

THE EDUCATION OF THE HORSE.



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THE
EDUCATION
OF THE
HORSE

BY
WALTER J. NEAL



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EDICATION

To

MAJOR P. H. DOWSON

Who is well-known amongst Horsemen as a lover of the horse, owner of thousands of fine Animals and of exceptional judgment in their selection, this small volume is respectfully dedicated.

WALTER J. NEAL

ILLUSTRATIONS

- PAGE No. 11 FIRST TOUCH OF THE WHIP.
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TIED AND WITH HOBBLER ADJUSTED.
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FAVORITE GAITED HORSE, "AD-
MIRAL."



REFACE



HAVING at various times visited my friend Mr. William J. Glenn, of the Piney Knolls Stock Farm, Stacey, Montana, who for 30 years has followed with success the range and horse business in its various phases, after many conversations on the subject of The Education of the Horse I finally persuaded him to give me by a series of practical demonstrations the correct procedure in the training of this noble animal.

The object is to render him docile without the use of elaborate and expensive apparatus, utilizing material accessible to the small horse owner.

The training should be initiated and so consummated as to involve the smallest amount of labor and exertion on the part of the trainer and his subject; retaining the perfect qualities desired in such an animal.

It will be found that careful handling is the shorter route to the ultimate finish.

There are many methods in vogue on the range and in horse training establishments that leave much to be desired from a practical, to say nothing of a humane, view-point: such methods only tend-

ing to make the animal nervous, irritable and ever after hard to control.

The horse is one of the most intelligent of God's creatures and responds readily to the human will if treated rightly; fully repaying any care and attention bestowed on his education.

Handle him roughly and he never forgets the bad treatment received and which would forever retard the realization of the aim of the trainer's ambitions, seeking to impart the highest qualities sought for in an educated horse.

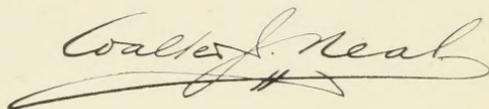
In the following pages I have endeavored to place before the public interested my friend's valuable experiences, extending over many years and a wide territory, in as concise and plain a manner as possible so it will be grasped by the ordinary mind, also without any pretense as to its literary merits.

In order to make my meaning clearer in some instances, I personally photographed from actual life some of the most important positions, Mr. Glenn having taken from the pasture for the purpose a thoroughbred chestnut filly, three years of age, "Red Wings." Such photos will be found inserted in their proper sequence.

There are many people, no doubt, who will welcome this work from the humane side, and it is written partly to this end, and for the benefit of

all lovers of the horse who desire to have a finished, educated animal, unimpaired by severe treatment, retaining his nerves and body in the best condition to carry him through his life of usefulness—intelligent, strong, and with every good quality born and bred in him, so trained as to be always subservient to the slightest will of his kind master.

Yours respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Walter J. Neal". The signature is written in dark ink and features a long, sweeping horizontal flourish at the bottom.

Garland, Custer Co., Montana.



CATCHING THE HORSE

THE better way to catch a horse is with a whip, provided the location is a suitable one, which should be in some enclosure, a medium sized corral or in a barn where there is a small range of view, so as to exclude as much as possible his sighting objects that would draw his eye away from his trainer's movements.

It is very important to receive the animal's whole attention; be sure and let nothing interfere with this, as should there be any large openings or windows in the place selected looking out on the pasture or feed lot, it might tend to defeat the object in view,—prolong his education, making him more difficult to handle and it may cause him to plunge violently against the bars, sides, or other obstructions, thereby risking an injury which at all times should be avoided.

This method should never be practiced in the open and is only suited to an enclosure of this kind, the necessity for which must be apparent to any one from this description.

Using a four-horse whip: when the animal turns away endeavor to hit him just under the fetlock on

the heel (it should be thoroughly understood that under no circumstances strike any part of the body except beneath the fetlock on the heel); pause and give him time to think it over before proceeding; make another move sideways and towards him; when he turns, hit him in the same place again and it should not need in any horse of nervous temperament more than five or six sharp blows with the whip before he will offer to face about. Care should be taken not to hurry him, but allow him time to absorb, as it were, gradually, the various stages of the lesson before hitting him again.

The horse is more than likely, when he shows signs of facing about, to lick his lips with his tongue. He is then ready for you to approach, but it must be done carefully, or he will turn in fright; it does not of necessity follow that he must lick his lips, as some less nervous may stand to be approached without that. Raising whip stock at intervals in front of you, then lower it and bring it towards you, taking at the same time short steps in his direction and repeating these movements with the whip stock until able to touch his nose, (see photo page 11), which will serve to more clearly explain my meaning. This is one of the most critical and important points in the horse's first lesson. He will hold his breath and by instinct turn from you, as

much to regain his breath as in fright, should you hold the whip in contact with his nose for more than a short space of time. Withdraw the whip and give him time to breathe, then repeat, holding the whip stock to his nose a little longer than before. When he is contented to have the whip stock touch him, then begin to rub him a little with the whip stock on the head, ears and neck, gradually approaching all the time until you are quite near the horse. When he understands that you do not intend to harm him, then offer him your hand; the same movements should then be repeated. He will smell your hands and more than likely hold his breath again, so be very careful and not be hasty with him until he becomes thoroughly accustomed to your touch.

Do not touch the horse with the finger tips extended, but instead place the whole hand on him with a stroking movement, which will be found to have a wonderfully soothing and quieting effect.

Touching a horse with the finger tips extended is practiced by many, causing the animal to get excited and temporarily unbalances his nervous system, producing irritability, a feature not to be desired and totally detrimental to his correct training; often times this may cause him to strike with his front foot, not through any bad trait acquired or



FIRST TOUCH OF THE WHIP

bred in him, but due to the shock produced by this unnecessary procedure. It has been Mr. Glenn's practice, which he has always found successful, to hold the whip in such a position that it is in plain view of the animal through this whole lesson.

After he becomes accustomed to your stroking his head, neck, etc., resume the handling of the whip and gradually work it over the whole body as done with the head, following up with the hand. It will usually be not more than twenty to thirty minutes until you have this accomplished, then step in front of your horse, using your whip stock; carefully teach him by pressure and by gentle taps, never under any conditions severely, so as to cause him pain, to move his head and fore part of his body, first to the one side and then to the other. As you step about, following closely up, he will turn a few feet each way and then stand at your command as you raise the whip stock in front of you. Wait a few seconds, get your halter and once again approach him gently; let him become familiar with the halter as he did your hand; after he is no longer afraid of it, take the halter in both hands and gradually accustom him to having it slipped over his head, buckled and adjusted: now your horse is ready to be schooled in leading.

Take the halter rope, begin as you did with the

whip stock and if found necessary use this rope, getting him to step from side to side; when he becomes versed in this, begin teaching him to move all the way round with you, first one way and then the other, gently inducing him to take a step forward.

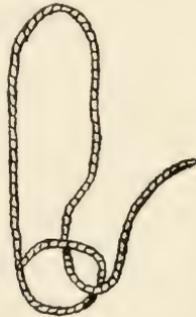
As you complete a few turns in this manner, it will be only a few minutes until your horse will follow you at will. Be very careful not to pull on the halter rope at any time very hard whilst thus getting him to lead, as, unaccustomed to having any thing in the nature of a halter adjusted on him, it is likely to cause a soreness, thereby lessening his entire confidence in you. Confidence of the horse in his trainer being the "Corner-Stone" of his education.



THE "WAR BRIDLE"



HERE is occasionally a horse of dull temperament that is slow in learning to lead. In such cases it is recommended that the "war bridle" be used. To effect this, make a loop in a soft rope, large enough to go around his lower jaw; pass the rope round behind his ears, bringing the end down through the loop, having enough end as on all ordinary halters, thus:



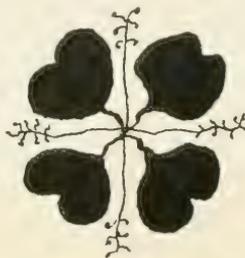
War Bridle
Fig. 1.

This is a fine accessory in the hands of a trainer of discretion, but must be used with great caution, as in the hands of anyone inclined to be rough it will be certain to ruin the horse's mouth; and I am desired to point out that absolutely light handling of the loose end is only permissible—to do otherwise will produce the opposite effect sought for.

A little personal experience will here tend to emphasize my point:

“About twelve years ago Mr. Glenn and a fellow horseman had occasion to stop at a horse ranch for the night. The owner of the ranch and his hired man each had undertaken to halter-break an aged horse. The horses became sulky and the men’s anger rising, they abused the animals beyond all reason, the owner’s horse in particular having his ears beaten until they lopped down. Both had their heads sore and swollen, being a horrible sight even to a western man.

“Mr. Glenn’s companion, a good horseman, having previously learned the use of the ‘war bridle’ from him, it was suggested that they each take one of these horses and test in the fullest manner possible the value of the ‘war bridle.’ It was agreed to, and though the horses had stubbornly refused to lead for more than 24 hours, they succeeded in having them follow at will in less than 30 minutes, which, considering the fearful condition of the horses, exceeded their most sanguine expectations.”





AILING



AS FAR as we have gone, so good; but the animal is not yet subdued. We will now therefore proceed to tail him. Pass the rope loosely through the halter ring; work gradually over the horse's body with the whip stock, accustom him to having his tail handled with the whip; then pick up his tail with your hand, tie the end of the halter rope to his tail. In so doing making a square knot out of the two. A little difficulty may now be expected—the idea is to teach the horse to let you have his head as shown in photo on page 17. The horse will spin around a few times until he becomes somewhat tired, causing you a little work and worry; but be patient and in a short while he will give you his head by the slightest indication of a pull. Do not give up until this is accomplished on one side; change your rope to the opposite side and repeat, giving a suitable word of command, but soft spoken. This is a very important lesson and you really have now a subdued horse.





TAILING



HOBBLER



THE next proceeding is to place the hobbles in position. Use the kind herein illustrated in Fig. 2. They can be made with a



Hobbles Fig. 2

common gunny sack, as the photograph on page 21 will show. In making these, open the gunny sack out and slit it with a sharp knife diagonally from corner to corner, making two equal parts. Then simply tie on as shown in photo, page 21; use a stout rope five or six feet in length with a small loop in one end, passing it through the hobbles and drawing the hind foot a reasonable distance ahead of the other. Placing the horse in a position so he cannot in any way get away from you, kick or strike with his front foot, yet he is standing in a very

comfortable position without the least strain. Use the whip now all about the horse, first easily popping it around, gradually increasing until you are able to give it sharp cracks all about him without any apparent notice on his part. We now have a horse (unless abused) absolutely fearless of the whip, This ends the use of the whip as far as any practical utility in the education of the horse is concerned, excepting the riding whip or driving whip to gently urge him along; its further necessity being only for the trickmaster.



PRACTICE OF THE WHIP

IT IS realized that it takes long practice to properly handle the whip, and it is not to be expected that the amateur can rival at first the facility of the professional of experience, obtained by much thought in the handling of animals of various temperaments; but it will be surprising how quickly a lover of his work will acquire a sufficient amount of control by careful attention and study. One must bear in mind that patience is the foundation of success in this work: without it no one can expect to achieve perfect results.

Putting your whip aside, the subject being still hobbled, take several false jumps, as if intending to mount. After doing this several times, and when you finally scramble on his back, he will soon allow you to climb all over him at will, a photograph on page 23 showing his perfect submission and standing in the hobbles in absolute ease and contentment. Note the gunny sack hobbles are used here, assuming that no one would care to go to the expense of buying elaborate hobbles unless having a number of animals to educate.

Now proceed to place the saddle, blanket, harness



SHOWING POSITION OF THE HORSE TIED AND WITH HOBBLER ADJUSTED

or other equipment on him, intended for riding or driving, as the case may be. Do this many times, until you are thoroughly satisfied that he does not flinch or make any objections to their adjustment. Mount and remount until he is well schooled to that; then bridle him, using the kind of bit that you expect to ride or drive him with. Fasten the rein loosely in the hames or the saddle, take off your hobbles, lead him up a little, remove your halter rope. Let him now move freely around the corral for at least an hour, reconciling him to the feel of the bit. When sufficiently exercised, take the harness or saddle off, get your hobbles, lead him near where you wish to tie him; but be sure it is a secure place, fit to tie a horse to. Proceed to fasten the hobbles on each hind foot, passing a rope or backband with belly band attached like a biting rigging around the horse's body; use two ropes tied to the hobbles, pass them over the belly band and through between the horse's front legs, through the halter loosely; then tie the horse, not too short; give him room, about as much as is usual with the ordinary halter. Do almost anything now in front of him that would cause him to pull back, raising a blanket suddenly or going to any extremes without hitting him.

Repeating these operations a few times, you will



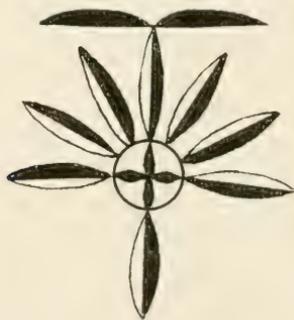
ANIMAL SUBDUED
SHOWING HIS PERFECT SUBMISSION AND STANDING IN THE HOBBLER IN ABSOLUTE EASE AND CONTENTMENT

have a horse that can be safely tied with small twine and little danger of him ever pulling back to break it. This will give satisfactory results on the most confirmed rope breaker that can be found and by it impossible to inflict an injury.

These lessons should all be repeated at least three times before the horse is tied in the ordinary way.

The horse should be saddled or harnessed and allowed to use the bit four or five times before riding or driving.

Never ride or drive a horse before he obtains a thorough familiarity with the bit; the average horse will fight the bit quicker than he will any other part of his equipment and often times his bad actions are due to this. To neglect the exercise is only to invite trouble and in some cases disaster.

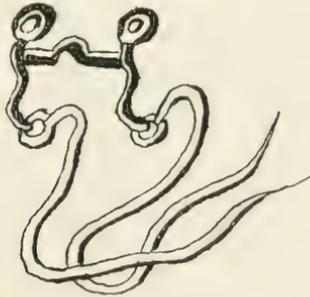




HE BIT



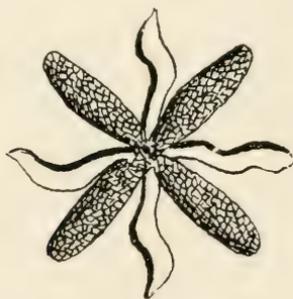
THIS is a subject on which much has been written by various authorities. Particular stress has been laid on the use of the bit in this work, rather than on the exact kind, but it is recommended for riding that it should be constructed wide enough so as not to cramp the sides of the mouth; the cross piece should have ample room for the tongue to rest comfortably underneath. Any kind of a bit that is severe is strongly to be discouraged, for be it known that the majority of the horse's bad actions are due to the bit, more often than from any other cause.





OUTHING

IT is a very difficult feat for even an expert horseman to properly “mouth” a horse by using a severe bit. The mouth, when the horse is fully educated, should retain its normal conditions and whilst responsive to the slightest touch should have no fear of it. It is urged to strongly impress on the reader that jerking or in any way harshly handling the mouth will only result in a hard-mouthed horse or one that will act as if he were devoid of feeling in this particular.



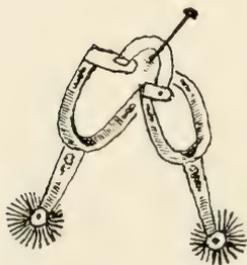


TEACHING TO RIDE



LET the first lesson be very short, more to get him used to seeing you on his back rather than guiding. Mount and remount often; after getting fairly well acquainted try guiding him gently. In almost all cases you will find the horse willing to turn for you easily one way—it may be to the right or left, a peculiarity common to the animal. Do not under any circumstances lose control of your temper and thereby try to force him to turn on the side he seems to object to. This is a very important stage in his progression and unless you are very cautious it is liable to lead to much trouble. Dismount, take your reins and drawing his head around as you had previously done, by the halter, tie the reins to his tail, not very short but enough so that by each move he makes his own weight forces him to turn. Then sit down somewhere and let him have about 10 to 15 minutes of this exercise. Go and unfasten him; it will be then found that he is quite willing to turn for you; should he at any time develop a tendency to resist you dismount at once and repeat the lesson. Gently urging your horse to take faster steps, working him

up gradually to a trot, then finally to a gallop, but use plenty of time for this—too much hurry lengthens rather than shortens the way. When he will turn readily for you by your pulling on one rein, then throw a little pressure against his neck with the opposite rein and by such alternate movements teaching him to guide by neck reining. The horse is now, if handled according to these instructions, well along towards a finish and by patience and care should soon be a source of joy to his owner.





ARD-MOUTHED HORSE



If the reader chances to have a hard mouthed horse that runs away, or is difficult to manage, use an easy bit on him; fix it on your reins or lines, as the case may be, so that you have a double power on them and note the improvement over any kind of bit that is severe. If to the saddle, get long reins, buckle them to saddle and run loosely through the bit, affording a drawing double pull; the easier the bit the quicker the result.





DRIVING THE HORSE



THE same care should be used in driving as in riding, as far as mouthing and reining are concerned. Put lines on him and teach him to respond to them fairly well before hitching. When ready to hitch place a good stout strap on one front leg below the fetlock, as you would hobbles, such strap having attached a ring; tie another ring to the harness that is of good size and of rather thick iron, so that it will avoid a possibility of cutting the rope. Pass a rope through this ring to the one on his leg, through that and back to the one on the harness and tie, leaving enough to let the rope reach back well to the vehicle. By this arrangement you can, if so desired, lift his leg with ease and prevent him running or kicking, and so gain control without being harsh with the bit, it being a most desirable feature to have as good a mouth on the driver as on the saddler. In the choice of a horse's driving mate care should be taken that one is selected free from bad manners, such as rubbing the neck yoke with the head, champing the bit or otherwise stamping around. A young horse will, unless he be exceptionally stupid, acquire in a surprisingly short time all the bad habits of his companion.



THE NEXT BEST WAY TO CATCH A HORSE



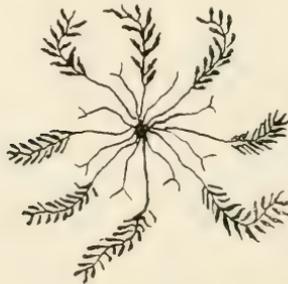
THE next best way to catch a horse is to rope his front legs and throw him down. Put the hobbles on him and let him rise; the order of things is of necessity reversed in one or two essentials, it being necessary, of course, to subdue the animal before undertaking to lead him. More time will be occupied in this than in that recommended, viz., by the whip. Work about him as before described, to give your horse plenty of time to understand he is hobbled. He has learned nothing up to now and if you rush him will shift around considerably. In this method it is very advisable to construct some knee pads and put them in place before letting him up; especially is this necessary if the ground be rocky or frozen hard—if he should plunge much and falls you thus avoid a possible bruise.



THROWING A ROPE



SOME will, no doubt, read these instructions who are not practiced in the art of throwing a rope. Western men, as a rule, know how to throw a rope and catch a horse by the legs. To those who are not able to accomplish this may make a loop some four feet in diameter and with a rope about 30 feet in length; hang the loop on a small piece of wire to a fence, allowing the lower side of the loop to rest on the ground. Then stand aside and hold the long end, having someone drive the animal between you and the fence so as to snare his fore legs.





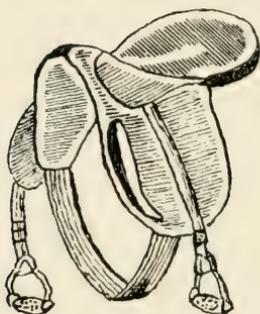
HOW NOT TO CATCH A HORSE



To confine a horse in a chute or narrow place of any kind is not so very objectionable, but catching him in this way is a practice that has nothing whatever to recommend it and utterly opposed to all ideas of humane treatment. The reason for this is that he is more likely to sustain injuries in the way of bruises and contusions, owing to possible contact with adjacent rough boards, posts, etc., than he would otherwise be if thrown on a smooth spot free from obstructions. The power of control is thereby greater and on the whole less dangerous.

Catching a horse with a rope by the neck is, in Mr. Glenn's experience, the most objectionable of all methods. Picture to yourself a horse in fright, with his whole weight on a rope, neck straining until the choking causes his eyes to almost fall out of their sockets; is it a wonder that in many cases the eyesight is irretrievably damaged? Let us consider another result—the muscles and ligaments in his neck are strained, so that in after years, should you pass your hand over his neck, you will be able to detect small indentations or hollows therein, as a result of the straining and pulling on the rope.

Such a horse may be a good one, but his treatment will so interfere with his neck that he will never have the flexibility of muscle action in the neck and shoulders. He otherwise would have naturally retained without it. Western men especially, where the rope is in so much favor, should give this their serious thought.





YING UP THE HIND LEG



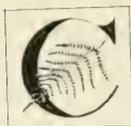
WHEN thrown it is quite a general practice to place a rope collar on the horse's neck and, passing the rope round his hind leg, draw it well up towards his shoulder, placing him in a very awkward position; this is done so as to subdue the animal and prevent his getting away. Doing so places a great strain on the loins; in many cases the animal is badly injured in this way. My friend, Mr. Glenn, relates that in the year 1901 he saw one large fine horse in Major P. H. Dowson's corrals so injured that he had to be killed, being quite incapable of rising from the ground.



HORSE'S NATURE



ow let us consider how to get along with a horse in a companionable sense, as it were. Anyone that gives this his close attention will find it worthy of much reflection. To the horse, good feed and water, as well as good bedding, is appreciated. His nature responds gladly to any attentions you pay him in a higher degree than almost any of us have suspected or realized. In the adjustment of his harness or other equipment during his working hours, these should be placed in position in exactly the same order and manner every time, particularly the bridle; in putting this on use the same hand to lift it to his head. Sometimes when saddling up or harnessing, the horse will appear to act strangely, throw up his head or go through some unaccountable motions; you then wonder why. A little thought will reveal that the effect is due to the above causes. Accommodate him in these small attentions, which to some may appear trivial and repayment on his part will be ample and quickly responsive.



CONCLUSION



WRITING from personal knowledge, Mr. William J. Glenn commenced his work in life in the days long ago when the only thought on the range and western stock farms in the education of the horse was first to throw the horse with a rope, blindfold, and let him rise; then to saddle, mount, roughly tear off the blinds and in a western phrase "let him go to it." My friend has really worked through all stages and his knowledge herein is the result of long years of deliberation and study, acquired in many instances by taking the roughest with the rough.

There is absolutely nothing written in the preceding pages that is theory and the greatest pains have been taken to eliminate anything that cannot be proved by actual facts.

Anyone who will carefully study and follow directions may obtain the desired results with any animal of intelligence without having to resort to very harsh bits, for by the treatment advocated, such instruments of torture will have no place in any ranch, farm or horse breeding establishments, as where

training is carried out on these lines there will not be any animals to need them.

I follow on another page with a short treatise on the gaited horse.



MR. WILLIAM J. GLENN ON HIS FAVORITE SADDLE HORSE "ADMIRAL"



HE GAITED HORSE

IT IS no easy task to give specific instructions as to the development of the different gaits in a saddle horse. Horsemen generally understand and appreciate the long experience and skill required to fully bring out these characteristics.

Horses not bred for the purpose are exceedingly difficult to impart this knowledge to, more so than in an animal whose ancestors have for years been trained and ridden in five gaits. To those who wish further information, and after having subdued and rendered the animal perfectly docile and easy to handle, the following is an outline of study which is hoped will be beneficial, although not perhaps wholly instructive, to those whose aim is to delve more deeply into this question.

There is nothing more pleasurable than to have a horse who will change his gait at the gentle touch of his master and is the acme of comfort for both man and animal. He is so far removed from the ordinary square trotter as to cause one to pause and consider why the perfect gaited horse is not more universally used; the satisfaction and pleasure, coupled with general utility and traveling capacity, makes him

such a companion to the studious horseman that he stands today without a rival in any kind of locomotion in existence.

The first essential to the development of a gaited horse is to be quite sure he is well reined.

Develop his walk under a light, steady pull on the reins, until certain that the maximum speed is obtained.

Commence to crowd his walk, gently pulling up on the reins and slacking again rather suddenly and alternately; when he breaks into a trot pull him back to a walk, repeating this until you have obtained a true balance between a walk and a square trot; you then have a "Fox Trot". Be certain that the walk and "Fox Trot" are well defined before you try the "Rack" or "Singlefoot." See that your horse's feet are well trimmed; pare as much off the toes as his feet will stand, leaving the heels as high as is consistent with their being level, care being taken to see that the feet are well balanced. Put martingales on, of the kind that have straps holding rings which can be adjusted to any desired length; shorten these so that it has a strong tendency to arch his neck. Now select some comparatively level road; pull up on your reins, setting your horse well on his haunches or rather that it will place his hind legs well under him in order that he may carry the most

of his weight there; urge him forward with the spur at the same time, restraining him with the bit, pulling in the reins suddenly occasionally, but not hard enough to be painful. This requires considerable time and unless your subject is saddle bred, and even then, it takes several days to have the rack well balanced.

Then comes the canter, but never under any circumstances until every other gait is well established.

Set your horse on his haunches with a fairly strong pull; give him a good, reasonably hard blow with the riding whip on the shoulder. Keeping him well in hand, you must nerve your horse up a little to get started in this; get him into a short, rather excited gallop and gradually you can teach him to lift his two front feet off the ground almost at the same time, rocking from his hind to his front feet in that slow, easy going gallop called the canter.



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