C, is somewhat more expanded than the inner side. A is the wall of the hoof, the white line conforming to its periphery, representing the junction of the sole D with the wall. The long

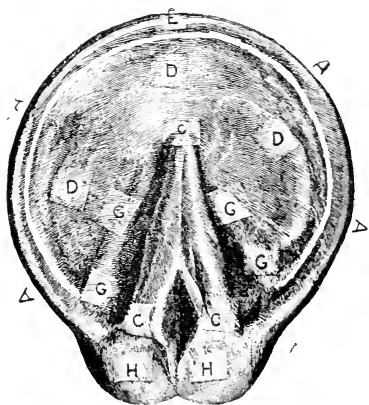


FIG. 2.

triangular cushion or pad C, with a cleft running down part of its length, is the frog. The inflections of the wall G are the bars. E is the toe, and H marks the heels, the upper portions of which are distinguished as the bulbs.

Fig. No. 2 represents the hoof or horny box as taken off by the aid of heat, or by soaking for a time in hot water. E is the toe, G the coronet. The shaded sloping lines running from the coronet to the

sole are the horny laminae composing the wall, which here represent both the inside and outside quarters. At the back of the hoof are the heels H. The convex cushion rising up between the heels and projecting itself forward towards the centre of the foot is the upper and interior surface of the horny frog. A is the sole.

The reader desirous of carefully studying the beautifully designed mechanism of the horse's foot, should obtain from Mr. Ward, of Piccadilly, his namesake in Wigmore Street, Cavendish Square, or from any other competent naturalist,

prepared specimens of the external and internal structures of this marvellous organ, including the hoof or horny box, a section through the centre of the foot from toe to heel, and a preparation of the internal foot with the hoof removed, showing the horny folds of the membrane and the coronary band. With these before him he will soon grasp the subject, and be enabled to dictate intelligently how his horse should be shod.

When a horse freshly shod returns home from the shoeing-smith's forge, the sole of the foot presents a deeply concave

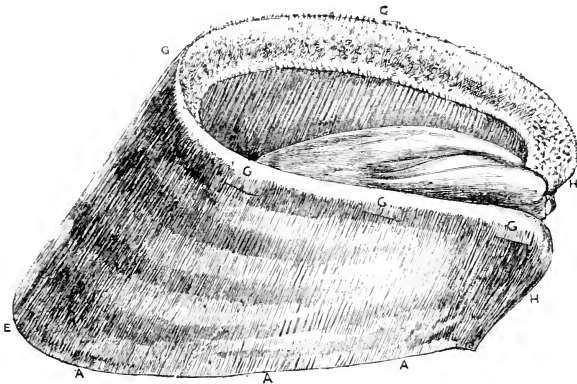


FIG. 2.

dome-shaped form, the frog and bars have been neatly cut away and trimmed, the outward wall or crust, from the clenches to the sole, at its junction with the shoe, has been rasped and smoothed, and, taken as a whole, the newly armoured foot, as a specimen of neat workmanship, does apparent credit to the workman's free and deft handling of rasp, file, and drawing knife. The basis of the art of good and correct shoeing is non-interference with and the preservation, as

much as possible, of the natural tread, leaving the whole of the bottom of the foot to take its natural place on and hold of the ground. The sole is slightly concave at the bottom, and convex above, but if a remove has not taken place for some weeks the surface meeting the ground will be found nearly flat, the crust, bars, frog, and sole being all in one plane.

A horse that has never walked in a shoe preserves a slight dome-like formation of sole, though nothing approaching that concavity wrought by the unsparing use of the drawing-knife, the bars and frog being in firm contact with the ground. Under certain circumstances and in very dry climates many horses work a life-time without shoes—the Australian race without plates of any kind—but in this humid climate of ours a substantial hoof armature is absolutely necessary with a large majority of all classes of horses. The drift of the operation of farriery ought to be to supply additional strength to the foot in order to render it capable of resisting the hardest bodies and of sustaining the additional weight we pile upon the horse's back. We want all the sustaining strength obtainable in the walls, so the modern fashionable shoeing-smith rasps away a considerable amount of its thickness to make the foot fit the shoe, in lieu of the shoe fitting the foot. He pares away till the sole is reduced to a thinness that it yields to the pressure of the thumb. That triangular mass of soft horn, the frog, intended by nature to act, in conjunction with an internal mass of fatty and fibrous tissue, as a cushion to prevent concussion, and to render progression easy and springy, is so neatly cut away that except in deep ground, it cannot possibly perform its functions. The bars, which, as they attach the wall of the hoof to the pedal bone, might be considered of first importance in the structure, are also subjected to this insane desire of making

a neat job, and are carved away and weakened. This so called "opening out of the heels" is imaginary expansion, and is a practice which cannot be too strongly condemned. The hoof horn's province is to protect the internal sensitive structures, so the farrier, flying in the face of nature, sets to work and denudes them of it. The horse is made to carry and haul loads for which, perhaps, he was never intended, and is forced to work long continuous hours on all sorts of roads and pavements, the devices of man; so the shoer, with his knife and rasp, inflicts on him an unnatural and tender foot.

Some farriers argue that the surface expansion of the foot, caused by the weight of horse and rider, is such that the concave sole assumes the form of a plane on its impact with the ground, and go so far as to advocate a horizontal hinge at the toe of the shoe to admit of the necessary expansion. With reference to this old, very general, yet absurd theory, Professor Brown says, "the base of a horse's foot cannot expand, nor the sole descend to any extent without tearing the inside of the hoof from the internal membrane to which it is everywhere closely and securely attached." Dr. Fleming adds the weight of his unquestionable opinion in these words: "These inflections form what horsemen and horse-shoers term the 'bars,' and this arrangement of the wall round the wings of the pedal bone is one of the strongest arguments against the imaginary expansion of the heels; because, these wings being inelastic, it is evident the wall would be torn from them, or the living tissue between bone and wall would be seriously compressed if the hoof alternately widened and contracted at the heels." That the hoof yields under pressure cannot be gainsaid, but only sufficiently to avoid concussion. The sole does not descend to an appreciable extent.

The frog is intended by nature to retain a certain amount of moisture to keep the horn above it soft and elastic, to give the foot a firm hold of the ground, and so prevent slipping, to protect the soles from injury from stones and other bruising substances, to aid in supporting the weight, to act as a buffer in diminishing concussion, and to assist the powerful flexor tendon in bending the foot. When, therefore, the presumptuous meddler of the forge keeps cutting it back, and it is kept, so to speak, "out of work," it becomes shrivelled and soft, in many instances the disease known as "thrush" sets in, and the foot becomes unsound. But this is not all. Inside the hoof, immediately above this horny frog, is a mass of fatty fibrous tissue, an elastic cushion, known as the "plantar cushion," which, acting in unison with the frog, prevents jar, and aids in furnishing ease and elasticity to the horse's action. When the horny frog fails to meet the ground the "plantar cushion" cannot perform its functions, and so the whole spring is taken from the "coronary cushion" lying in the upper and inner surface of the wall of the hoof, close to where hair and horn meet. The whole cunningly devised elastic apparatus is thrown out of gear, an undue strain is thrown on this uppermost coronary arrangement, ring-bone frequently being the consequence. When one part of the apparatus is called upon to discharge the duties of three it must suffer from the unnatural strain.

The horse, as found on the runs of Australia, or roaming at large on the prairies or veldt, requires no care of his feet, they look after themselves and all goes well; the horn, worn by the attrition of the ground over which he wanders, being continuously reproduced. But these vast natural pastures do not cause the same wear and tear as our metalled roads and pavements. Nothing, when sound turf

has to be galloped over, can be so easy to the horse as the foot in its natural state; but such going is the exception, not the rule. It seems impossible, under the present circumstances of domesticated equine servitude, to do away entirely with "the unyielding iron rings," which in the case of worn out shoes taken from the feet of two of Messrs. Allsopp's horses weighed twenty-three pounds. When we consider that every ounce added to the weight of the foot necessitates a lifting power equivalent to four hundred ounces at the loins, some idea may be formed of the effect of the needless, holding, dragging, wait-a-bit clog, resulting from heavy shoes. Nature intended the horse to walk, trot, gallop, and jump *barefoot*. Lord Pembroke, who wrote many years back, said, "the shoes in England at present, that are contrived with the most sense, are what they call *plates*, for the racehorses at Newmarket. I do not say they are perfect, but they are nearer the truth than any others I know; but they are not substantial enough for common use, though sufficiently so for the turf."

In the face of the great improvements lately wrought in the manufacture of steel, there can be no valid reason for weighting our horses of any class with heavy, clumsy shoes. Some few feet, by their particular form and strength, provided the sole be never pared or the frogs and bars interfered with, are enabled to resist the wear and tear of our turnpike roads and streets, and the harder the objects to which the feet are exposed the more obdurate and flinty they become; but the plurality must needs have some wearing protection to the whole or part of the wall, which is the real continuous weight-sustaining surface.

The thickness of the wall varies according to the size and breeding of the animal, and the treatment it has been subjected to. It will be found thickest and strongest in the

fore feet towards the toe, the inner side or quarter being the weaker, and usually the higher. In the case of the hind feet the quarters are the strongest points of the crust. From this formation of the fore feet it is evident that the toe is the point intended to and best constructed to withstand constant battering and friction. The fore toes of horses working without shoes or enlarged on runs are invariably much worn, especially if the ground be hard. It seems appropriate, therefore, that at this point, above all others, the foot should be armed so as to minimise the wear and tear, and especially so in that it offers the best nail-hold. With this formation in view, when the foot is of good flinty material we strongly recommend shoeing with "tips," or at the most three-quarter shoes on the Charlier principle. The Charlier system, though it has many detractors, appears to be as near perfection as possible, for the simple reason that it comes nearest to nature, and permits the sole of the foot to come in full contact with the ground. This invention consists of a narrow rim of pure steel let into the wall of the foot for a certain space round the toe and quarters, leaving the whole of the bottom of the foot in its natural position resting on whatever surface the ground presents. It is contended by some that the paring away of the wall, in order to form the channel or groove for the reception of the shoe, weakens the encasement of the foot, but seeing that such a material as steel, carefully and exactly fitted, is substituted for horn this argument falls to the ground. The rim of metal protects the crust from injury, whilst the sole, frogs, and bars remain in an unshod condition. The advantages claimed for the system are:—

(1) It lessens the animal's muscular exertion, rendering him less liable to tire.

(2) It gives great security for travelling over the most

slippery roads, granite, wood, and asphalte pavements, and in frosty weather, no roughing being necessary.

(3) It is the only shoe which gives the foot the natural support of the crust, sole, bars, and frog, which latter, in ordinary shoeing, are invariably cut away.

(4) All the parts of this essential organ being brought by its use to perform their natural functions, they are kept in a healthy state of expansion and development, thereby preventing corns, sand-cracks, contraction of the heels, muscular diseases, tendency to hoof-bound, and numerous other affections.

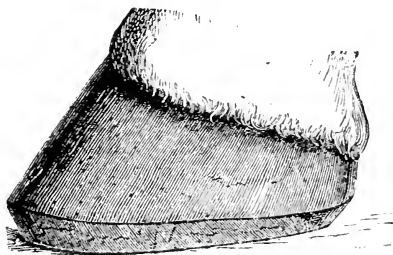
(5) The lightness and conformity to the wall of the foot (of which it resembles a continuation) make it the most humane method for the animal.

The mode of application will best be ascertained by a visit to the establishment of Mr. Henry W. Stevens, M.R.C.V.S.L., 9, Park Lane, Piccadilly, London. The following notes may, however, explain the mode of application. The only instrument differing from those employed by every shoeing-smith is a drawing-knife, with moveable guide to regulate the depth of the groove. The nails are the ordinary English countersunk pattern, the heads flattened to fit the groove in the shoe. Much smaller sizes are used than with ordinary shoes.

In preparing the foot to receive the shoe the lower edge of the hoof is boldly but evenly rasped off at an angle, forming thereby a sloping surface on which it is more easy to employ the drawing-knife.

On this sloping surface the drawing-knife cuts a groove, as depicted in the following wood-cut, in the wall or crust for the reception of the shoe. A properly trained smith can so cut this channel that it shall have the exact room for the reception of the shoe and can insure a perfect fit. Care

must be taken, especially on the first occasion of shoeing on this system, that the groove is made a trifle shallower than the thickness of the shoe. The web of the shoe also must be slightly narrower than the thickness of the wall of the crust, which varies from half an inch to less, stopping short



between the sole and the wall, and which marks their junction. My firm opinion is that no part of the sole of the foot should be in continuous contact with the shoe, its natural slight concavity and elasticity forbid any such permanent

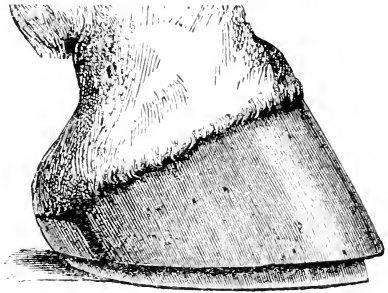
pressure. Many argue to the contrary, and point to the flat plate of the Arab, covering and bringing equal pressure to bear on the whole of the ground surface of the foot—in fact, a thin sheet of iron interposed between the bottom of the foot and the ground—as supporting this contention. But, tough and sound as the foot of the Arab's horse, I decline, save in respect of his system of nailing, to accept the Bedaween's teaching. The foot, when prepared to receive the shoe, presents the appearance given below.

The necessary form is given to the shoe that it may exactly follow the outer edge of the hoof as far as the beginning of the bars, where it is thinned or sloped off in order that the heel and broadest part of the frog may come well on to the ground. If the sole be strong and concave, the heels high, and the crust thick, the shoe is buried entirely in the channel

so that the ground rim of the metal is level with the horny sole. If, however, these desirable conditions be not present then it is better, at first, to cut the channel so shallow that half the thickness of the shoe protrudes below the ground surface of the foot.

The shoe is shorter than the foot to prevent the possibility of its being wrenched off.

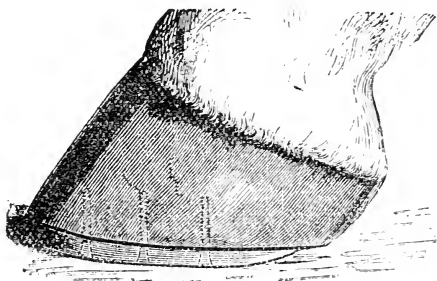
To insure a perfect fit and level bearing the shoe must, in the first instance, be placed in the groove hot. The application



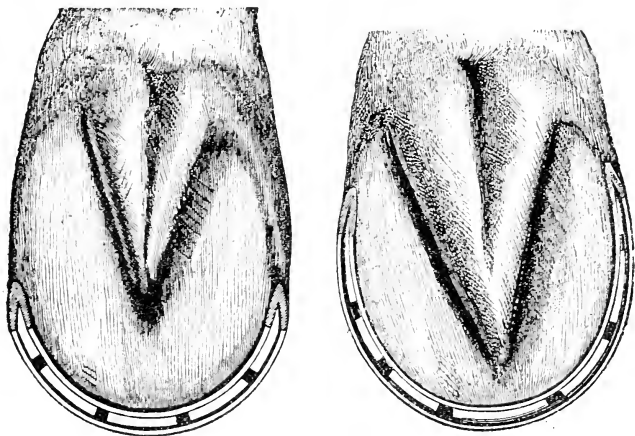
of a hot burning shoe is, I am aware, strongly condemned by many whose opinions are entitled to respect, but my experience is that, provided the hot metal be kept in contact with the horn for *a few seconds only*, no more harm is done than by the process of singeing to the horse's coat or to the human hair. And here a word of warning will be in place. If the shoe be plunged into cold water and cooled too rapidly when hot, the nature of the metal is changed; it becomes brittle, and is liable to fracture. When shoeing cold a small rasp may be used to secure for the shoes that perfectly level bearing which is essential. The foot, when shod, presents the following appearance, the diagram No. 2 representing the Charlier tip.

On large, flat, platter-shaped feet, with low heels and high frogs, it is necessary to put on shoes thicker at the quarters, allowing them to come down, as in the case of the ordinary racing plate, below the surface of the sole, and this will be

found effective in the case of convex-soled or "foundered" feet. In cases where the heels are turned in and predisposed



to corns (bruises of the sensitive sole, between the frog and the wall on the inside quarter of the foot, caused by too



tight shoeing at the heels, or by the shoe pressing on the horny sole) the shoes must be lighter in substance, narrower

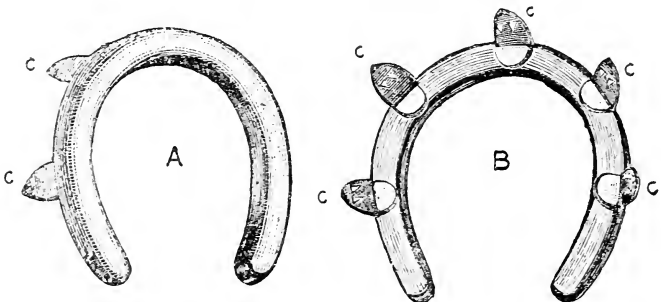
in web at the heels, and well sunk into the groove in the wall. On feet with high contracted heels and weak frogs, the shoes must be very narrow in the web, and sunk fully into the groove. When adopting the Charlier system for the first time, in lieu of ordinary shoeing, it is advisable to let the old shoes remain on for some time so as to be well worn down; by this delay the sole may have recovered from the smith's paring and rasping, and has regained its normal thickness and power of resistance and support. The Charlier shoe may be modified, like all other shoes, and is suitable for every degree of foot. "In a well-formed limb a plummet line dropped from the middle of the knee should fall exactly through the centre of the toe" (Fleming).

The hind hoof is, in comparison with the fore, smaller, and more elongated, has a more perpendicular steep wall, and its sole is naturally more concave, with a smaller development of frog. Differing from the front foot, the quarters are the strongest part of the encasement in the hind. Feet are of all shapes and sizes, and it is not uncommon to meet with front feet that are "odd-sized," an inequality which does not predispose to unsoundness, though decidedly unsightly. Black hoofs are generally built up of tougher material than white ones, and are seldom so low in the heel. The exterior horn of the wall is much harder than the inner crust, and should, therefore, never be rasped.

A great deal of ingenuity has been expended in endeavouring to devise some method of attaching the shoe to the horse's foot by which nailing may be done away with. I was sceptical as to the possibility of any such contrivance being effective till my attention was directed to what is termed the "Humane" shoe, the invention of Mr. Benfield, a practical shoeing smith of Walsall. The following sketches

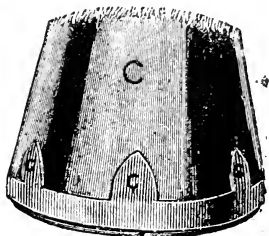
will aid in explaining the salient points of the clever invention.

The materials of which this shoe is composed are the best soft steel and indiarubber. Flat pieces of steel are worked into a shell of the ordinary horse-shoe shape, by means of powerful presses, the open portion of the shell being that touching the ground. Out of the top surface (B), that meeting the wall of the hoof, are punched five or any other number of clips (C) which, when the shoe is finished, serve by means of two small claws on each, to attach the shoe to the foot. Objection having been taken to this punching,



as tending to weaken the web of the shoe, this process has been discontinued and another still more effective means of furnishing the clips devised. Into the hollow of the shell is forced a pad of indiarubber, the pressure being so great that the whole becomes practically a homogeneous mass of soft steel and indiarubber, the pad projecting slightly beyond the ground surface of the shoe so as to minimise concussion and jar, and to aid the frog in gripping a firm foothold on slippery pavements. As the shoe can be bent with vice and hammer without in any way disturbing the pad, there is no difficulty in fitting the shoe to any foot, a strictly level bearing

being secured by means of the rasp. When the shoe is fitted, a by no means difficult task to the unskilled shoer, or even to the amateur, a few taps of the hammer bend the clips on to the outward surface of the wall of the hoof, causing the points on the clips to enter the horn as at (C). It will be obvious that by this arrangement the natural growth is not interfered with in the slightest degree. The metal shoe being a mere shell, is of course much lighter than the ordinary run of solid shoe, and, as the pad pre-



vents slipping of the foot in action, the wear is materially reduced, both points of highest importance. It appears to me that shoes constructed on this principle and fitted in grooves to the foot on the Charlier principle have very decided claims to general adoption. In the case of brittle feet, such as will not carry a nail, they cannot fail to be a boon. Who has not heard of the "Peril of the nail?" At first I was sceptical as to the holding power of the claws when tested by severe and continuous work, but all doubts on this head have been set at rest by the testimony of medical men and others who have been constantly using them during the past severe winter, driving their horses in them over hard macadam, granite, and wood pavements, frozen hard and smooth as ice, as well as over stone setts, without slipping or working loose. Many of the owners find a vast improvement in their horses' feet.

Some feet wear quicker and grow quicker than others, some grow more sole than others. As a rule, shoes ought not to be left on, without at least a remove, over three weeks. Horses should, as a rule, be re-shod every five or six weeks.

The following few rules may be observed with advantage :

Stopping the feet previous to a horse being shod or removed is unnecessary. The object of such softening of the hoofs is to enable the farrier to use his drawing-knife freely, which implement, if used at all, should be confined to paring away jagged parts of the frogs or detached flakes of the sole.

If a horse be awkward at and object to shoeing, before resorting to Galvayning, or the twitch, let him be bridled and saddled and ridden by the groom who usually exercises him to the forge, and let him be shod with the man on his back. Many horses will not yield their feet up without some force. An impromptu and effective method of securing the hind legs so that the smith can work with safety, is to put on an old and strong cart collar with hames. Get a good pliant stirrup leather, and taking two turns with it round one of the hind pasterns, stop it with a piece of cord or spun yarn close to the joint. Then buckle it in front so as to form a loop. To this loop attach a stout smooth twelve foot length of half-inch rope, or better still, a strong strap. Bring the rope of strap forward between the fore legs through the bottom of the collar, round which take a double turn. Haul steadily on this, gathering in the slack, till the foot to be shod is raised well off the ground and brought forward in a position convenient for the smith to work on it. When in position secure it there by taking a turn round the pastern with another stirrup leather, which buckle tight over the hamstring some inches above the hock. Care must be taken that the horse is not kept too long in this constrained position, or he may fall from fatigue.

When the shoe is being removed it must not be wrenched off. See that the clenches are first turned back and the shoe only just sufficiently released from the foot by the pinchers for them to seize the heads of the nails, which

must be withdrawn one at a time. The too common method is to draw out the nails on one side only and then to tear the shoe from the foot by main force, frequently carrying a bit of hoof with it.

Rasp the bottom of the circular walls of the hoof until a perfectly level flat surface is obtained. On no account let the drawing-knife touch the bars or returns of the foot. All that has to be done is to reduce the foot to the size it would have been if not guarded from attrition by the rim of steel, and that can best be effected by attrition—by the rasp. The toe, if too long, must be reduced from below, not by vertical chopping or shortening; the line of outward hoof or wall from the coronet to its junction with the shoe must be perfectly straight. The shorter the horse's toe is the less likely is he to trip or to bring his toe on the ground before the heel.

See that the shoe is hammered to exactly fit the foot, not, as usually is the case, the foot pared and rasped to fit the shoe. The surface of the shoe, that coming in contact with the foot, must be perfectly level.

The nail holes must be bevelled throughout the whole thickness of the shoe, and made exactly to hold the nail heads, so that they may retain their hold to the very last. When the nail holes are cleared with the pritchel over too large an opening, the shoe is liable to be bent; this, on being remedied by using the hammer, very frequently causes an imperceptible fracture in the shoe. They should be cleared over as small an aperture as possible.

Only chisel-pointed and bright (not rusty) nails should be used. They should be driven so as to take a short and wide hold of the crust, and should come out within half an inch of the shoe. Being driven thus at an angle across the fibres of the wall, they retain a better hold than those

driven in as far as possible with the run of this structure. Another advantage of this short cross-nailing is that when the shoe is taken off, the holes will be rasped out, and the fresh nails will have sound tough horn to take hold of. Rusty nails drive badly.

The fewer the nails driven into the foot the better, and this is especially the case with the forefoot. If farriers are not supervised, they will drive as many nails round the inside quarter as the outside. By the examination of a freshly removed well-worn shoe, it will be observed that the web on which the inside quarter has been resting, shows signs of having done extra duty; in some cases a cavity will be noticed, the result of extra wear and tear at this particular point; whereas that part of the shoe which has been bearing the outside quarter presents comparatively little evidence of friction. The extra wear at this part of the wall may be accounted for in two ways: first, that it is more under the centre of gravity; secondly, by the fact that the shoeing smith will persist in leaving the inside wall higher than the outside, throwing the limb out of balance, and thereby causing abnormal strain on the ligaments of the joints, lameness, and premature wearing out. In British cavalry six nails is the regulation number, but five are sufficient, three being driven round the outside quarter, and two on the inside from the toe. As the quarters are the thickest and strongest part of the walls of the hind foot, it is appropriate that they should carry the nails.

When the nails, which should exactly fit the holes, have been driven, a slight groove or notch may be filed out in the wall of the hoof immediately below the point at which the nails come out, in which to clench the points. Having twisted off the points, what remains must be turned down and in with the hammer, the usual polishing up with rasp and file being dispensed with.

Be careful that the shoe does not project beyond the wall and *vice versa*. If the shoe be too small, it must be opened by the smith, or a larger one substituted. On no account must the bottom of the wall be rasped down to make it correspond in periphery with the outside rim of the shoe.

Calkings, in my opinion, are analogous with high-heeled boots and shoes so fraught with injury to the human foot and spine. In the case of the hunter, however, they are advantageous in so far that in taking off from slippery ground, they give him a better foothold and consequent purchase. In the front feet they are not to be thought of, and those applied to the hind should be moderate in height, and applied to the outside quarter only.

Tips, to which in describing the Charlier system I have already referred, will be found admirably adapted to every description of work when the frog is on the ground and the foot in its normal condition. In cases where the heels are contracted, they will be found especially useful. They must taper off in thickness, not in width of web, towards the ends, and as in the case of the Charlier shoe, a groove should be cut in the wall of the hoof to receive these thin ends, so that they may be flush with the posterior portion of the ground surface of the hoof.

Brushing, Cutting, or Interfering, whether before or behind, is not only annoying in that it produces lameness, but is positively dangerous. This faulty, hitting action is caused by the inside quarter of the hoof brushing or striking the ankle of the opposite leg. At first, when discovered, the evil must be mitigated by placing an india-rubber ring, or a rounded bit of leather with an elastic strap or joint, round the pastern, which acts as a buffer or guard. Without some such protection, a deep wound, with consequent inflammation and enlargement, will ensue. Permanent

remedy, however, must be sought in the forge. The farrier's usual practice is to rasp away the inside-quarter of the interfering foot, and to raise it by placing under it an extra, to double, thickness of shoe. He thus weakens the already not too thick quarter, and elongates the toe. Temporary benefit, no doubt, results, but at the expense of giving the horse a one-sided tread, and of wear and tear of joints, ligaments, and cartilage. I do not advocate any such treatment. The inside quarter must have the full width of web to rest and bear upon, but the shoe might advantageously be filed off at an angle, rough edges at its junction with the horn being rasped off. A strong clip should be thrown up on the outside quarter to prevent any shifting of the shoe inwards, and so obviate the necessity of more than one nail on the inside, and that well forward. Shoeing with tips has been found to effect a cure. Horses addicted to this defect in action are generally pleasant straight goers, and seldom or never roll; it is worth while, therefore, to remedy the evil, which is a consequence of some defective formation. It is less dangerous and troublesome behind than before. The American trotter is especially prone to this interfering gait, so, in consequence, our cousins on the other side of the Atlantic are ever busy in bringing out some new boot, each more hideous than its predecessor.

In hard frosty weather, when snow lies on the ground, try the effect of no shoes, of bare hoofs.

In the stable the horse should not stand any part of the day on his bedding. His foot should rest on hard, dry, even ground.

CHAPTER XII.

SOME RANDOM WRINKLES.

“ Full of wise saws and modern instances.”

FEEDING.

Pluck, or *courage*, is derived from breeding; *strength* is the outcome of food and a good digestion.

Regular feeding is essential; long fasts weaken the digestive organs.

The horse's digestion, when properly carried on, is marvellously rapid and effective, therefore he should have little food at a time. He does not ruminate like the cow. Properly speaking, four hours is the outside time that a horse should work without feeding, though, of course, numerous occasions present themselves when he must go foodless for much longer periods. The horse, it will be noticed, never sleeps long together, and during the night is frequently up and feeding. His last feed at night, therefore, should be the largest over which he may dwell. After all other feeds there should be “ a clean manger.”

A hard-worked horse should have every facility offered him to feed during the night.

Cooked food should never be given to riding-horses, except in the shape of an occasional mash. It is swallowed rapidly, little or no insalivation takes place, the stomach is distended and weakened, and colic results. Insalivation, or the secretion of saliva, is absolutely necessary, owing to its solvent powers by which the masticated food is chemically altered and assimilated.

Under ordinary circumstances the best mill for crushing dry corn is the horse's teeth, but many are such greedy, hurried feeders that they bolt a large quantity of grain whole. All oats, beans, peas, or maize should be given cracked or crushed, mixed with fresh chopped or cut hay or oat straw, so as to ensure thorough mastication and the admixture of the food with saliva.

This manger system of feeding requires wide and deep mangers, with iron cross-bars, otherwise much corn will be wasted by the horse's throwing out the corn in search of "tit-bits." No more oats than the quantity just sufficient for the day's use should be bruised at a time; for, in a crushed state they are liable to turn sour, are refused, and are injurious. All oats, before being bruised, should be carefully sifted to get rid of gravel, grit, and dust.

A horse, fifteen to fifteen and a half hands high, not a greedy feeder, and doing ordinary light work, or merely exercise, will need about ten pounds of oats a day; this is the allowance for cavalry horses, and they have to get through a great deal more of heavy and prolonged work than is generally supposed. But *oats*, by custom the most generally selected staple grain food of the horse, are not, when the wear and tear of muscular power are excessive, the most suitable diet when given entirely by themselves. The method in economizing food, and in obtaining the best results from the varieties at our disposal, is to give a mixture in which due consideration is given in apportionment of each ingredient, having regard to the nutritious matter contained in it, and the amount and nature of the work to be exacted from the consumer. Should the reader care to get up this important subject, I can strongly recommend the perusal of an able and compact little work, entitled "How to Feed the Horse," by Mr. George Armi-

tage, formerly lecturer in Veterinary Science in the Albert and Glasgow Veterinary Colleges.

The owner or stud-groom (if this dignitary be trustworthy) should keep the granary door under lock and key. The granary floor should be of large area to admit of constant turning out and spreading. Musty oats are comparatively worthless as food, and frequently cause indigestion, diabetes, and other disorders. The corn-bin should not be in the stable, where it is very much in the way; moreover, the horses, having an eye on it, get anxious and uneasy whenever the groom goes near the receptacle. It forms a handy seat no doubt, but if a seat be required it should be one of the sort that falls down flat against the wall.

If happily possessed of a large stud, watch the markets and, if there be ample, airy, stowage room, take advantage of them and buy for ready money.

For feeding purposes corn should be quite dry. When purchasing from corn-chandlers or contractors insist upon guaranteed weight and measure. Good oats ought to weigh forty pounds a bushel. The late Mr. Hannington, of Brighton and Portslade, once showed me some marvellously neat, short, and almost round New Zealand oats weighing forty-eight pounds to the bushel, which in a very short space of time wrought wonders on a couple of scarecrow two-year-olds he had received from the then most fashionable and successful training-stable at Newmarket. Horses are fed by measure, not by weight. Inferior oats have a ponderance of husk of no greater feeding value than straw. Good Scotch qualities yield much less of husk than the foreign varieties. Some persons object to black oats, but except that they, the Tartarians especially, are apt to be taily I find them to be quite as good as the white, and frequently thinner in the skin. They seldom weigh quite so

well as the white varieties. Irish oats being generally kiln-dried are, therefore, not so much in favour, otherwise those grown on the extensive lime-stone central plain of the island are excellent.

New oats produce flatulency. Horses fed on them do not stay well. Oats for fast, hard work should be two years old ; after that age they begin to shrink.

Beans, of which grooms are far too fond, must be given with great caution, and seldom or never to young horses, unless called upon for duty on the racecourse, for steeple-chasing, or for the hunting-field. Horses doing ordinary hack work, unless very old, do not require them, and great care must be exercised in feeding them to any horse unaccustomed to this powerful tissue-forming and heat-producing food ; otherwise cracked heels, affections of the eyes, acute diseases of the foot, skin diseases, and general predisposition to inflammatory attacks of various sorts may be caused. New beans are absolute poison. Those imported from Egypt should never be used, being full of the eggs of various insects, which when hatched out in the horse's stomach produce irritation, loss of health, condition, and general unthriftiness. The Lincolnshire *tic* is the best variety, being small, thin in the husk, and heavy in the kernel. Whatever variety be used see that it be old, dry, and free from perforations by grubs. They should be split or bruised, not ground, and if given immediately before a horse starts on quick work are pretty certain to produce colic.

Horses on long journeys require the stimulus of beans ; those that have been accustomed to them cannot work without them ; they are decidedly beneficial in the case of delicate constitutioned animals that pass off their food rapidly, and to old horses wanting, as most do, a "pick-me-

up." Late in the day and in the last feed at night is the best time to feed beans.

Peas are quite as nutritious as *beans*, and not being so constipating may be used with greater freedom. Both beans and peas may be considered the roast beef, Burton Stingo, and crusty old Port, or full-bodied Burgundy, of the stable *ménu*.

Barley is too seldom seen inside our home stables. The Arabs have a saying, "Had we not seen that horses come from horses, we should have said that it is barley that produces them." All the great feats of endurance of the untiring steed of the desert are performed on barley and chopped straw. My Eastern experience has taught me to value this corn. I have known horses thrive on barley that went "all-to-pieces" on oats, probably owing to the former being so easy of digestion. Given dry, in moderation, mixed with oats, it suits many horses. In tropical climates, where horses sweat profusely, and so carry off, through the pores of the skin, its heating qualities, barley may, in some instances, be the sole corn diet; but in our temperate clime it does not answer unless given as an admixture. I have given it, bruised, to horses with weak digestion, and to those of nervous temperament, with most satisfactory results. Scalded, it suits and fattens *washy* nervous horses, and soaked in water and left to sprout it acts as an elixir on those that have become stale and worn from excessive work. The oldest race-horse I ever had to deal with was an Arabian, well known on the Bombay side of India as "Cronsdatt." His last race, one crowned by victory, was the Welter, a mile and half over the Byculla course. I fed this game old campaigner on a mixture of a pulse known as *gram*, scalded barley, a sprinkling of oats, some ground nut, and, as a salad, a handful or two of lucerne with a few

carrots. To win such a race at the age of twenty-two, towards the close of a laborious career, carrying eleven stone, was no little testimony to the virtue of a mixed diet, in which barley formed the main element.

Indian-corn or *maize*. This corn, unless mixed with beans or peas, is of little use where horses are doing fast work. It is too fattening and, as it imparts an unpleasant smell to horses eating it, is not to be recommended. Horses fed on maize may look "full of flesh," but it is not solid hard-working flesh and muscle, but "stall-fed" blubber. Those of the General and other omnibus companies are mainly fed on this great fat or heat-producer, but they work at a slow pace, eased by frequent stoppages.

Bran. When not given indiscriminately, bran, in the form of a mash, at the temperature of new milk, is one of the safest, most natural, and acceptable adjuncts to the horse's diet. Given in a judicious manner it acts as a laxative. The impression with many is that it is non-nutritious, whereas, were the flesh-forming principles it contains liberated in the process of digestion, it would be found the equal of either oats or barley. If fresh and perfectly sweet, nothing is more grateful to the horse after a severe day of violent muscular exertion, an over-excitement of the circulation of the blood, and debility of the whole system, caused by prolonged effort and abstinence from food. Nothing, in short, is more appetising and soothing when suffering from languor or depression, restlessness and fever, no better safeguard against inflammation of the lungs and stomach. It is a sedative and a cooler of the whole system. A bran mash given for two days before physic prepares the horse for its reception, and, if the aloes be good, prevents griping. The usual custom is to give only one mash twelve hours before administering the ball,

but this is not sufficient ; it should be continued for forty-eight hours to have its laxative effect, some corn, bruised, being mixed with it on the first day, but given quite plain on the last. As the mash is invariably bolted, not masticated, the oats must be crushed. Some horses will not touch a mash unless it has some oats sprinkled on the top or mixed through it. A horse well prepared with mashes requires fewer drachms of the aloes. A very common practice with some lazy grooms is to leave the bran mash for days before the animal. The mixture should invariably be given fresh as prepared, for if allowed to stand it ferments, fouls the woodwork of the manger or bucket, and nauseates the patient, who will plainly exhibit his disgust at the unsavoury mess by standing back away from it as far as possible.

The following is a good mash for horses in ordinary work which, on the supposition that they rest on Sundays, as they ought to do, may be given with great advantage for the last feed on Saturday night. Place half a pint of well-cleaned linseed in a porcelain-lined or enamelled saucepan, pour on it one quart of boiling water, cover up closely, and leave to soak for three or four hours. At the same time pour boiling water on a very clean, sweet, bucket, half full of fresh bran, till well saturated, then closely cover up. When reduced to milk heat, make a hole in the middle of the mash to receive the linseed jelly, and thoroughly mix the whole mass.

Some horses shy of bran will greedily devour a mash made of *malt* ; this mixture may be substituted, and will be found grateful, after a long tiring day, a chill, or when recovering from illness.

Of all *roots* those most relished by horses are *carrots*. Parsnips are too fattening. Swedes, excellent for farm

teams, are the best when given in large quantities. Mangolds are good in spring-time, when other roots deteriorate. Kohl-rabi, excellent for brood mares as a milk-producer, should have no place in the riding-stable, and potatoes are not to be thought of. For horses doing fast work the quantity given should never be large. I have heard carrots objected to as producing eruption on the skin. Such is not my experience. If they produce any blotches, then that eruption is better out than in. Moderately used they are serviceable, are much relished by both well and ailing horses, and are nutritious and appetizing. If given too freely they interrupt the formation and maintenance of muscle, and lower condition. London coachmen and grooms are very fond of getting the permission of their employers to purchase carrots largely, but it is more than suspected that the succulent root finds its way into the family all-a-blaze pan, and not into the manger. Not a few give carrots, cut into fingers, along with the corn, thinking to tempt shy feeders, but the carrots are picked out by the horse, and the oats rejected; to avoid this the roots should be pulped. Carrots, if stored in dry sand in a dry cool place, will keep a long time. My experience of this green food is that a small daily allowance, in summer especially, acts much in the same manner as a salad does with us, and that it keeps horses from getting stale, stiff, husky, and hide-bound, also that it helps to keep the wind right. That it keeps the system cool and open cannot be doubted.

We now come to that important portion of the horse's dietary, *hay*. The quantity required per diem varies with many circumstances, and must be governed by the size of the animal, the quantity of other food he is getting, the nature of the work, and the quality of the hay. The nutritious materials found in hay vary from six to fourteen

per cent. It should, for every description of horse, invariably be of the very best quality, nothing should induce the owner to let even a pound of anything but old, fragrant, sweet hay of good colour enter the stable. Such as has got wet in the making, and has heated or moulded in the stack—"mow-burnt," as it is termed—is pernicious, and the prolific cause of broken wind, coughs, indigestion, and diabetes. Too soft hay is generally that made from the second cut, or aftermath, and is, therefore, devoid of nutrition. The best hay is that grown on upland well-drained strong clay; the worst that from water meadows. Good sound chopped oat straw is preferable to second-class hay. In order to insure the proper portion of hay going with each feed of corn, it should be chaffed and mixed with the bruised oats, etc.; if fed from the rack, a proceeding often endangering the horse's eyes from falling seeds and dust, then not more than three pounds should be placed in the rack at one time.

Clover hay, when well made and leafy, is much liked, nutritious, and fattening. It is easily spoiled by rain. Better still is that made from *sainfoin*, and *lucerne*, very much appreciated by horses when green and in flower, is the best of the three. In India I have made superlatively good hay from lucerne, cutting five crops, annually, to the acre.

Linseed contains a large quantity of heat-producing matter, and is usually given, as suggested, in conjunction with scalded bran, mixed with other substances. It is very fattening, keeps the bowels open, and greatly improves the coat. A mixture of oatmeal and linseed gruels is much relished by horses suffering from debility or convalescing from acute disease.

For putting an extra-polish on the coat there is nothing

next to health and careful grooming, like bruised *sunflower* seed. *The locust*, or *carob bean*, has a modified, though similar, effect, and is largely used in the preparation of horse condiments, being full of saccharine matter. Both these seeds must be split or ground, and not more than half a pint given in a feed.

Lentils, or *tares*, are both nutritious and digestible, though slightly bitter in taste. When ripe, and given sparingly in conjunction with oats or barley, they answer admirably with some light-hearted horses. Excessively nervous animals derive much benefit from bulky succulent food.

When a horse is being "summered," *i.e.* laid up in summer for temporary rest, lameness, or other causes, green food is absolutely necessary. He wants "letting down," and a radical change of diet, something that will clear the whole system, yet nourish him.

Lastly, when writing of *green foods*, *hay*, or that more modern preparation known as *silage*, I must put in a strong word or two for the new forage plant, *Lathyrus Sylvestris*, which, in the opinion of Professor Chas. F. Hope, of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society,—an opinion based on careful analysis of plants grown by the society—shows that in the green condition, weight for weight, it is in feeding quality worth double that of any other fodder plant, "*twice as concentrated as any green food known.*" To those of my readers who are landed proprietors I strongly recommend the cultivation of this most valuable addition to our stock of fodder plants, which is of vigorous, though at first slow, growth, robust, and a very heavy cropper, producing seventeen tons to the acre. The hay reminds one of the composition of cotton-cake, with the attraction of a delicious aroma, and the sweet *silage* has "a nose" on it quite equal to the *esse bouquet* of prime clover. It may safely be

predicted for *Lathyrus* that, at no distant date, it will prove the sheet-anchor of the horse-breeder and horse-owner.

Having hurriedly glanced at the various foods at our disposal, we would now call attention to *water* and *watering*. In a state of nature, when water is within reach, horses never want such an immoderate quantity as to unfit them for active work at any moment. Epicures as to their food, they are doubly so on the question of water. An Arab horse of the highest caste—a Seglâwiâh Jedrân, Manhâgy Hûdree, or other patrician of Nejd or Mesopotamia—always, it is said, troubles the water with his fore-feet before slaking his burning thirst. The mobs of Australia have their favourite water-holes. Here in our more favoured pastures our fenced-in horses have their favourite spring or rivulet, the effect of which on their condition is distinctly noticeable, and which they will drink copiously or almost reject. The cold chalky water of Epsom has militated against the prowess of many an aspirant for Derby honours, has robbed many a sterling good racer of “the blue riband of the turf.” The groom’s common practice is to water twice a day—at each time a copious draught. When being fed on dry corn and dry hay, the horse, undoubtedly, should have clean, and, if possible, soft or river water always within his reach. Like ourselves, he is liable to derangements of the stomach, and seeks a remedy in copious draughts of water; the means to slake his thirst should therefore be permanently at hand. If an arrangement for continual access to water be inconvenient, then offer it to the horse three or four times a day. The quantity cannot be stated, it is best to let him drink what he fancies, giving it an hour before feeding, commencing early in the morning.

The following rules should be observed :—

Never water when the horse is heated, or on the point of any extraordinary exertion.

Much water before severe work is obviously injurious. Horses going out hunting should have, contrary to general rule, a drink, but a limited one, at their usual hour; they generally have some miles to go quietly to cover.

After heavy work, or hard galloping, the chill should be taken off the water, and a handful or two of oatmeal thrown in.

Cold water should be sparingly given to horses liable to colic or gripes, and never to those recovering from physic. Very cold water is liable to disagree with any stable-fed horse.

If a horse has fasted long, give him water in very small quantities, and frequently.

Hard spring water may be softened with bran.

When on a journey, at all seasons of the year, let the horse have half a dozen swallows occasionally, giving him a good long drink when within a mile or so of home; the last half-mile should be performed at a walk.

Be very careful never to water at public drinking troughs, to which every description of road horse has access. Many infectious diseases, such as ozoena, epizootic catarrh, farcy, and that fell disease glanders, are easily contracted this way.

When a horse is found to be "off his feed," have a look into his manger. Many grooms are culpably negligent in cleaning out this food receptacle. Probably it will be found to contain the remains of the last mash in a sour, vile-smelling condition, quantities of half masticated "quidded" food, dust, and gravel; or the oats and hay may be musty. Corn contractors want a vast deal of looking after. When

no palpable reason for refusing food exists, the horse's mouth should be examined for decayed teeth. Horses suffer from toothache, swelled, inflamed, and painful gums, in much the same way as we do. I have seen the eye blood-shot and watery in sympathy with a decayed upper molar. A swelling of the bars of the mouth behind the front teeth, called lampas, is common with young horses shedding their teeth; with old ones it is a sign of disordered stomach. This complaint, more or less painful, interferes with feeding and chewing, frequently producing feverishness. Some grooms recommend burning, others lance the swellings freely, many rub salt well in, barbarous treatment worthy the ordinary run of stablemen. In such a case, gruel, mashes, linseed, boiled oats, etc., must be substituted for the ordinary hard feed, and a little cooling medicine will soon bring the sufferer back to his feed. If no such causes for the horse refusing his food can be traced, then a qualified veterinary surgeon must be called in; in any case of dental surgery his services would be necessary. The horse's teeth often want looking to. Sometimes a supernumerary tooth—known as a "wolf's tooth"—makes its appearance in front of the molars on either jaw, interferes with chewing, and must be extracted. The molars are often irregular, with long, sharp and jagged edges, causing wounds on the inside of the cheeks, and cutting the tongue. These painful protrusions require to be rasped down. The instruments used in the removal of these irregularities should be handled by the veterinary surgeon alone.

The best *bedding*, in my opinion, is a reddish-yellow, springy, fibrous description of *peat moss* well teased and carefully freed from dust. It may not be so sightly and attractive as bright straw, but it lasts longer, is cheaper, if kept dry is better for the feet, and the horse rests longer

on it. Much of the dark sepia-coloured moss litter now sold of German and Dutch manufacture is taken too low down from the surface of the bog, has lost all its elasticity, most of its powers of absorption, and is quite unfit for bedding. That from some of the Irish bogs, when properly prepared, is of superlative quality, and fully answers all the requirements of a thoroughly good litter. Horses will not eat it, and that is one point of importance. By selling the used bedding as manure one omnibus company bedded their horses for nothing, and made, moreover, a profit on the transaction. No drains are required when moss litter is used.

Always keep a lump of *rock salt*, and one of chalk, in the manger.

On a journey the horse's feed may be increased from one-third to one-half.

Never let a horse be groomed when feeding.

Avoid artificial physic as much as possible. Many grooms are constantly doctoring their horses, giving condition balls, powders, and such like poisonous rubbish. Especially partial are they to diuretic balls, a frequent cause of inflammation of the kidneys. Arsenic, judiciously administered, is very valuable in improving and "satinizing" the horse's skin; it improves the appetite, and helps to get any unthrifty horse into condition, so these groom-doctors give it constantly, and in dangerous quantities, not unfrequently—*vide* police-court reports—causing death.

Of white oils, black drinks, alterative powders, and the numerous drinks of the wholesale or retail farm and stable drug vendor, I have a horror. Some owners are constantly using these much puffed "sovereign remedies," external and internal, doing incalculable mischief. Many of the quack liniments and embrocations are worthless, others the stable-

man can compound for himself. A widely-advertised remedy for sprains, curbs, sore throats, rheumatism, and a score of other ills is nothing more than turpentine, acetic acid, and white of egg, and can be made up for a tithe of what is charged for it. Sequah's embrocation is said to be a mixture of turpentine and fish oil, and the main ingredient in Jacob's oil is turpentine.

All spiced foods I abhor. Mellin's food is excellent for horses recovering from serious illness, and especially so in the case of foals.

The importance of *grooming* cannot be overrated. There is an old maxim, "a good cleaning is equal to a feed of corn." There is a close connection between the skin and the digestive organs. Mr. Armitage mentions the good produced on fourteen colliery horses and ponies cared for by an infirm horse-keeper, dressing them with a coarse brush morning and evening. "His horses and ponies," wrote that able veterinary, "would have caused many owners of animals above ground to blush with shame at their superior condition and shining skins. They were always doing equal work with the animals of other collieries, *but suffered least of all, and consumed the least corn.*" The proof of the dirt and perspiration having been properly removed, and of the due application of "elbow grease," will be found in the shining coat, which, when stroked down, will not soil the most delicate tinted kid glove. Grooms are very fond of using water in cleaning, not in thoroughly washing, the horse; it saves trouble as compared with wisp or brush. All cleaning out of doors should be strictly forbidden. When the legs are dirty, instead of turning on a stream of cold water, whilst the horse is standing wearied and perhaps shivering, the best plan is to use a brush and cold water up to the knees in summer, lukewarm in winter, with a little

soap ; then thoroughly dry with a sponge and coarse cloth, putting on warm woollen bandages to prevent chill. I prefer cloths and bandages made of peat-wool, a new manufacture, the fabric being so very absorbent. The saddle should not be removed, only the girths loosened, till the back be cool and dry. If, on the saddle being taken off, the part of the back on which it has rested be quite dry, save on one or two distinct isolated spots, the numnah, or, in the absence of that saddle-cloth, the stuffing of the saddle should be carefully examined, for these patches indicate galls. After a hard day's work, the main object is to get the horse dry and comfortable, with the least possible fuss and delay, so that he may rest. The coat, when saturated with rain or perspiration, should first be scraped and thoroughly rubbed dry with relays of large soft straw wisps ; that done, the horse should be clothed and left to himself.

In "dressing" a horse a stiff body-brush is generally employed, but the hardness of this brush makes all the difference to the animal. Many high bred horses having very thin and highly sensitive skins, are ticklish in parts, and are unable to bear a sharp penetrating bristle. This is very generally the case with high caste Arabs, who are proverbially "thin-skinned." Many a horse is often made vicious by the application of a too hard brush. I approve highly of the glove, much used in India, made of cocoa-nut fibre, which has an excellent effect on the skin.

A strong strapper should work at least an hour a day on each horse as soon as possible after the usual exercise and work.

Should a horse be given to biting during the process of cleaning, put in his mouth a large wooden bit, or a chain bit covered over with rubber. It must be of such diameter that he cannot close his mouth on it.

A tired animal will be greatly refreshed by having the channel between the buttocks and the inside of the thighs well sponged out.

If a horse is very awkward to dress, put on knee caps, and strap up one of his fore legs. Do not keep one leg strapped up more than ten minutes ; release that leg and go round to the other side. Many horses make a show of vice when being cleaned, lay their ears back, lift a hind leg, and make pretence of playing the tiger, whereas it is mere "kittleness," or play. A really dangerous brute bites and kicks without warning.

Thoroughly *washing* horses when home from hunting or in the summer is to be recommended. Nothing, moreover, brings a long-neglected skin more quickly into good order. More than one man is required to carry out this operation as thoroughly and speedily as is necessary, and it should always be performed with warm water, in a loose box guarded against draughts. Very warm water will deprive the coat of its gloss. I always use a lather of good soap, as free as possible from alkalis, and lukewarm rain water, rubbing the lather well in, especially along the roots of the mane and tail, with the cocoanut-fibre glove already mentioned. If no soft water be obtainable, a big spoonful of Californian borax may be thrown into the bucket. The lather is scraped off with a piece of flat bamboo, or with a blunted toothless, spring-curry-comb (Spratt's patent), and the horse well washed down with a large sponge so that no suds remain. He is then dried as speedily as possible and, weather permitting, is walked smartly about in the sun. In the case of a long-neglected skin, the horse should be freely sweated before being washed, and hotter water used. Hunters must, of course, be dried in the loose box and at once clothed.

The quantity of clothing depends on circumstances. My opinion is that in order to keep up a good coat, one with "the Pigburn polish" on it, the stable being, as it ought to be, cool and thoroughly ventilated, to a certain extent horses must be kept warm with clothing. Nature provides them with a long and thick winter coat, according to their breeds, and this we clip or singe off, leaving the animals as bare as a freshly scalded porker. Thus denuded of their coats. I am not railing at the very necessary practice—we must restore the covering in some form or another, but there is no occasion to do so with compound interest in the form of super-heated stuffy stables and piles of heavy blankets. The circulation of the blood of any horse, and especially of one consuming large quantities of flesh-forming and heat producing food, enables him to withstand transitions from heat to cold, and degrees of cold without injury or suffering, such as may make us shiver to think of. Comfort is all that is necessary; in all cases the golden mean between too much and too little should be the hit, and that mean will best be indicated by the sheen of the coat and the warmth apparent to the hand when thrust between the rug and the coat. A horse's warmth ought, to a great extent, to proceed from his "body lining"—his food. I do not advocate a *cold* stable, and stipulate for a *comfortable*, and above all, a thoroughly *dry* one. We must bear in mind that gentlemen's and ladies' horses are in their stables, taking one day with another, possibly twenty hours out of the twenty-four, and that when breathing the open air they are at work. Consequently, the proper warmth and purity of the air they breathe in the stable is a matter of vital importance. In these days of sanitary engineering there can be no difficulty in securing a system of ventilation which, without creating draughts, will let impure air out and pure air in. The warmth of an

air fouled by repeated breathing is a blood poison. Burning gas unduly heats the air and contaminates it. "Scrutator," whose opinions are always worthy of being taken to heart, wrote, "I had much rather keep a horse in a barn during the winter months, with good warm clothing, than in such a place as our common stables; and I am quite satisfied he would enjoy better health, and be less liable to catch cold, or subject to diseases of any kind, and would do much more work, than any hot-house plant."

There is a great deal too much *bandaging* in our stables. In the case of cold damp legs broad flannel bandages, four to five yards long, may be rolled on loosely and evenly, but should never remain on longer than four or five hours. When removed the legs must be rapidly but lightly hand-rubbed. During continuous wet weather, when the roads are muddy, or in the hunting season, what is termed "clay fever," an affection of the skin of the legs, may to some extent be warded off by, in lieu of washing the legs, on the horse's return to the stable, putting on rough thick woollen bandages, or those of peat-wool, and letting them remain on whilst he is being cleaned. The mud will thus harden and peel off, any remaining being brushed off. Wet linen bandages, soaked in arnica lotion (mix one fluid ounce of tincture of arnica with fifteen of water), are of great use in averting a tendency to enlargement of, or heat in the back tendons, so common after hard work: they must be kept constantly saturated.

Dark stables injuriously affect the eyesight. White glazed wall tiles over the manger have a similar tendency.

Never allow the groom to cut or pull the long hairs out of the horse's ears.

If a horse comes home very tired rub, pull, and dry his ears well. Should he when once dry break out again into

a perspiration—"break out" as it is termed—walk him about a bit briskly, and set the groom again to work on him with the straw wisp.

Never permit the grooms to speak harshly or sharply to their charges, and see that the words of command, "come over," or "come round," are given quietly and unaccompanied with any flick of the leather or towel.

Visit the stables frequently when the horses are out at exercise, examine them carefully generally and see that the drains are in good order. Some of McDougall's, Condy's, or other disinfectant, should be sprinkled on the surface runs daily, and subsequently washed into the reservoir. If peat litter be used make the helper rake away all damp portions to be dried in the air.

If any man be found striking a horse with a fork or broom-handle, dismiss him on the spot.

Constantly overhaul saddlery and stable gear. Do not let old clothing be thrown away; it will come in handy for sick horses. Never buy second-hand clothing unless you know who its former owner was. I once invested in a lot, and every animal in the stable got ring-worm. Clothing not in use should be well brushed, folded, and put away in a press; that in use should be well beaten and shaken outside the stable and aired once a week. Muzzles should always have a throat-latch attached to them. Do not permit "dressing muzzles" in the stable. Note that the beds of the rollers, where they pass over the spine, are so stuffed that there is a clear channel, and that they do not rest on the ridge.

A groom's absolute requisites—he will indent for everything in the saddler's shop if allowed to have his own way—are: bucket, body-brush, burnisher, a broom, bandages, curry-comb (Spratt's patent is the best), chamois leather,

corn-sieve, dandriff or dander brush, dusters, manure basket, measures for corn, mane comb, picker, pitchfork, sponges, and shovel. He should also be supplied with a small supply of tow and Stockholm tar; rock salt to replenish that in the mangers; saddle soap; chalk in the lump, which, being an antacid, it is good for horses to lick; also a jar of the following hoof-ointment which will be found invaluable in preventing the far too common disease called thrush.

Beeswax	2 oz.) Mix all the ingredients well together. Rub well in all round the hoofs and soles, also work into the clefts of the frogs.
Burgundy Pitch	2 oz.	
Venice Turpentine	2 oz.	
Whale Oil	1 pint	
Verdigris	1 oz.	
Resin	1 oz.	

A subject of equal importance with feeding is *Exercise* and *Work*. No horse can be in good health or condition without at least two hours a day exercise unless he be at regular work. As a rule the horses of "the upper ten thousand" get far too little work. Provided he be not over-taxed as to pace and effort, the more a well-fed horse is out in the open air at a brisk walk, with an occasional trot, the better. What work is done by a large majority of ladies' and gentlemen's hacks amounts actually to mere exercise; no wonder then that they become overloaded with fat and a burden to themselves. A corn-fed horse is capable of doing long and continuous work for years and of keeping his condition on it. Mr. Armitage mentions the case of a Scotch mare, "Maggie Lauder." When the fly-boats plied between Glasgow and Edinburgh on the Forth and Clyde Canal, this old mare was stationed to run between Port Dundas and Glasgow Bridge, a distance of eight miles, the time allowed being one hour. After a rest of one hour, the return journey to Port Dundas was made,

and in the afternoon she performed the whole distance over again, thus travelling and drawing the boat thirty-two miles per diem. The person from whom this information was obtained rode the mare daily, during the time she performed the work alluded to six days in the week, and stated that Maggie was never sick nor sorry a single day, nor ever had a day's rest in addition to the usual Sunday. When the boats were superseded by the "iron horse" the game old lady was sold at the age of *twenty-nine* years. Were our pampered, coddled nags subjected to Maggie Lauder's daily round there would be less colic, less acute founder, less weed, and fewer ailing horses. The Duke of Westminster insists on "Bend Or" travelling one hundred miles every week of his life, the consequence is that this almost faultless sire can be seen enjoying himself in the famous Eaton paddocks, the picture of health and condition, as playful as a colt.

When practicable the exercise ground should be under the owner's eye. Orders on the subject of exercising should be strict and enforced. Unless under the eye of the master or trusty stud groom, servants are not to be implicitly trusted, and have a decided leaning to selecting roads garnished with public-houses. A piece of sound well-drained turf is preferable to the hard high road.

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