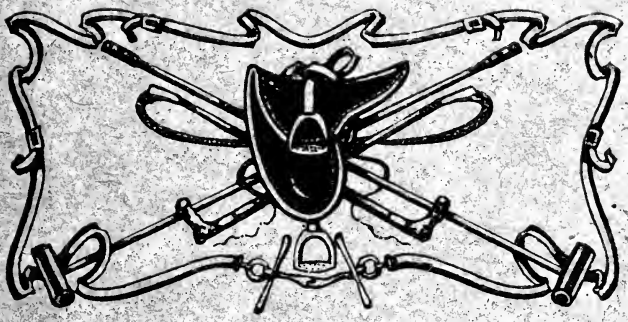
THE
SPORTS LIBRARY



RIDING
DRIVING
AND
KINDRED
SPORTS

1/-

BY

T. F. DALE

The Sports Library.

Edited by HOWARD H. SPICER.

ILLUSTRATED.

Crown 8vo, cloth, price **2s. 6d.**

LIST OF VOLUMES.

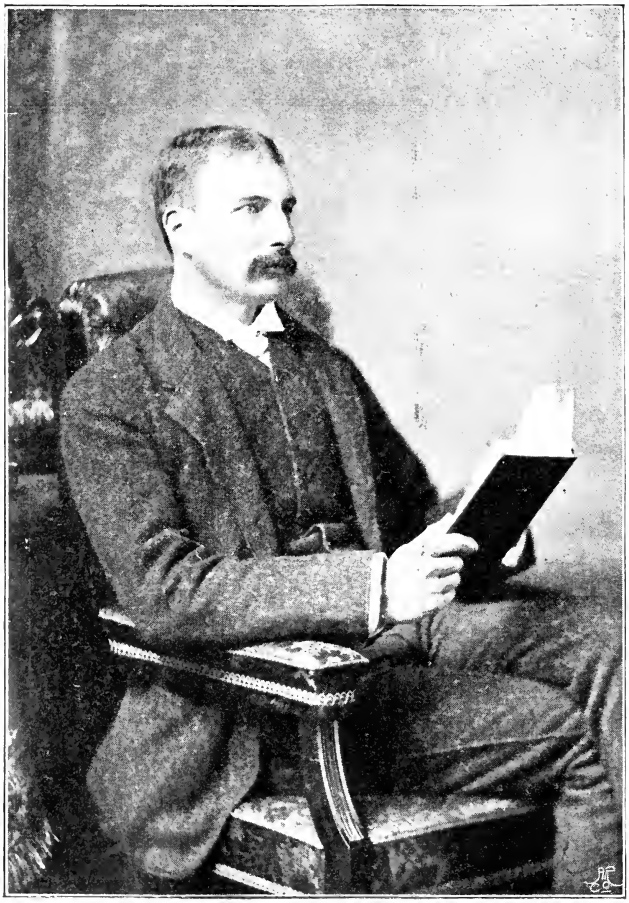
RIDING, DRIVING AND KINDRED SPORTS. By T. F. DALE, M.A.

FOOTBALL, HOCKEY AND LACROSSE. By J. H. C. FEGAN, H. J. BATTERSBY, TINSLEY LINDLEY, and J. C. IZARD.

(Other Volumes in preparation.)

JOHN A. SEAVERNS

The Sports Library



T. F. DALE.

The Sports Library

RIDING, DRIVING AND KINDRED SPORTS

BY

T. F. DALE, M.A.

LONDON: T. FISHER UNWIN
PATERNOSTER SQUARE. MDCCCXCIX

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	HORSEMANSHIP	6
III.	RIDING TO HOUNDS	20
IV.	LADIES ON HORSEBACK	34
V.	POLO	45
VI.	SPORT AND HEALTH	62
VII.	THE EYE OF THE MASTER	73
VIII.	DRESS AND EQUIPMENT	93
IX.	DRIVING	100
X.	TANDEM DRIVING	109
XI	FOUR-IN-HAND DRIVING	128
XII.	HOG-HUNTING	146
XIII.	JACKAL-HUNTING	173
XIV.	RACING	191

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

T. F. DALE . . . . . *Frontispiece*

A LEICESTERSHIRE HORSE 21

A GOOD HORSE FROM THE PROVINCES . . 35

MR. WALTER BUCKMASTER 44

PLAN OF POLO GROUND. (*Drawn by Author*) . 58

SILVER STAR. (*The property of Mr. J. Gouldsmith*) 72

IBU NUREH. (*From a photograph by Thomas Fall*) . 101

POSITION OF THE HANDS FOR DRIVING . . 114

THE MIGHTY BOAR. (*From an engraving lent by Messrs. Turner & Horsley*) 129

PREPARING TO RIDE. (*From an engraving lent by Messrs. Turner & Horsley*) 147

THE FIRST SPEAR. (*From an engraving lent by Messrs. Turner & Horsley*) 172

THE KILL. (*From an engraving lent by Messrs. Turner & Horsley*) 190

INTRODUCTION

IN preparing the Sports Library for the younger generation of sportsmen, the Publisher and the Editor had the following ideas in view :—

They intended that the books should be written by sportsmen of the younger generation in thorough sympathy with the needs of younger athletes and twentieth century ideas. They hoped where necessary and practicable to deal with the cost of each sport, and also to show the public that many sports which are considered beyond the means of the ordinary man, are quite within the reach of all who are really interested. It was proposed that the medical aspect of Sports should also be touched upon in a practical way, and useful advice given to the tyro. Last, but not least, it was intended that the series should be a kind of cheap

Badminton Library to the thousands of sportsmen who cannot command the price of that series.

It is natural, perhaps, that the book on Riding, Driving, Hunting, &c., should come first. In no country is the interest in horses more widely felt than in England; it extends from the coster who drives his Russian pony to the Derby, and the City clerk on his hired hack enjoying Saturday afternoon, to the Earl of Lonsdale and the Duke of Westminster. It is anticipated that the motor cars and bicycles will so reduce the price of horses that the splendid exercise of riding will come within the reach of many who have hitherto regarded it as prohibitive.

Mr. Dale needs no introduction to lovers of horse-flesh. *Land and Water*, the *Field*, and the *Badminton Magazine* have published his articles for many years, while he is well known as the author of "Polo," Editor of the book on Polo in the *Badminton Library*, "The History of the Belvoir Hunt," &c., &c. Mr. Dale is, perhaps, the greatest authority on Polo in the United Kingdom; while in hunting and racing there are few other men who have seen so much sport at such a small expenditure of cash.

The second volume of the *Sports Library*

is a thoroughly up-to-date work on Football — Association and Rugby — Hockey and Lacrosse. All lovers of football are familiar with the name of Bertie Feegan, the well-known International Blackheath and Kent County player. As a medical man Mr. Feegan's ideas on this point are of more than ordinary interest, and his advice to young players is sound and thoughtful.

Mr. Tinsley Lindley when he retired lately left one of the most brilliant records behind him in the Association football field. Besides officiating as Captain for Cambridge University, he later on acted as Captain for England. He says himself, that like Joseph, he should have a coat of many colours. After leaving Cambridge University he played for a number of years with Notts Forest, Notts County, the Corinthians, Sheffield, Crusaders, &c. All Association men will, I feel sure, eagerly look forward to his part in the book.

Mr. Prevost Battersby, who is a well-known figure in the Hockey field and already an author on the subject, has had a varied career all over the world, and it is almost a pity for the sake of his readers that he is confined to one subject. As a military and naval correspondent of the *Morning Post*, and as a writer of several books, his work is well known

He is the keenest of keen sportsmen; has hunted elk, wolf, and bear in Sweden and in the wildest parts of Russia; has lived the life of a peasant in one of Tolstoi's colonies during the awful famine of 1892, marks of which experiences it is probable he will carry to his grave. Besides distinguishing himself at Hockey, he has been known on the football field with the Casuals and the Old Westminsters. Being a man of regular habits, he has already chosen the sports he intends to indulge in in old age; and when the hockey field knows him no more, fox-hunting and boat-sailing will claim him for their own.

Ever since the introduction of Lacrosse into England there has been no keener follower than J. C. Izard, M.A. For many years he has been one of the most popular masters of the Leys School at Cambridge, which post he undertook directly he left Trinity College. A great deal of the renown of this school in the world of sport has been due to his sportsmanlike teaching and his love of all athletics. He is Vice-President of the South of England Lacrosse Association, and was one of its hardiest Centres at Cambridge.

The Editor hopes to include in the third volume of this Library treatises on boxing, fencing, gymnastics, wrestling, and physical

culture each sport to be described by well-known men. Volume IV. will include running, athletics, swimming, and water-polo. Gomer Williams, the late Cambridge blue; Captain Beves, the well-known swimmer of the Enniskillen Dragoons, and others will be asked to contribute to this series. It is hoped that its readers, the younger generation of sportsmen, will show their appreciation of these efforts by encouraging the Publisher and Editor to produce a library of ten volumes covering every known sport.

HOWARD SPICER.

THE right-hand man to the left-hand said,
As down in the vale we went,
"Harden your heart like a millstone, Ned,
And set your face as flint:
Solid and tall is the rasping wall
That stretches before us yonder;
You must have it at speed or not at all,
'Twere better to halt than to ponder,
For the stream runs wide on the take-off side
And washes the clay bank under;
Here goes for a pull, 'tis a madman's ride,
And a broken neck if you blunder."

I remember one thrust he gave to his hat,
And two to the flanks of the brown.
And still as a statue of old he sat,
And he shot to the front, hands down;
I remember the snort and the stag-like bound
Of the steed six lengths to the fore,
And the laugh of the rider while, landing sound,
He turned in his saddle and glanced around;
I remember—but little more,
Save a bird's-eye gleam of the dashing stream,
A jarring thud on the wall,
A shock, and the blank of a nightmare's dream—
I was down with a stunning fall.

ADAM LINDSAY GORDON.

RIDING, DRIVING AND KINDRED SPORTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THERE are so many books on riding and driving, and some of them so good, that it might seem as though there was nothing new to be said on the subject. Yet the feeling of every man who has delighted in these sports will be with me when I say, that even after the experience of a lifetime, we can always find something to learn about them. The thoughts of those who share the same tastes with ourselves are always interesting, if the experiences be genuine and the opinions founded on practice. For this reason I have some hopes of readers among those whose knowledge may be greater and whose opportunities wider than my

own. Nevertheless, it is not for the experienced and well taught that I write, but for those whose early opportunities of learning, on matters connected with the horse may have been small, and for those, too, whose means being moderate have to consider economy in the stable as well as in the house. For it is a common failing of writers on sport, that, forgetting the real facts of the case, they always write as though every practical sportsman had at least £2,000 a year, and pour scorn on any suggestion of the combination of sport with economy. The consequence of this is that people of small means who would enjoy one or other of the sports treated of in this book, are deterred from doing so, by the idea that these are reserved for the wealthy.

That money is an advantage to the hunting or coaching man, no one will doubt, but its possession in any large quantity is, and always must be, the exception. Indeed, I am sure that if we sent home from our hunting fields every man whose available income was not more than £500 a year, many fixtures would be far less well attended than they are. Belonging to that majority whose means are much too narrow for their tastes, and who have nevertheless managed to see and to enjoy much good sport on the hunting field, on the polo

ground, and the driving seat, I feel I am entitled to offer my counsels to others, and am enabled to promise that nothing is advised in this book which has not been tried and accomplished, if not by the writer himself in all cases, yet by those whose experience has come under his personal observation. The only caution I have to offer is that all estimates of expenses are provisional, because prices vary from time to time, and according to our surroundings. In some instances it will be found that bargains are mentioned to show what can be done by those who will give time and thought to finding them, and not as representing exact prices. For it may be taken as an axiom in all attempts to obtain money's worth, that if you cannot expend coin you must give something very like an equivalent in time and pains. But I am sure that those who read the following pages will, unless indeed they have travelled the same road in life as the writer, gain some useful hints; and others it may be will see opening out before them the possibility of sharing in sports which they had hitherto looked on as altogether out of their reach. But though I have in this book thought chiefly of the sportsman, or would-be sportsman, of moderate means, I have not confined myself to his case, for the reader will find

suggestions and directions for the practical side of the various sports treated of, which may be useful to all. In addition to the usual English sports, I have added sections on Indian polo, pig-sticking, and jackal hunting, because India is still a paradise for the sportsman of moderate means with some leisure, and offers a far from exhausted field for the traveller, or to those whom the search for daily bread may lead thither in one capacity or another.

There is one question which I think every reader asks: What good, if any, can be drawn from books? Can I really learn to ride or drive, or play polo, or practice any sport from books? To this the answer is that you cannot do so altogether, but that having once mastered the elements of the sport or game, it is of great advantage to become acquainted with the best that has been written on the subject. For this reason you will find that sportsmen are eager to read what has been said on their particular subjects, and that they will readily acknowledge the benefits they have thus received. Sporting books are for the most part readable. I do not hesitate to say that in the course of my own experience I have gained great profit from reading, and I have never failed to read any book on sport, old or new, which has come in my way. In fact, a man who undertakes any

pursuit will always be the better for combining theory and practice. I well remember the advice given to me by an old and very excellent player when first I began to play whist. "You want to read. No one can be a first-rate player without reading." Of course whist is a scientific game with an element of chance, but if whist is a science, horsemanship is an art, and a fine one too; and so, for the matter of that, is driving. I propose, then, to refer from time to time to works treating of the subjects included in this book, so that those who desire to penetrate more deeply into the refinements of the various kinds of riding and driving may do so, since within the space of a volume like the present it is impossible to say everything that ought to be said.

CHAPTER II

HORSEMANSHIP

AT whatever age a man begins to ride I should advise him to make a start in a riding-school. There are many simple and elementary but very necessary matters which are best learned in the seclusion of the school, and with no one except the riding-master, or at all events other pupils in like case, present. Apart from the instruction given by the riding-master, whose duty it is to be patient with the beginner, and to encourage a diffidence which only too soon wears off, the regular riding-school horse is a forbearing animal, and one which is not disturbed by the eccentricities of the man or woman on his back. That patient animal has borne with so many riders who have sat in so many different places on his back, and held on to his scanty mane with despairing clutches, or clung to the bridle to steady the

seat in the first beginning of the trot. But when a few preliminary lessons are finished, and this will be all we can allow a learner who has to consider ways and means, he will be very far from a complete horseman. It is true the rider knows that he ought to mount on the near side, to hold his reins in the left hand and his whip in the right, how to rise in the trot, and how to make his horse canter.

He may even, and indeed he should have, held his breath and kept his seat, while the horse lobbed over the leaping-bar. But he is now only at the beginning of his training, and it is at this point that the hints herein contained may be of service to him.

It will be of the greatest use to him if for some time he can command the services of a quiet horse. For some weeks, it may be months, the aspiring horseman should be concerned more with himself than his horse. It will be time enough to ride more spirited animals when he himself has gained confidence and ease in the saddle. The first thing to be thought of is how to obtain a firm seat. No one who has not a strong seat can have even moderately good hands, and this latter is a point to be striven for, since it is the only way to be safe and happy on horseback, and is even an economy, for the man with good hands will be

able to ride horses other people cannot, and he will also improve the animals he uses.

The first point, then, is to distinguish between a real firmness of grip and evenness of balance in the saddle, and that sticking on which is a combination of grip in the saddle and grasp of the reins. The amount of help most riders derive from their reins is a matter on which there is a great deal of delusion. There are many men who would scorn the idea of holding on by their horses' heads, but yet who do so habitually all the same. They are, in fact, as much indebted to the bridle for remaining in the saddle, though not so frank about it, as the celebrated cockney: "Not 'old on by 'is 'ead! Then what the dooce am I to 'old on by?" Nevertheless, for the polo player, or hunting man, it is most desirable that the rider should be independent of his bridle. Indeed, so long as a man needs his bridle to keep him in the saddle, the higher arts of horsemanship are out of his reach. The use of the bridle is to guide and to help the horse, and this can perhaps as often as not be done by leaving him alone judiciously. Far more horses are thrown down by a wrong use of the bridle than are helped by it. If any reader doubts the truth of the foregoing, or thinks it is too strongly put, let him forthwith mount

a steady steed, and knotting the bridle on the horse's neck, make his groom hold the lunging rein, and proceed to try various paces without the bridle in his own hand at all. If he can do this without clutching at the reins, and without a strange feeling of lonely insecurity, that rider is in a fair way to become a horseman. At all events it is well to question sternly whether, when he persuades himself that he is helping his horse, he is not really steadying himself. Many a man thinks he has held his horse up on landing over a fence, who has only steadied a seat somewhat shaken by the jar of landing.

In order to attain firmness of seat, and to be independent of the bridle, it is necessary to pay attention to all the details of the seat in the saddle. It is for this reason that I lay much stress on having a quiet and steady horse at first, if possible, so that all the attention can be given to the best way of sitting. I have always found that some such practice as this is beneficial even for the man who has been riding for many years, and is a fair horseman. That is to say it is well to be conscious of one's seat in the saddle from time to time, when jogging along quietly by oneself in lonely country lanes. By paying attention to small details of riding, they thus

become a second nature, and give to the seat in times of difficulty or danger the unconscious easy strength which is invaluable. Let us consider, then, what are the points to be attended to. Having mounted old Dobbin, let us ride quietly along, resolutely determined to hold the bridle as lightly as though the bit were made of rotten pack-thread, and would break at the smallest pressure. Then adjust the stirrups till you are comfortable and feel that you have the greatest security and assistance possible from them. This, it is true, will be a hole, or perhaps two, shorter than you ought to ride, but the length will come later. Different men and different horses require varying lengths of stirrup leather, but it may be said generally that a man should ride as long as possible. That is, so that he can when sitting at ease, kick his feet free of the stirrups at any moment. If your nerve is a little out of order on a cold morning when going out hunting, you will often feel an inclination to take up the stirrup-leathers a hole or two higher than you usually have them, but you are pretty sure to let them out again before the end of the day if all goes well.

Having, at all events, got the stirrups at the right length, on Mr. Jorrock's excellent principle that what is most "com-f-ble for the man" will

in all humane probability be "most com-f-ble for the 'orse," the next point is to get your seat right. The proper place for the man in the saddle is obtained by bringing the seat of his breeches well under him, and the leg will then fall into the right position, the knee and toe being so placed that as you look down you can just see the point of the boot in front of the knee. The leg should be free from the knee down unless in emergencies or when jumping a big place, when by slightly drawing the leg back and turning the toe out a little the calf will give a considerable additional grip. The whole of the inside of the leg should be close to the saddle, the exact surface in contact with the saddle being somewhat determined by the shape of the man, the cut of the saddle, and the make of the horse. Yet as time goes on and we ride regularly, endeavouring to get a grip with the inside of the thigh, the muscles will develop and we shall be able to hold on without any effort. Just at first, too, it is desirable to look square to the front—in fact the old riding-master's maxim I remember as a boy, to look straight between the ears of the horse, is a good one. After a time an easy, flexible carriage of the figure in the saddle will come by itself. At first it is well to avoid slouching, or poking out the chin, and to err rather on the side of stiffness than the

reverse. "'Ead and 'eart 'igh, 'eels and 'ands low," as the old riding-master used to say to us; or as sometimes when a timid girl in the school was crouching on her horse, "Now then, Miss, sit up and look to yer front, there's money bid for yer." Both these maxims being sound and easily remembered, I recommend them to aspirants of both sexes.

I have already said that the grip should be from the inside of the thighs, that of the calves being in reserve, for it must be understood that this is also one of the means of guiding or even of coercing your horse. But while you ride quiet horses regularly every day, it is well not always to ride the same. If the beginner be living in or near a town where there is a good livery stable, let him hire the horses and ride all those fairly trustworthy in turn. Nothing is so good practice for the rider after the elements of the art have been mastered as riding on different horses. This gives to the horseman the power of accommodating himself to various paces, and greatly increases his strength and adaptability in the saddle. After a week or two of this, care and attention will begin to tell, and the exercise strengthening the riding muscles, it will become every day easier, and a sense of confidence born of use will grow up similar to that which comes to us on the bicycle, except

that the horse is the easier and far the pleasanter of the two mounts. When the rider has reached this point it is simply a question of practice and taking pains, how soon he will have that strength in the saddle which is the foundation of all feats of horsemanship, whether on the polo ground or in the hunting field. Thus constant attention and regular practice are the two first steps.

After a greater or less period of these exercises, the time of which cannot be determined on as it must vary with opportunity and natural aptitude, the rider will have some of that feeling of unity with his horse which is necessary to good riding. Of course, though much, this is only a first step. The next is the perfect control of the horse. The master and servant should have but one will between them, and that will the master's. As a matter of fact horse and rider much more often have two wills, and it is not always that of the rider which prevails. The horse is said to be a stupid animal, but he is wonderfully quick at finding out his master's weakness. The least fear, the smallest indecision, communicate themselves to the horse very quickly. A nervous man makes a timid horse, an undecided man will turn a bold animal into a restive and self-willed one. I knew one man,

a nervous, doubtful rider, who had as fine a stud of horses as money could buy. All the horses came with characters, yet before the end of the season nearly every horse took to refusing. On the other hand I recollect seeing some cavalry rough-riders trying to persuade a very awkward batch of Waler remounts to jump one of the regulation fences. There is no horse more awkward than the Waler remount. The men were bold enough, but they were rough. At last the squadron commander, who was looking on, and was a beautiful horseman, got on the horses one after the other and handed them over the fences in the most perfect style. So does the rider make the horse. Yet there is much to be learned before a man can obtain proper control over his mount.

Having learned to stay on without the bridle, the next point is to use it for its proper purpose —the control and guidance of the horse. If the rider has the opportunity, I should advise a course of military equitation. In a cavalry riding-school we learn what is always useful to know, the principles of the art of riding, and to control the horse by the use of the hand and of the leg. It is by pressure of the latter as well as by the finger on the bridle, that a horse is guided and controlled.

But if you have not the advantage of an

experienced school-horse and a skilled riding-master you must do the best you can for yourself. A riding-school is easily made, and I always make one, as well as a bending-course, wherever I am. Four white stones will mark the corners of the school. A bending-course is made by putting in a double line of posts at intervals.

To teach the use of the bridle there is nothing better than to practice riding in figures of eight and through a bending-course, and for more advanced work to follow the lines laid down by Captain Weir.[1] When a rider can make his horse do a figure of eight and go down a bending-course, he will already have made considerable progress in the right use of hand and leg.

But more than on any exercises I lay stress on paying attention to everything to do with riding when going along the road. Just as in the case of the seat, a good, firm seat in the saddle can be obtained by care and attention when riding—with a little natural aptitude thrown in—so, too, the management of the horse can be in a great degree acquired as we ride for business or pleasure about the roads and lanes of a country place. A horse's mouth should be regarded with the greatest respect and should

[1] "Riding." Badminton Library.

never be jobbed. In steadying or controlling him, use just so much force as is required and no more. Directly a horse gives, drop your hand and ease the pressure on his mouth. Coercion should be from the pressure of the legs. It is astonishing how sensitive a horse is to the communication of one's feelings in this way. The pressure of the rider's legs gives to a horse confidence and courage, and if it is applied at the right moment is most effectual. Thus I should never hit or spur a horse till I had tried squeezing him with my legs. Numbers of half-wild Waziri and other Indian country-bred horses and ponies, have passed through my hands. Active, wiry, nervous horses, they are easy to spoil by violence, while great things can be done with them by kindness and firmness. However, I am considering rather the rider than the horse at present. An excellent exercise in the use of the bridle and the leg is to make a horse walk out. Very few horses are good walkers, just because they have never been taught. Yet if much hacking has to be done nothing is more comfortable than a good walker. A kick with the unarmed heel and an even pressure of the legs should make a horse walk up to his bit. He will, however, try to break into a jog. Then is the time very quietly but firmly to pull him

back to a walk, easing the pressure on the bridle as soon as he drops into the desired pace.

At all paces the same action should be used, the process being gentle pressure till the horse is going up to his bit, then when he goes beyond the desired pace a gentle pull until he gives, when his mouth should be at once eased. It may be taken that many of the faults of a horse arise in the first instance from misuse of the bridle. It is, therefore, most necessary that our horseman, who can sit on without holding by the reins, should treat the horse's mouth gently. If riders would only consider that the horse's mouth is a most valuable possession, they would perhaps treat it more tenderly. But no one is able all at once to attain such skill as to be able to ride as he ought. It requires a steady purpose and much practice, and for this purpose I advised above the use of the riding-school and the bending-course. Good horsemanship, like every other kind of skill, is the result of some aptitude and a great deal of will to succeed. Horsemanship, even of a very moderate kind, is not common among men who ride much, but a little study and pains will go a long way to give it. In these little home riding-schools much may be done by practising simple exercises and seeing that you can, by a pull on the rein and a pressure of the

leg, make a horse perform such exercises as a figure of eight, or a bending-course in good form, or to change his leading leg at the right moment.

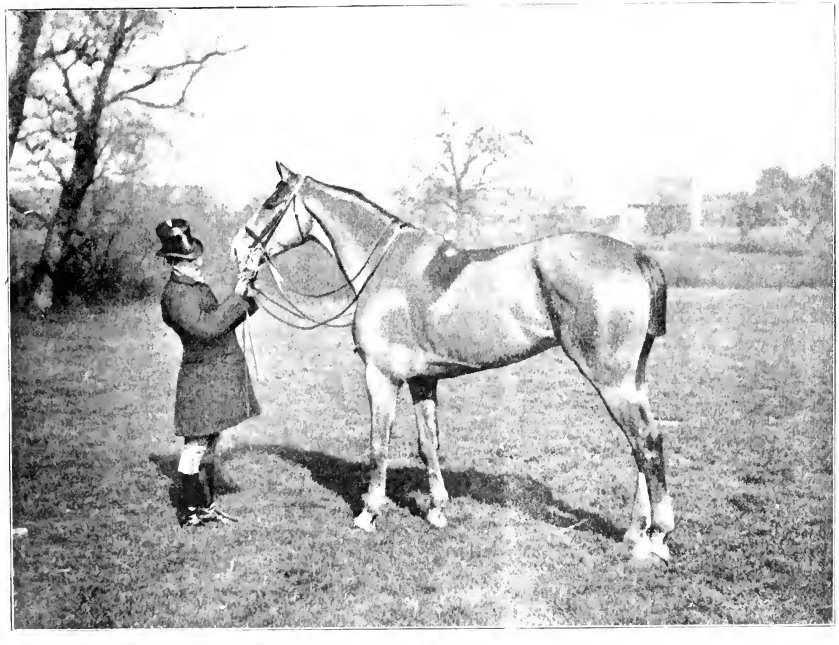
Having thus by practice secured a fairly strong seat and laid the foundation for having good hands, the sober-minded horse may now be discarded and mounts on all sorts of horses be sought for. The great point is to be always in the saddle, and to have the saddle on as many different backs as possible. Nor need you be discouraged if your seat is not always as firm even now as might be wished. There is a certain ease and strength in the saddle which only comes with time. It is a power that comes to the man who rides for business as well as pleasure, to the Australian stock-rider, to the huntsman, amateur or professional, and, above all, perhaps, to the polo player, that fine game being in the nature of things the best school of practical horsemanship. We may learn much in the hunting field, but many people do not seem, after reaching a certain proficiency, to improve. The fact is there are many distractions out hunting, and the standard of horsemanship is not high. If a man can ride safely over a country on a fairly well-trained horse under favourable circumstances that is all he desires. But no man can play polo

really well without an independence of his bridle and a firmness of seat, which is all the more useful that it soon becomes unconscious. The variety of positions assumed by a polo-player in the course of a game show how much can be done from the saddle, and they give a firmness of grip, combined with a flexibility of the body from the waist upwards, which, so far as I know, can be obtained in no other way. But these considerations, perhaps, belong to another chapter of this book and I may now turn to consider how the man who has mastered the elements of the art of riding can apply his knowledge.

CHAPTER III

RIDING TO HOUNDS

"NO man can keep his nerve and ride straight to hounds over Leicestershire unless he has good horses." This was said by a well-known steeplechase rider to the author as they were riding to covert, and is, I think, true more or less of all flying countries, but at any rate, it is well understood in the shires. There any horse that is a really fine performer, no matter what his appearance and even though he may have some unsoundness, will always bring a good price. In order to go in the first flight over a good country, a horse must have certain qualities. He must be fast, for hounds fly over the grass; he must be bold, or he will not face some of the fences; he must be fairly handy, or he is a nuisance and a danger in a crowd; and he must be able to stay, or he will never reach the end of a run.



A LEICESTERSHIRE HORSE.

Now the men who can go well across country on almost any horse, are so few as to be hardly worth counting. There are plenty of men who will go for ten minutes, but I think it may be laid down with certainty that at the end of half an hour at any kind of pace over a fair country, of the few men who are then really with hounds the majority are there because they have very good horses, and have ridden them out knowing well that somewhere in the lanes were their second horsemen. But those who will read this book with most interest and profit will have no second horse, and the better the animal they ride the more care must they take of him. Perhaps I can explain what I mean by taking an instance. There were two friends of my own who were both good riders and hard men, one of whom seldom or never got to the end of a run. He went away close, too close the M.F.H. said, to hounds, and he stuck to them till he was stopped by a fall, which generally came sooner or later, and seldom was delayed more than fifteen or twenty minutes. He was a good rider and a bold, but not a fine, horseman. He had not always first-rate horses any more than the rest of us, but he took no pains to make the most of them, nor had he much knowledge of what hounds were doing. His younger brother, who had less

money, and perhaps for that very reason found the necessity of taking more care, gradually, with time and thought, came to be noted in the country for seeing the most of every run.

"How do you do it?" I asked him once when, on a very moderate horse, he had seen a long, and at times fairly fast run, over a stiffish country. We were both out and both got to the end, but he was with hounds all the way or nearly so, and had been in the same field when they killed, while I had seen parts only of the run and had arrived in time to see Caroline and Lavish squabbling over the fox's leg as their custom was. "My dear chap," he said, "there's no magic in it; you can sum it up in two words, 'Strict attention to business and consideration for the horse.' Tell you about to-day? Yes. We found in the Fifty Acre Wood, where I saw you talking to some one, though you know just as well as I do how quick those bitches are to get away. I never speak to any one after hounds are once in covert. Then I was lucky: I remembered the last time we found at that place, the fox went out on the side near the village. There is a path that goes through the wood and leads to the boundary fence where it is a little broken down. The take-off is sound, so the big ditch doesn't matter. Well, as soon as I heard hounds running pretty hard

in that direction, I galloped down the path and jumped out into the field just as they were casting themselves. I got a view and a good start; hounds did not run very fast for three fields, and by keeping wide of them and watching the turns, I was hardly out of a trot while all you fellows were galloping to get to us. When hounds straightened out to run I remembered as they swung to the right that there was a path running across Farmer John's fields. I galloped hard for this and struck it, and then for nearly a mile I was going on hard ground and jumped three small stiles. Having a good place and commanding the pack, I could afford to fall back at the fences and take them slowly: nothing beats a horse so quickly as racing at his fences. You'll see my brother Jack taking everything in his stride, but if you want to last you must take a pull at the jumps. If you go steady at your jumps and choose the best ground there is nothing or very little gained by turning out of your way for weak places in the fence. Even a gate is not worth while if you have to go far for it and then open it. You have to pull up and then gallop fast to make up. If a gate is open and has a clear roadway through it, and you are well in front, then it is worth while, not otherwise. Well, we ran hard for twenty minutes, and the fences being big my horse

was a bit blown. There was a check in that small wood near the Ogilvie's place, and when the hounds got on the line they could only hunt. So I jumped into the lane and trotted along the road, till hounds started to run again. This gave my horse a puff and he was quite as strong as ever. The fox must have waited for us in Caselby Spinnies, for after clearing these, hounds ran desperately hard for ten minutes. There was no chance of choosing ground then, the only thing was to sit down and ride. But this was the only time in the run I had to ask my horse really to go fast. Near the end there was a longish check, so I slipped off and shifted the saddle an inch or so. This gave us a new start. I hate ridge and furrow, and above all at such an advanced period of the run, so as hounds weren't going so very fast I galloped up under the hedge one side and down the other of the three hundred acre field. I lost some distance, but I consider I saved time by avoiding 'the curse of Leicestershire.'

"It was a good run, and I may say that I hardly ever had my eyes off the hounds. Watching hounds carefully is the best way to save the horse. But I consider that where I gained most was in the start. I had not to bucket the horse at first, and I was positively sitting still while you fellows were tearing

through the wood to the fence. By the time you got up hounds had settled to run, and whereas I had been standing, walking, and trotting, you had been galloping all the time."

Now I have quoted these remarks because they show, in my opinion, the principles on which a man must ride if he has not the very best horses. If he has—and this is not always, though it is generally, a question of money—he has nothing to do but sit down and ride. If we look back over the past history of hunting we shall find that the great riders had, as a rule, first-rate horses. The two Lords Forester, Mr. Assheton Smith, Sir Richard Sutton, Mr. Little Gilmour, Sir Thomas Whichcote, and others of the great riding heroes of the past, were always well mounted. Of men who have gone in the front rank on bad horses and are still hunting, I can recall but three of the many I have seen or known.

One of the leading principles of riding safely to hounds is the choice of ground so as to reduce the horse's labour as much as possible, and to economise his strength. I entirely approve of the choice of the path, of the avoidance of ridge and furrow; and I would ask riders to note the wisdom of going into the road when opportunity serves and the horse begins to tire. As to the pace at which

to ride at fences, it should be as slowly as the size of the obstacle and the temperament of the horse will allow. In the same way a horse should have plenty of rope at his fences. To give length to the reins is the means of saving many a fall. All horses when recovering from a blunder use their heads as a means of regaining their balance, and will be sure to stretch out the neck. The horse's head should be as free as possible when he lands; and if your nerve will stand it, as soon as he is about to take off, the reins should be slackened so that in the act of springing and landing he may take out as much rein as he requires. But I readily concede that different horses require different handling. For example, I once bought a horse which had been ridden by a hunt servant. This man was a good man with hounds and a bold rider, but he had no hands to speak of, and I have seen him when turning hounds take his horse short by the head and with a twist of his wrist and a "Come up, 'oss," jump out of a road over a fair-sized hedge and ditch, and land safely too. When I got the horse I found him an admirable fencer, but not at once prepared to fall in with my ways. In those days I was more attached to theories of horsemanship, and less inclined to modify them, than experience has since taught me to do. The first obstacle

was a stile out of grass and, luckily for me, into soft plough. I let the horse go at it freely with only a light touch on his mouth. He took off too soon, lighted on the top rail, and an imperial crowner into the field was the result, and the instant destruction of one of Mr. Barnard's best hunting hats. The hat gave a loud crack. "Dang it, Mr. Tom, I thought as it was your neck!" said an old farmer, when I picked up the pieces. That horse, having been accustomed to have his head held tight, would have it so, and I found that taken short by the head and driven at his fences there was no safer jumper in the stable. Some horses jump better if allowed to go pretty fast, and the owner of cheap horses will find that he will get them of all sorts. One mare I owned had a reckless way of hurling herself over the fences which nothing would break her of; but she knew best what she could do and how she could do it, and though a terrifying mount was apparently a safe one, for she never put either of her owners down. But even in her case I used to try and steady her, sitting back and holding her hard till within three lengths of the fence, when I was fain to let her go her own way, which was about forty miles an hour.

There is another matter which should be noticed here, and this is that even from the

rider's point of view it is well worth while to understand something about hounds. Much can be done in the way of saving a horse by the man who can in some measure anticipate the movements of hounds. The place to keep one's eye upon is about the middle of the pack, for there it is that the most trustworthy hounds are driving on the line of the fox. When they begin to waver it is time to take a pull, for a check or a turn is imminent. Foxes run to points; up or down wind, except in a gale, makes very little difference. Yet the down wind side is the best, if only because you can hear better. It will not be long before you will, if you hunt much with the same pack of hounds, be able to distinguish some of their voices. In one pack I hunted with, there was a famous old bitch with a curious "twang" in her voice, and so long as you could hear this you could ride forward confidently. When it ceased you could pull back with equal confidence, for a check was imminent, and it is in such a case well to be able, if you are in front, to drop back into a less distinguished position. If things go wrong, it is not so much the worst offender, as the first man he sees who, like Jephtha's daughter, is offered a sacrifice to the master's wrath.

In another pack there was a hound the hunts-

man pointed out. "D'ye see that hound, sir? Well, when you see him go to the front the fox is sinking."

So when I saw old Remus with his hackles up straining to the front, I would sit down, sure that I could be a little prodigal of the horse's strength, for the end was not far off.

Once more, a poor man must not make long days, and if he is heavy must jog steadily off home when his horse has had enough. It is hard to turn your back on the hounds, harder still should the siren voices ring in your ears from behind a hill running parallel to the line of your homeward route, but turn up your coat collar over your ears and jog doggedly on. Then if the distance be long and hills be steep get off and walk, boot leather is cheaper than horse flesh. The hunter which suits him is to the poor man far above rubies, though a "pony" or two might have been his original price.

I had once a mare which, after a long day, would look round at me as much as to say, "Now when are you coming off?" The bridle slipped over my arm she would trot along by my side for a mile or so, and when I remounted would trot off merrily till the next hill, when she would look round again to see if I meant coming off.

If you have a long homeward ride before you, shift the saddle a little forward or backward before starting. Always go on the crown of the road and ride lightly on the bit rein with just enough pressure to bring the horse back on its haunches, thus changing the muscles used.

In this way, and in giving care and attention when you have not money, hunting will be found to cost very little indeed. If you have to keep a horse, a good one is no more expensive than a bad one in point of keep.

It is the duty of every man who lives in a hunting country to do all he can towards the keeping up of the sport. Don't think how little you can give to the hounds, but how much you can possibly squeeze out. Always be civil and courteous to those you meet, whether on foot or horse. Deal with local tradesmen for your requirements, domestic and stable. Walk a puppy or two for the master. Always carry some small change and reward generously but not lavishly small services rendered, and always add a courteous nod of thanks. I would as soon think of going through a gate held open for me without saying "Thank you," as I should of sitting in a lady's drawing-room with my hat on.

Courtesy and politeness are far too much

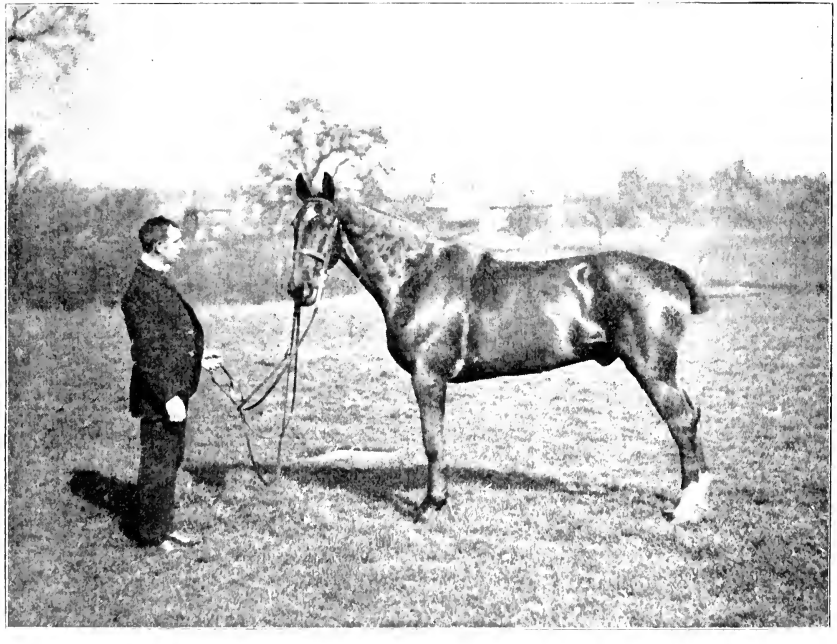
neglected, but they sweeten life for all with whom we come in contact. Our dispositions are mostly concealed from those we come in chance contact with in life ; our manners are not, and they are the more important to ninety-nine out of every hundred people we meet.

Lord Chesterfield, I believe, despised hunting, knowing little of it, but his letters to his son are no bad study for the members of our hunts to-day.

CHAPTER IV

LADIES ON HORSEBACK

THIS is not a subject on which I feel inclined to write much, because there is little that a man can write which is not included in those general hints and suggestions given in other parts of this book. Then, too, those instructions which are necessary for women have been very well and charmingly treated by more than one of their own sex. Two writers more especially occur to me as having dealt with the subject of "Ladies on Horseback," or in the hunting field out of the fulness of a practical experience and knowledge. They are Mrs. Burn in the chapter on fox-hunting in "The Sportswoman's Library," and Mrs. Power O'Donoghue in the book which still remains the best treatise on equitation for women. Both ladies write charmingly and both know what they are writing of, and I feel inclined



A GOOD HORSE FOR THE PROVINCES.

to leave to them a subject on which I have neither power nor will to say more than they have done. And yet it seems that something may be written by way of instruction to those of my own sex who have the duty of instructing ladies in the art of riding and the choice and care of ladies' horses. That man must indeed be very much behind the time who would raise a discussion as to whether or no women should be seen in the hunting field. They come out nowadays in large numbers, and more than that, they often show us the way to go across country. There are women riding across Leicestershire who are as good across country as all but the very best men of the day, and are infinitely superior to most of us. Nor can it be said of the majority of ladies that they are in the way. They seldom jump on us because, to tell the truth, they are generally in front. The modern hunting lady is generally well-mounted on fourteen-stone horses, and can make every use of them. On the choice of a lady's hunter, the editor has contributed an article to the "Sportswoman's Library" which gives the best possible advice on the subject, and to this again I would refer those who would profit by the experience of one of their own sex. As long as all goes well the light weight of most women and the amount of rope they are obliged by the

nature of their seat to give their horses, gives them an advantage over us. It must be confessed, however, that when things go wrong the odds are terribly against them. Therefore no horse can be too good for a woman to ride in the hunting field. Every man who has had to ride indifferent horses over a stiff country knows that the inevitable cropper is bound to come sooner or later, probably sooner. But then a cropper is not a matter of much consequence to a man, however little he may like it, while a fall for a woman is a dangerous affair. Safety skirts, safety bars, and straight-seated saddles have done much to render the danger less than it used to be, but still the one-sided seat and the pommels always remain. A man therefore may, if necessity so compel him, ride horses the shape and temper of which is not all that could be wished; but a woman's horse must have good shoulders and a fairly well set on neck, or the rider will be in perpetual and very real danger. More than that, those who are responsible for women's hunters ought to be particularly careful to keep a watch on the state of the horse's feet. This is a point on which many otherwise excellent and trustworthy grooms and stablemen are apt to be deficient in care. Yet a twisted shoe, a bruised frog, or an unperceived thrush will

bring the most trustworthy horse down at times.

If you have a sister or a daughter to teach to ride it is a great point not to begin too early. I am entirely at one with Mrs. O'Donoghue in fixing sixteen as the age at which girls should begin to learn. Even then it is of great importance that the lessons at first should be short so as not to tire the pupil. It is when girls are tired that they acquire bad habits, sit with one shoulder forward, or ride on the stirrup. I remember seeing a lady of a well-known hunting family who habitually sat on the near side of her saddle putting her whole weight apparently on the stirrup. It was a fearful sight and suggestive of sore backs in the stable. I am bound to say I never saw this lady come to grief, but then she was magnificently mounted.

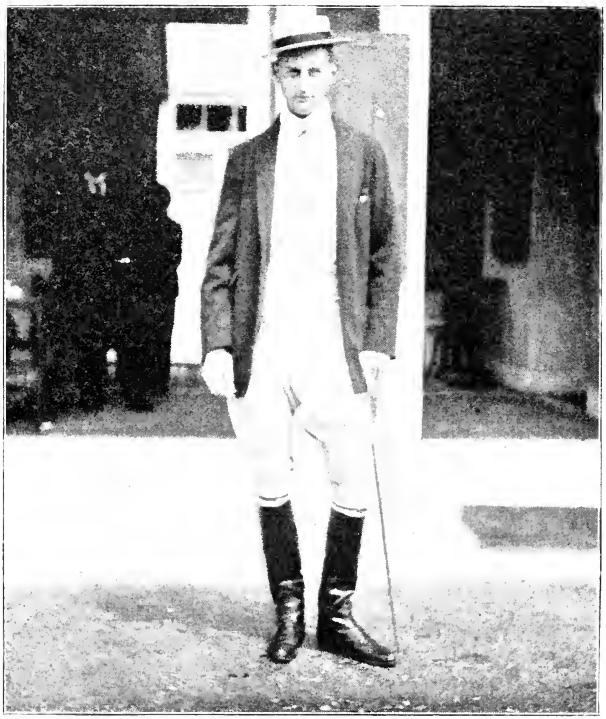
The very first thing a girl should learn is to ride fair and square in her saddle, and not to hold on by the bridle. Young girls and beginners should not be put on very big horses or those with rough action. To trot well, easily and gracefully, is a difficult thing for a woman, and she can only learn it on a good hack. A pony is all very well for a boy, but a girl wants at least an animal of 14.2 to learn on. All girls should have their first lessons in a school if

possible. If a girl, or for that matter a boy, is timid or has no nerve it is a mistake to force them to learn. Have patience, for many very nervous beginners have turned out capital horsemen and horsewomen after all. Let them take their own time in learning. If you intend your pupils to go out hunting they must be taught to sit a horse over a leap. This, of course, is no difficult matter, but it should be insisted on that from the first every jump should be taken in good form—sitting firmly in the saddle, leaning slightly back with the hands low and a rein in each hand, and a fair-sized hunting crop in the right hand with the hook end down. Most pupils will stick out their chins, crouch ungracefully in the saddle, and all will raise the hands. These faults should be corrected at once. The bolder spirits will, however, try to rush, but this, too, should be checked. For many reasons a woman should ride slowly at her fences, and Mrs. Burn's advice on the point should be learned by heart: "A horse will jump a place more slowly and more cleverly if you give him time to see what he is going at. . . . If you take a pull to steady your horse when you are a little distance from your fence, you will probably arrive at the other side far more collectedly, and be striding away again over

the next field, before others who allow their horses to gallop right up to the fence are near you." Mrs. Burn explains a few pages further on what she means: "By riding slow, I mean taking a pull about three or four lengths from the fence and getting your horse to go steady and *look*." This, by the way, is sound advice for man or woman. Another matter which I should insist on for all young people, girls or boys, is that they should learn to open gates neatly and properly, and if they are alone never to leave them open. I can remember the time when ladies out hunting nearly always expected you to open a gate for them, but now in Leicestershire they can do it as deftly as most men. Of course there are cases when the gate is too heavy or a strong wind is blowing when a woman must seek the help of a stronger arm. Sometimes, however, she can dispense with this help. I remember once coming down to an awkward gate with an unjumpable fence. There was a little group of men, and two of them were good men too, struggling with the fastening. Suddenly behind us we heard a silvery voice, "Please let me come," and looking up we saw a lady on a small blood horse riding at the gate. She got over as safely as her pluck deserved, and then turning in her saddle said as she followed the

vanishing pack, "I think, gentlemen, you should come out on Sunday afternoons and practise gate opening." This lady had a marvellous tact for getting over a country on an indifferent horse. Indeed, in a long experience I have only once known her equal, a farmer's daughter in Lincolnshire, who would ride at the most awkward places on a wonderful old three-legged horse.

Two other pieces of advice and I have done, leaving the rest of the mysteries of lady's riding to more competent hands. Never let a pupil get so accustomed to one horse that she cannot ride another. Let every steed in the stable that is safe, carry the side-saddle in turn. The other is, try to teach girls to recognise when a horse has had enough. Pressing a tired horse is dangerous and cruel, and it is often done through ignorance rather than from any other cause. When a horse falters, changes his legs, hangs on the bit and chances his fences, it is time to take to the road, or perhaps to go home altogether.



MR. WALTER BUCKMASTER.

CHAPTER V

POLO

IN the space that can be afforded in a book such as this it would be impossible even to touch on all that could be said of polo. Moreover, in another work I have said almost all that I have to say on the theory and practice of the game. My course now is plainly to follow out the plan suggested by the title of this book, and treat polo from the point of view of the rider. I shall also assume that those who read these pages will be interested in counsels which may tend to economy in expenditure. A great deal has been written on the cost of polo, and many people are still of opinion that it is a very expensive game in England. It would be more true, perhaps, to say that it has been played in a somewhat extravagant style. The introduction of the game into England by two crack cavalry regiments

and its growth under the auspices of the Hurlingham Club naturally spread the idea that polo led to considerable expenditure on the part of those who played the game. And of London polo this is no doubt true. The mere keeping of two or three ponies in London is expensive, the subscription to Hurlingham and Ranelagh is considerable, and some expenses are incurred in travelling to those pleasant resorts. In country and suburban clubs, however, the case is different. Stansted, Eden Park, the London Polo Club, Wimbledon Park and Kingsbury are very moderate in their subscriptions, and the expenditure required in the game is not large. Still more moderate is the outlay necessary for the polo player who has a county club at hand. Since the last of the formal treatises on the game has been published, county polo has made great advances, and the country players have an association of their own, with headquarters at 12, Hanover Square. Thus in country districts where polo clubs exist, the would-be player can enjoy a game if he can afford to keep two or three ponies—no very expensive matter in the country.

"Yes," I can imagine the reader objecting, "that is all very well, but the ponies I need to keep are polo ponies, and I have always under-

stood that they are most expensive articles. Polo ponies cost sums far greater than I could think of giving." To this I reply, quite true. Certain ponies are sold at high prices, but then they are the most accomplished of their kind, good-looking, well-mannered, and fast, and above all, trained in the game to perfection by such men as the Messrs. Miller, who make a business of schooling ponies. These animals are the pick of their class, but many good ponies untrained to polo can still be bought for moderate sums. In fact, they are not worth more than ordinary ride and drive ponies of a good class. No one would pay a fancy price for a pony that did not know its business, because it is very likely that it might never do so. A very large number of ponies never come to much good at polo. Either they are deficient in pace or temper, or some one or other of the manifold qualifications a polo pony must have. It is evident that there is only one way for a would-be polo player to mount himself at a reasonable price. He must look out for young ponies and train them to the game. A man with some experience of horses, who is something of a judge of young stock, and owns a little grass land, would do well to buy some well-bred youngsters two or three years old. Ponies

of the following sires out of pony mares are likely to make polo ponies: Rosewater, The Bey, Edward the Confessor, Lord of the Lea, and Buckshot.

From the first, young ponies should be handled and made gentle, and should have plenty of exercise. The three-year olds should be ridden regularly at slow paces by a light weight, and may be broken to harness so that they may earn their living if they should prove unsuitable for the game. They may run in a field or park, but should have a shelter to go to, and it is well to have a straw-yard in which to confine them in very bad weather. Cold will not hurt them, but wet is bad for all young horses. They will require feeding in the winter, and the owner must exercise a good deal of judgment in this. It is of course desirable that ponies wanted for fast work should have good and fairly plentiful feeding, but this must be given carefully, for too much food might cause a pony to grow over the standard height of 14.2. I do not know that any attempt has been made to determine the rate of growth of a horse and its relation to the quantity and quality of food, exercise and exposure given to it. Therefore any who try this plan would be doing a service if they would keep a record of the food consumed and the

rate of growth attained by young pony stock. The polo pony market has made this a question of real importance to all breeders of young stock, and if we can even approach to a solution we shall have done a great deal. The problem is twofold, first to check a too rapid growth lest our young animals grow over height, and secondly to stimulate and force those which seem likely to fall below the standard. However, for the time being it may be assumed that our young polo player finds no difficulties in this way. As soon as the ponies are quiet and handy and can be hacked into a market town, or will cross a railway bridge, or meet or pass a traction engine, they should be introduced to a polo stick and ball, and at the same time be driven with long reins—*not* ridden—in circles and down an easy bending course.

Very few ponies that are thoroughly gentle and have been carefully handled ever object to a polo ball or a polo stick after the first few lessons. By this time they should have learned that their master is not going to hurt them, and I have always found that a soothing word or two will induce them to go up to the ball and allow me to hit it with the stick. At first all the work should be done by hitting the ball straight forward. A young

pony must not be twisted and turned about with any weight on its back. In this way by the time the pony is four years old his training will have made him thoroughly quiet and handy in saddle and light harness work, light work as one of a pair in an easy running four wheeled dog-cart being the best. Now mark out on fairly smooth grass a riding school with four white stones, or fenced in with bushed hurdles, and here take the pony through a regular school system. That of Captain Weir, as laid down in the Badminton volume on "Riding and Polo," is the best. The more carefully, completely, and thoroughly you do this, and the more time and patience you expend on it the better pony you will have. This work should be begun in the early Spring, and the school must be littered if the ground is hard. If you follow out the school system carefully, by the time your polo season begins you will have a very handy pony. In the early part of the season you will find members' games going on, and as neither men nor ponies will be in condition, they will be just those easy cantering games which will best suit your pupil.

A difficulty here suggests itself. While teaching the pony, how is the rider to learn? Well, if you have a fairly trained eye and hand

and are a reasonably good horseman, you will not find polo a difficult game to learn up to a certain point. After that all depends on natural aptitude and opportunities for practice, and the pains and time you give to it. Still the difficulty remains that you cannot afford to learn polo off the back of a young pony. There are two ways: either to buy a useful old pony, or to learn from the back of a wooden horse as suggested in my longer treatise on the game,[1] and better still by combining both. In this way you will gradually gain a mastery over the ball, and it is in control of the ball that the whole secret of polo lies.

Certain leading errors you should avoid. First try to hit the ball full and clear, getting neither under it so that you break the force of your blow by hitting the ground, nor over it so as to tip the ball as well. Both are common faults, the latter being the worse of the two. My late friend, Mr. W. J. Dryborough, had a peculiarly clean, sharp stroke, and the ball went away from his back-handed stroke with a shoot on it I have never seen in any other player. To borrow a term from the musketry range, his stroke had a "straight trajectory." If you watch Mr. Buckmaster or Captain McLaren, confessedly two of the finest polo players of

[1] "Game of Polo."

the day, you will notice the clean, neat style of their strokes and the way the ball obeys their will. This control of the ball is particularly important, because polo is, as is often, though not too often, remarked, a game of combination, and your duty may and often will be to place the ball within reach of one of your side. This passing the ball is one of the marks of a good player.

Another very important thing to learn is the rules of the game. On the observance of the rules, which are admirably framed in the interests of safety and fairplay, depends the success of your side. To the non-observance of rules, penalties are attached, and a single error, wilful or careless on your part, may cost your team a well-fought game. To hit the ball cleanly, to play for your side, and to know and observe the rules, sums up the whole knowledge which a player need possess to enter upon the enjoyment of one of the most exciting and thrilling of our games. Polo indeed is a pastime which treads close on the heels of sport.

We will suppose, then, that you have succeeded in your endeavour, and that you have two four-year-old ponies which approach somewhat to the ideal polo pony in shape and make. Let us see that we know and

understand what to try for when we are buying, and let us begin, as any good judge should do at a show of ponies, and look upwards from the feet. The feet are of great importance, and I should not expect a pony to stand work well in the polo field which had not good sound feet, since, especially in country clubs, the ground must often be hard. When a pony is galloping with fourteen stone on its back on hard ground the concussion is naturally great, and the trial to the feet proportionately severe. Feet that are smaller than the average are preferable to those that are larger, always provided that the feet are in pairs. Next, the pasterns are of great importance in a polo pony for two reasons: first because animals with sloping pasterns stand work better than those with straight ones; and secondly, because the elasticity of the sloping pastern makes the action much smoother, which is a matter of importance in good polo. Sticky action in front, or "propping," makes it much more difficult to hit the ball fairly and with certainty. I should prefer pasterns somewhat too long to those that are too short. The late Mr. W. J. Drybrough's "Magic Spell" is a remarkable instance of a pony with long pasterns standing severe work under a heavy weight, for a long period.

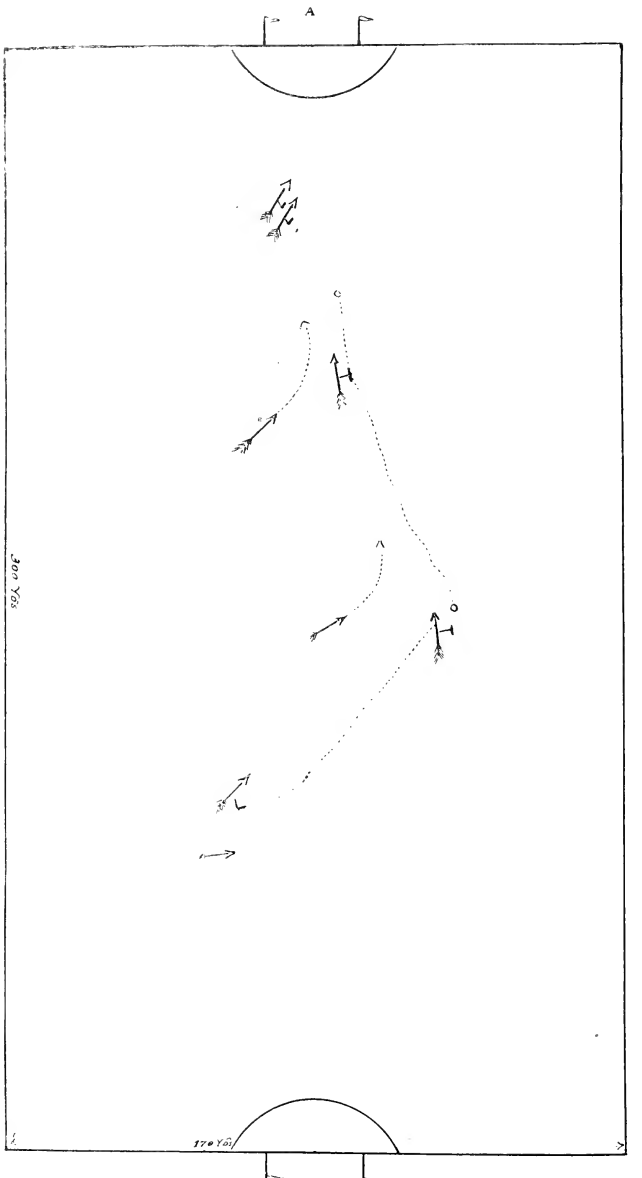
The fetlock bones should be large and well-formed, for they give attachment to the suspensory ligament. From the fetlock joint the eye is carried up to the leg, of which the bone should be small and well-knit, but the tendons and ligaments should be broad and flat. A useful size below the knee comes from broad, flat, well-developed tendons and ligaments, rather than from the size of bone. A large, well-developed knee should be looked for, as on the size and development of the joints is dependent the strength of the all-important tendons and ligaments which are attached to them. Looking upwards again, the leg above the knee should have good length. A polo pony cannot well have too good a shoulder, for sloping shoulders give comfort to the rider and enable the pony to recover if he makes a mistake. The withers should be rather far back so as to give room to the shoulder blade, and neither "knify" nor thick, but a polo pony should have muscular withers. The spring of the neck from the shoulder is another matter of great moment. A thick, stumpy neck is a defect which should never be passed over in a pony intended for polo. Such ponies are sure to be awkward to turn and heavy in hand. Now, passing the eye along the back and loins, the former should

be short, and the latter well-developed and muscular. Without powerful loins the pony cannot go as fast as you would have him. In the hind-quarters I should rather take a race-horse than the hunter as my model, so that wide, ragged hips would be a disadvantage, and length and galloping power should be looked for. The hocks should be large and well-developed, for a polo pony's hocks have much strain placed on them. It is good if the hind legs are well under the body, and in a polo pony sickle hocks are no defect if they do not reach deformity.

Lastly, well-sprung ribs and a deep girth are good points. Many good ponies are a little light in the back ribs, and that is a defect which is of less consequence, as the polo pony has only to gallop for ten minutes at a time. Long, awkward ponies are to be avoided; they are dangerous and apt to come down when turned sharply. The power to turn quickly, and with safety is of greater importance to a polo pony, even than speed, because a pony that can turn sharply and handily, and be off in another direction quickly, will always be easier to keep in the game than a faster animal which requires half the length of the ground to turn in. A polo ground is only three hundred yards by one

hundred and seventy or one hundred and fifty, and many are not so large, and it is within these limits that the pony has to work. Moreover, a day's work for a polo pony as a rule is three ten-minute periods and this is seldom exceeded. Speed, activity, pluck, and temper are thus the first requisites of a pony. But the man whose means are limited has to chance much in buying his ponies, as he must do, in the rough. I bought most of my ponies in this way in India partly because it was cheaper, and partly because in India where a pony's polo career is so short, seldom extending to more than four seasons, and often not so long, it is desirable to have as much of the pony at its best as possible.

It is not always possible, of course, when buying in the rough to have a very thorough trial and examination. But the following are good rules to go by when purchasing a pony in the rough, in the hope that it may hereafter serve for polo. Note how the pony stands when his attention is aroused. Note if he stands fair and square, and seems to cover a good deal of ground ; if his neck springs gracefully out of his shoulders ; if he has a bold yet gentle eye, a fairly deep girth ; if he trots with a straight knee and flexes his hocks freely and well. In the same way reject a pig-eyed, sulky



PLAN OF POLO GROUND.

B side ⟶ passing ball to A goal.

pony, one that bends the knee in the trot, or leaves the hind legs behind him.

I have said already that I have no intention of writing a treatise on the game, but the following brief notes may be useful to beginners and those who have not seen it played so far. In order to make my meaning plain I have sketched the accompanying diagram, which shows the way a polo ground is laid out, and giving an ordinary phase of the game may serve to make more plain the following hints. The game of polo, then, is played on a ground three hundred yards by one hundred and seventy or one hundred and fifty yards, but in cases where sufficient space cannot be obtained the size may be less. There are eight players—four on each side. The game starts from the middle of the ground, and the object is to drive a ball through goal posts. The four players are thus arranged :—

No. 1, whose duty it is to prevent No. 4 hitting the ball.

No. 2, whose duty it is to hit the ball straight forward, and on occasion to impede the opposing No. 3.

No. 3, whose duty it is to stop the ball and pass it on to No. 2, or to drop back and help No. 4.

No. 4 keeps the goal, and feeds the forwards by hitting the ball to them.

When the adversaries are attacking, the defending side should try to hinder them thus :—

A		B
No. 1	rides off	No. 4.
No. 2	,,	No. 3.
No. 3	,,	No. 2.
No. 4	evades	No. 1,

and tries to keep the ball from his goal.

It is the first principle of modern polo that you should do what is best for your side. In the diagram I have shown a common case of passing the ball by the side in possession, and the relative positions of the other side who are trying to obtain possession.

If, then, a polo player living in the country will buy suitable young ponies, and always have fresh ones to come on and train them to the game, he will, according to my experience, have but little expense and a great deal of pleasure. Nor is there any reason why his ponies should not earn their living in other ways.

In the earlier days of my polo I began with two ponies, which ran in a single, pair, and tandem harness, were useful hacks, and in fact did everything that was required of them, and

I see no reason now why the same thing should not be done. At all events, where there is a will there is a way, and the whole truth about the expense of polo lies in this, that if you can afford to keep two ponies you can afford to play polo.

CHAPTER VI

SPORT AND HEALTH

MOST men would, I think, say that one of the reasons for their devotion to sport was that it brought health. This is no doubt true to a great extent, and a life given up to outdoor pursuits is on the whole the healthiest kind of existence. Life in the open air is undoubtedly wholesome, and even under the hot sun of the tropics I think as a rule those times when we are under canvas, either on a campaign or in pursuit of game, are the periods when less ill effects are felt from the climate than those which are spent in houses with all the appliances that make life easy. Yet it cannot be denied that men, and women too, have injured and do injure their health in a serious manner while in pursuit of sport both in India and in England. This is likely to be the case more particularly

with those who, like most readers of this book, have some other occupation besides sport to attend to. The writer cannot pretend, of course, to any scientific knowledge of the laws of health in relation to exercise, more than is within the reach of ordinary people. Yet he has had a long experience, and has almost always had to combine work and play. The suggestions which follow are those which are derived from practical experience. It may be laid down in the first instance as a self-evident proposition that the amount of mental and bodily energy which is possessed by any given individual is a limited quantity, which moreover is not constant, but varies from time to time with the conditions of life or the state of health. We must, then, adjust our expenditure, and to use a well-known metaphor, according to our credit balance at the bank. An overdraft has to be met at some time or other.

One of the reasons why sport, and more particularly those riding and driving sports of which I am now writing, are sometimes injurious, is that men rush into them without sufficient preparation and without being "fit" to undertake them. No man out of condition, however skilled an oar he might be, would undertake to row in a boat-race without

training. To go through a day's hunting, to play a hard game of polo, or to ride a race without due preparation is equally foolish and unreasonable, though people do not seem to think so. A man of business, or other person who has much brain work, is, while he is deeply engaged, naturally disinclined to take much exercise, and I have known many cases in which people so engaged have given up all active sports, as they became more and more immersed in the serious work of life. If they dieted themselves accordingly, and if they took a very moderate constitutional, there would be little harm in this, for it is not improbable that this disinclination is a real hint on the part of nature that she cannot spare blood for the brain and for the muscles as well. It is not unlikely that very busy men who work hard with their brains do not need a great deal of exercise for their bodily well-being.

But there is another side to the question: bodily well-being counts for much. "Good 'ealth next to personal appearance," as the lady's maid said, "is the greatest of blessings," but it is not everything. Sport is, for those who have the passion for it—an overmastering desire, and a life in which no form of sport could be enjoyed would be considered hardly worth living. This is the

practical question to be considered by men who wish to indulge in sport—how to enjoy it without injuring health. It is evident that the proper way to do this is not to rush out of the office or study when you have a day off and ride hard to hounds, play three ten-minutes at polo, or drive a pulling team for two stages. Nor even in the interest of your own enjoyment of sport can you do this for any length of years. Sooner or later the taste for such active exercise will become less, and above all your nerve will give way. When a man says that he is losing his nerve, it generally means that he has overtaxed his strength at some time or another and is paying the penalty. There are three things, then, that must be carefully regulated alike in the working periods of life and the leisure days—exercise, food, sleep. I think that most busy men take too little exercise, eat too much, and sleep too little. Let us take these matters in order.

1. *Exercise.*—A very large amount of exercise is not required to keep us fit, but there must be some, and it must be regular. Directly you are awake take a cup of tea and a biscuit and go out for a short ride, or walk, or bicycle ride. On coming in have five or ten minutes with dumb-bells or Indian clubs, two to four pounds is heavy enough for any one. A cold

or tepid bath and a rub down with rough towels. Dress and have breakfast. If a polo player can manage ten minutes or a quarter of an hour with stick and ball, that is a capital form of work and could take the place of those mentioned above. If you can ride or walk to business, so much the better. When you come back at night and have done your work, a dry rub over and a complete change of clothes is a good thing. This should be carried out regularly all the year round.

2. *Food and drink.*—Should be plain and taken not at too distant intervals. Every one is the better for some lunch; dinner should not be too heavy a meal. A man who wishes to keep down flesh should try to do so by dieting rather than by violent means, such as sweating. No rules can be laid down for the ordinary man's food and drink, except that each one should observe for himself the hints which nature gives as to what is or is not suitable for him. As to drink, the less the better. Tea is very pleasant and can be rendered quite harmless by pouring it off the leaves after standing for three or four minutes. Some alcohol is desired by most busy men. I prefer light table beer and claret, and dry port after dinner when I desire to keep in condition, but a little champagne does no harm. I am not

at all disposed to enter into the merits or demerits of alcohol, but it is pleasant, and probably the desire for it indicates that a moderate consumption will do no harm. Any large quantity we all know is bad, and there is no need to discuss the question. No man who lets himself go—I am not speaking of intemperance—in the matter of wine or spirits, can possibly be in good, hard condition for long. There has been no attempt here to suggest a regimen, for that is matter for a doctor; and besides, no one would keep to it.

The case of the busy man who has a day or two's hunting a week is so far different that I think I may offer more suggestions. In the first place, I am not in favour of a very heavy breakfast. The internal economy of a man is not that of the legendary camel. As a matter of fact the real camel requires to graze for six hours every day. The breakfast should be light but supporting, so to speak. A mutton chop and a couple of eggs, or, better still, a plate of good mutton hash or mince, tea and toast, should suffice. Luncheon in these days is a duty, and if the cook is propitious may also be made a pleasure, but it need not be large. A couple of sandwiches and a slice of cold plum pudding, and a couple of dry biscuits to munch on the homeward way is quite enough.

When you come home, a cup of tea and a slice of toast and a dry rub down, *not* a warm bath. It is better not to smoke till the day's work is done, but that I have ever found a counsel of perfection. Need I say it is probably better not to smoke at all when you want to be in condition?

3. *Sleep.*—At all times, and more particularly when you begin to get a little past your first youth, sleep, and plenty of it, is necessary, and most men require to go to bed fairly early when taking strong exercise; 10.30 p.m. is the hour for the hunting season, and well shall we be rewarded for any self-denial it occasions. Of course it is only reasonable to argue to a limited extent from our own experience, but I am convinced that for enabling a man to do hard and sustained bodily work sleep is by far the most important thing. I am also sure that the sleep that is most needed by hard-worked people is that at the beginning of the night. If you are not a very good sleeper in bed, there is no harm in forty winks in your arm chair, never mind what anybody says; sleep how and where you can, but sleep you must if you are to ride straight to hounds.

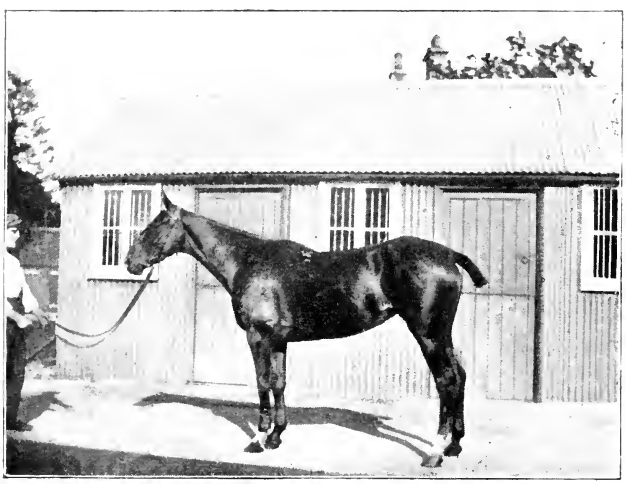
Now passing from general to particular precautions. I am a great believer in constant changes of raiment. If you are or have been

hot, never rest till you have changed. If you hunt from town and have a railway journey, always have a long, dry coat to go over your wet clothes if you cannot change there and then. A dry coat over wet clothes will preserve you from many of the ill effects of a wetting. You will be surprised how comfortable you will find yourself when you have donned a long ulster or a fur coat, and having lighted a cigar (did I say you shouldn't smoke just now?—well there are exceptions to every rule) you may be tempted, perhaps, to sympathise with the good man who, as he folded his rug over his knees in a first-class carriage and drew the first whiff of his cigar, said, "Well, you know, this is the part of hunting I really like."

If you should have a holiday, don't over do it; you cannot, I fear, hunt more than four days a week with profit to your health, and then I should suggest making the days short. If you feel slack and languid in the morning and know that you have nothing to accuse yourself of in the way of whisky and soda and cigars over night, take a day off. If you lose the run of the season don't blame me, for the advice is very sound, be the consequences in that way what they will.

These precepts are few, also they are simple and obvious, but I do not know that they

require to be put forward the less earnestly for that. I think with the observance of them that health can be preserved, nerve retained, and such condition kept as is necessary to the enjoyment of hunting, or indeed any other active sport.



SILVER STAR.

The property of Mr. J. Gouldsmith.

Winner of many prizes.

CHAPTER VII

THE EYE OF THE MASTER

IT is one of the main purposes of this book to consider the question of expense, and to endeavour to enable readers to enjoy much good sport at little cost. This it has been necessary for the writer to do himself, and therefore the following opinions are the result of experience, and every one of the various ways here suggested has been actually tried.

I started in life with the fixed determination to hunt as often as possible, and wherever the chance should come in my way. This has at all events given me a wide experience, and I have hunted stag and fox, hare and otter, and ridden every conceivable kind of animal, have hunted on foot when no horse was available, and even tried a bicycle, though I am bound to say that the last named, though a useful roadster, is the very worst possible

hunter. I am now going to devote myself chiefly to considering the way to see most sport at a moderate outlay. In doing this I shall have, I know, some friendly and sympathetic readers in far off Indian messes, with whom I have often compared notes and discussed ways and means. I do not say that even a moderate horseman may not have a great deal of fun, but good horsemanship is undoubtedly worth money. Now let me say at once that I do not propose to have anything to do with "coping." It spoils one's pleasures, alienates one's friends, and is not really profitable in the end.

Of course, there are fine and exceptional horsemen who add to the value of any horse they ride, but this book is not for them. The ordinary man must be content to lose as little by his horses as may be, and to be thankful if by good luck he occasionally does have a little windfall. I know some very well-to-do men indeed, who buy and sell a number of horses, and never, except by accident, have a good one, because they try to buy cheap horses and are always getting hold of bad ones which they are not horsemen enough even to make the best of. For such people I have no sympathy. The course which is really wise, when £100 or so makes

little difference, is to buy the very best animals you can find from a good dealer, making the proviso that you shall be able to ride them. This is in the end by far the most economical way of buying. Horses with a character will be found to sell well, and really good ones deteriorate in value very little if properly cared for. But with such fortunate people I have nothing to do. Rather am I concerned with those who must perforce give small prices because they have not the wherewithal to pay more. Even to these I suggest the wisdom of having fewer horses and paying more, when and if they are sure they can get better ones by so doing. One really good horse will, if he keeps sound, give more pleasure than two or three indifferent ones. It is at this point that the value of the counsel offered in a former chapter will be apparent. It is plain that if you are to have cheap horses, the better you can ride the better you will be mounted. For a great many horses are rejected by wealthier men because they are unpleasant or difficult to ride. These are the best of the cheap horses, but they are no use except to a fine and resolute horseman.

There will be many men, however, who cannot really hope to do much with horses that are difficult to ride, and they again must

do the best they can, and I am afraid they must be prepared to put up with cripples and endeavour by special attention to stable management to bring them out sound. And here I may recur to the maxim which is, so to speak, the central idea of this book, that if you cannot spend money you must give time, attention, and pains in its place. There is no such stud groom as the master himself, if he will take the trouble, and it is in successful and careful stable management that the poor man will find his account. The fox is half killed in the kennel, the race is half won in the stable, for condition and health in the horses will cover a multitude of defects and deficiencies. But they are, of course, still there, and will be felt at times, yet are they the condition on which we enjoy our sport.

But before we discuss how to treat our horses we have to consider where and how we are to buy them. If you have some knowledge and experience of horseflesh, well conducted auctions are the best place to buy in. You can, if you please, have any horse you fancy examined by a veterinary surgeon, and can thus know the worst. You can also have the horse trotted out, and if you buy on Monday, you have, by the conditions of sale, till twelve o'clock on Wednesday to see if he fulfils his

description fairly well. Naturally you choose your time for buying, and bid for hunters when other people want polo ponies, and for polo ponies when other people want hunters. It is true that you will have in this case to keep the animals you buy for some time, but that is no disadvantage, and if you live in the country and have some grass land, no great expense. When you are buying it is desirable to look pretty closely at the catalogues, and to pay visits to the respective lots. Horses sold singly or in small lots of three or four, and without a name, are often cheap, but also are risky purchases. Yet there are prizes to be had in such cases, and I must confess that I have known and purchased several bargains in this way. There is an element of chance in this plan which is not without its charms. It is evident that sales are sometimes forced for various reasons, and thus bargains come upon the market. I well recollect selling three excellent young Irish hunters, all practically sound, because my tenancy of a hunting box had come to an end, and I was on leave from India and had to return. I hunted the horses to the last available day, and sent them up with very little preparation. The man who bought those animals got a bargain, for they fetched quite

absurdly low prices. In the same way I once bought two good-looking, hunter-like horses for their appearance for £26 and £27, and had no reason to regret the bargain. I had a season's hunting out of them, and then sold them at auction in the country where I had hunted them, for double the money paid. They were not first-class horses but they were useful poor man's hunters, coming out in their turn, and able to get across country in fair style. But though I cannot resist picking up bargains which do not always turn out such, I recommend as the safe way the purchase of horses out of a first-class stable, against which there is some mark. "Makes a slight noise which does not stop him," is one suggestion to the poor man. Of course, whether his roaring stops him or not depends a good deal upon how fast and how far you want him to go, but there are roarers and roarers, and a great deal can be done by careful feeding and stable management, and of course horses good and pleasant to ride in other respects are often found in their ranks. Two I have had which cost £10 and £8 respectively, and one of them was a most admirable timber jumper, and though he required some care in and out of the stable, yet I could see all but the fastest runs on his

back. The worst horse I ever rode was a show hunter that had won his weight in silver cups and prizes, and was as a hunter not worth the shoes he stood up in.

There is another kind of horse which often appears in sale lists and which, of course, is difficult to detect, and that is the hard puller, such a horse as Mr. Sponge's "Multum in Parvo," for example. Or again, you might find yourself possessed, as I once was, of an accomplished buck-jumper, which had been drafted because he had put down the owner and his groom. The first time I got on him he sent me flying in the first five minutes. This horse had a peculiar and complicated buck, but so far as my experience goes English horses have no perseverance in their bucking. I have seen a Waler in India buck himself clean out of his saddle without breaking the girths, after having got rid of two rough riders in succession. The Australian buck-jumper goes on till either you are beat or he is, but if you can stick to the English buck-jumper for a short time he generally gives it up. So it was in this case, and he was the best hunter a man could wish to sit across, save that he was a little troubled with the slows. But then he was such a fencer! He could always go the nearest way to hounds, and was a very easy horse to ride.

It is always worth while, if you get a queer one, to conclude that bad breaking is at the bottom of his vice. In this case a horse should be put to school again and be trained exactly as though he was a colt just up from grass. I do not say it is a plan that will always succeed, and there is a vast difference between tackling a foolish colt, weak and timid, to a bold horse with three or four seasons' condition in him, and the recollection of the men he has got the better of. Some horses are like the Bourbons—they will learn nothing and they forget nothing. But it may answer, and very often does, especially with the buck-jumper, and sometimes, but more rarely, with the hard-puller. With a horse given to buck-jumping great care should be taken in girthing not to pull him up too tight. When hacking to the meet, and I prefer to do this with horses with which one is likely to have a difference of opinion, for quarrels between horse and man as between husband and wife should be settled in private, if the horse has a breastplate on, an article of horse-furniture I am old-fashioned enough to like, the girths can be left comparatively loose, and then by putting the leg forward and lifting the flaps the rider can tighten them up at will. The advantage of this is that while many

grooms try to cut the horse in half, the rider can, from the saddle, pull his girths tight enough for safety, but not so tight as to inconvenience or irritate.

With a hard-puller, I should try riding in the school in wide figures of eight, and hacking him in such a bit as will make me his master. It is all very well to say that a horse will not pull at you if you do not pull at him, but in a modern hunting crowd you must be master of your horse unless you are to be a public danger. If the horse gets his head down and bores, a gag is the best thing, and I had at one time two horses in my stable I could ride in nothing else. In one case the gag always was and remained necessary ; in the other, that of a big blood horse, I was, after once establishing my supremacy, able to ride him in a light double bridle. It is perhaps needless to say that if a gag is necessary, so is careful handling when you are using it. For horses that get their heads up, a running martingale on the bit rein of a long cheek bit and a very thick bridoon are the most effectual, but it is perhaps also not necessary to say that this is not a sort of bit you can hang on to at the fences. Remember that five-sevenths of vice is the result of bad or insufficient breaking and training, and though it does not follow that by a good system and

patience you can undo the evil, you may do so, and at all events by the time you have put your refractory horse through a course of bending lessons, and have ridden on him some simple school exercises, you yourself will be in a fair way to be a good horseman, or at all events—if you are still alive—a much better one than when you began.

Now let me give, from my own experience, the cost of a stud on which I saw much fun, and the selling prices of the horses. Every one of them was bought at auction and sold in the same way. The "Screw-driver," as our forefathers used to call the man who mounted himself in this fashion, should never either buy from or sell a horse to a friend. My horses were bought as they could be picked up in the summer and sold in January, when, if the season is open, fair prices can be reckoned on.

1. Big brown horse, a roarer, and with navicular. Cost £10. Shot at close of leave on account of an accident. A useful horse and a first-rate timber jumper.

2. Chestnut horse, a steeplechaser, a big striding blood horse, £50. Bad puller, but went quietly in his second season. Did not sell. He was a good horse to ride, but would fetch no price.

3. Irish mare, bought as a colt and trained; excellent and delightful to ride and beautiful fencer. Cost £70. Had a leg. Sold for £30.

4. Brown mare. Cost £26. Went well, up to weight, rather slow. Sold for £80.

5. Chestnut horse, buck-jumper, £75. Cured, and sold for £150.

It will be seen that I had a season's hunting, and had one screw on my hands, and £30 when I had finished.

My accounts show that my expenditure for the six months of the hunting season was £350, which included a subscription to the hounds, but did not include the cost of horses which were bought earlier in the season. Eventually I gave away the chestnut horse, so that the actual cost of my season was £350, which included everything. I kept more horses than I could otherwise have done, as I was acting as correspondent to a sporting paper and had to go out tolerably often, and with three or four different packs to make up the tale of bricks for the week. This estimate might be reduced by keeping fewer horses. But I do not think that it is possible to hunt regularly and to reckon on seeing a fair allowance of hunting, without two or three horses. Something, too, must be allowed for casualties.

There is yet another class of man who must

not be forgotten in a work like this—the man with one horse. He belongs to a numerous class, is almost necessarily a good sportsman, and very often enjoys his sport under considerable difficulties and the expense of much labour and self-denial. Let me give one or two examples drawn from a wide experience among hunting men. The first that occurs to my mind is of a man who has since become very eminent as a sportsman, but whose means at one time of his life were very moderate indeed. His plan was this. He kept no regular stable, but himself with the help of a lad looked after the horse. The animal, a useful one, was kept in a shed open to a meadow. On the owner's return from hunting he simply took off the saddle and bridle, gave the horse a pailful of warm gruel, and let him roll on the grass. About an hour afterwards the horse was given a full feed of corn and shut in for the night with a rug over him. In the morning he was roughly groomed over and had the run of the meadow till the next hunting day. This horse was never sick or sorry, but he was of course well fed with the best of oats, hay, and split peas. It is perhaps needless to say that the country in which this sportsman hunted was not a flying one, but of the sport there was he saw the best. Let me give

another instance of a man of small means who was determined to see sport. In this case the sportsman, who now, by the way, as better days have come, hunts in Leicestershire, lived in one of the best of our provincial countries not far from London. He was a City clerk on £100 a year, living, however, with his father. He managed to save up enough money to buy a horse that could gallop a bit and jump. He kept and groomed him himself, getting a day or part of a day whenever he could. In order to do this he lived hard and rode hard, and that he stuck to business as well as sport may be inferred from the fact that he has been for many years now at the head of a large concern. But he has never failed to hunt. Cub hunting was his best time, for then he could get up early, see hounds, and be back in time to catch his train and take his seat at the desk in the City in due course. Another case I know of is that of a country parson with an old hunting mare that was given him, and on which he manages even in these days—for this is a modern instance—to see much sport in the woodland country in which his lot is cast.

Three things stand out from my own experience of hunting with short stables, as being advisable. The first is that you must have what the grooms call a "good doer," that is

a horse which clears up every oat in his manger. The second, you must make short days, for there is no such strain on a horse as being for long hours out of his stable; and the third is, you must pay great attention to stable management. And since the last-named requisite is the same for all who desire to use economy in sport, I will now deal with this very important point.

The poor man will of necessity be his own stud groom. For many years past, with the exception of two seasons, when other and more profitable occupations made it necessary to employ a first-rate man in the stable, I have always been my own stud groom. An apprenticeship in India with a stable of racing and polo ponies, and of horses, when on one occasion I took the station hounds, has been most useful to me. Be a man rich or poor in India he must of necessity look after his horses himself, if he wishes to have them well-kept and in good health. The Indian syce is not a bad groom in his way, but he is quite incapable, as a rule, of acting for himself, and his intellect is, perhaps, on a level with that of the horse he looks after.

All the help, then, that is required in the stable is a strong, useful man, of the vicarage-groom-gardener type, or a willing lad anxious

to improve, who may have been in a farm stable. It is no use in any case to have a man who does not like horses, or who is afraid of them. Beyond that, and reasonable honesty and willingness to do what he is told, my own requirements would not go. It may be suggested that I am expecting great patience on the part of the master, but that is one of the first necessaries to a poor man. All that I can say is that I have twice had men who had never seen a hunter in the stable till they came to me, and that my horses were never better looked after, perhaps seldom so well.

The first thing for the master to do is to overlook everything that is done, at first regularly, and then from time to time at irregular intervals. One of the great points of stable management is regularity in hours of feeding and grooming. I do not say of watering, as I am strongly in favour of keeping water always in the stalls. This is not as a rule approved of by grooms, and one of the best I ever had, would always put down a slight cough in one of the horses to "swilling all that there cold water." I always make a point of being present at the grooming once a day, so very much depends on a horse's skin being kept in healthy condition. Besides, all boys,

and men too, are apt to neglect such matters as sponging out the eyes and nose, the dock and sheath, and, on the other hand, they occasionally use the curry-comb for the horse's coat, for which it was never intended, and to which it is perhaps hardly necessary to say it does harm. Another very important matter which needs supervision is the washing of the feet, not the legs, which should never be touched with water, except a wet bandage be needed. Washing out the hoof is a simple matter enough, but the need of care comes in in drying the heels, which are sure to be wetted afterwards. Wet heels mean cracked heels, and cracked heels mean horses laid up.

So much for general precepts, now for particular instances. The most important matters in the care of the hunter are his treatment on return from hunting and on the next day. Let me tell the plan I followed. There is, of course, little in it, but it was very successful. As soon as the horse came home he was led into a spare stall. I then loosened his girths, threw a rug over his back, and took off his bridle, while the lad went to the house for a pailful of warm gruel which had been prepared. To give a horse a pailful or even two is good, and you may rejoice that he will take it. I have had more than one horse that never

cared for it. Then just a little hay in his manger and begin operations. Let the lad take a wisp of straw and quickly dry the skin under the jaw, the neck and shoulders and the legs, and everywhere he can reach without removing the saddle, keeping this and the rug on. Then, as soon as the legs are roughly dried, get eight flannel bandages, soak four of them in water as hot as the hand can bear to wring them out, squeeze them hard and then put two bandages on each leg, one hot, wet flannel underneath, and a dry one above. This done, the saddle may be removed and the back underneath wisped till every trace of sweat be gone. Then rub the horse over with a cloth, sponge out the nose, eyes, dock, and sheath, give a quick brush over, and clothe him up. Then, and not till then, should he be moved into the stall or box he is to occupy for the night, his feed and some long hay be given him, and left. The last thing at night, say about 9 or 9.30, the bandages should be taken off, any moisture removed from the heels, and the horse left quiet for the night.

Not until the first part of this process was complete did I leave the horse and go in to enjoy the luxuries of a change, a cup of tea, and a smoke. And here I may give a hint to the rider for his own comfort. Most people

have a warm bath, but acting on a doctor's advice I gave this up, substituting a good rub over with a rough towel, and found I was better for it, the hot bath being too relaxing for many people, myself included.

The next morning the horse should be groomed carefully, his feet washed, clean bandages put on, and he should be walked about, if a young horse, for half an hour morning and evening, if an old one for rather longer. An old horse in hard work wants more exercise than a younger one, as his joints and muscles stiffen much more easily. In such a stable as I am writing of, it is very likely that there will be an old horse or two, and this is a matter well worth remembering. The remainder of the day the horse should have to himself in rest and quietness. I had a mare, and a very good one, who would make a pillow for her head by switching up her bedding straw and lie for a day at full length, only getting up to eat. Such an animal is generally a good poor man's horse, as it preserves its legs longer than the others.

A point on which I lay much stress is the temperature of the stable. This should be as nearly that of the outer air as is consistent with the absence of draughts. A current of air should always circulate over the horse's head,

nevertheless a clipped horse must be kept warm, and I would do this by the help of clothing. I should not mind either if the horses looked a little rough in their coats. This is far better, anything in fact is better than close, hot stables, except close, damp ones.

As to bedding for non-hunting days, peat-moss litter used with care is the best. Idle horses will eat straw, and many horses will do so at all times, liking it better than anything else. I do not know whether Irish horses are particularly fond of straw, but those hunters I have had from the Emerald Isle have been great offenders in this respect. I always give them a straw bed after hunting, put down on the top of the litter. This is a fad, and it may be a fancy, but I do think that tired horses rest better on straw than on the litter only.

Cheap food is no economy in a hunting stable, and I would rather keep one horse and feed him on the best, than have ten on cheap food. Old oats, the best of hay, and plenty, though not too much, should be the rule. One of the advantages of being your own stud groom is that you can ascertain how much a horse wants and give him that and no more. Very few grooms will take the trouble to do this, yet horses vary a good deal, as well

in their appetites as in their capacity for digesting food. Three signs will tell you when a horse is getting the right quantity : a healthy, pink mouth, clearing up the manger to the last oat, and healthy droppings. If the mouth be yellow, if he leaves his food, if his droppings be loose, or hard and slimy, give him bran mashes for a day, and then feed on reduced allowance.

It is an economy to pass the hay through a chaff cutter, but some long hay every horse must have, as he cannot without it digest his food properly.

CHAPTER VIII

DRESS AND EQUIPMENT

THERE is no doubt that to have a horse properly bitted is a great step towards riding him with safety and comfort. Yet it is one of those subjects on which it is impossible to lay down rules, for the best bit to use with any given horse depends on the temper of the horse, his conformation, and on the hands and nerve of the rider. Horses pull for various reasons. Some pull because their heads and necks being badly put on, they cannot help doing so; others pull because they are nervous and excitable; others again because the bit hurts and the heavy hand of the rider worries them. Nearly all bold, free horses catch hold a bit when they are fresh, and when hounds first come away from covert.

For hunting purposes there are three kinds of horses with which I would have nothing to

do at any price, as it is almost impossible to enjoy oneself on their backs. First the resolute, bull-headed puller, with a neck like steel and a mouth like leather, a horse in fact of the Multum-in-parvo style. Some horses of this kind can be reduced to reason by constant work and careful feeding. It is of course true that you may break such a horse down in the process, but it will be confessed that he is no use unless he can be subdued, and therefore the result is worth the risk. Horses with thick necks and a short rein should always be avoided. Almost, if not quite as bad, is the nervous, excitable, light-mouthed horse, which will neither stand being pulled at nor yet give in. I have had two of this sort—a polo pony, good to look at and a charming hack and a capital tandem leader, but which went clean off his head in a game so that nobody could do anything with him; and a hunter mare which I could just hold in a Mohawk bit, but which went comfortably in no kind of bit and with no sort of rider. I thought perhaps it was my own fault, but there was the same trouble with several much better horsemen, and she was at last sold by auction. This mare was a charming hack, but of so wildly excitable a nature, and yet with so light a mouth withal, that she was thoroughly un-

pleasant to ride; and with all horses of this class, to get rid of them is the best thing to do.

But most horses pull either as the result of bad riding or injudicious bitting. If you have bad hands or indifferent nerve, and the courage to confess it to yourself, you practically cannot ride with safety and comfort any horse which you cannot hold in an ordinary double hunting bridle. It is advisable to have the bridoon plain and rather thicker than is ordinarily the case, and the curb-chain sewn up in leather. As a matter of fact the great majority of men get along fairly safely with this bit, or with a broad, plain snaffle. There is much to be said for the latter for indifferent riders, as with this bit it is not easy to pull a horse into his fences or throw him down. But, for the man who has taken to heart some counsels written in the earlier part of this book about not holding on by the bridle, some further liberty and variety is possible, and he will be able to ride horses that catch hold. The thing to do is to find out what sort of bit suits a horse best, and having found it, to take care that it fits him and is put on right. In, say, some seven cases out of ten, the double hunting bridle will do all that is required. These can be obtained with any length of cheek-piece to the bit, and having found the length with which you can

stop the horse, put it on and ride on the snaffle as much as possible, reserving the curb for emergencies.

If further power is required, pass the curb-reins through the rings of a running martingale. This gives tremendous leverage, and has the advantage that directly the occasion for it has passed by it need no longer be used.

A snaffle thick and plain is good, and some few horses go better in it than in anything else; but it is not so effectual for collecting a big, tired horse at the end of the day, and as a rule such horses will go equally well in a short-cheeked double bridle.

Other bits which are useful, but which require care in handling, are the gag—useful for horses that bore. The chain snaffle, which I used for polo and steeplechase horses in India, I found very good. It is a light bit in light hands, and a severe one if needed. I always used it with double reins, one being passed through the ring of a running martingale.

Much depends on the way the bridle is put on. The corners of the mouth should not be wrinkled in the least, and the bit should just clear the tushes in horses, or be about two inches above the corner teeth of a mare. Always, without exception, look to see how the bridle is put on; it is a matter of which

very few grooms take much note. The cheek of the bit should be pressed back, to see that the pressure of the curb comes in the right place, and that the chain does not rub against the horse's chin unless intended to do so. If the bit be put right in the horse's mouth, the curb-chain will be no inconvenience to the horse till the rider pulls the rein.

The mere alteration of a bridle in a horse's mouth will often make all the difference to his style of going, so narrow is the difference between doing things in the right and the wrong way.

From bits to saddles is an easy transition, and of the latter I have not much to say. If you can possibly afford it, it is sound economy to have your saddles from a really good maker, and to have one to each horse. This saddle should be fitted to the horse's back by a careful saddler, and should be used for no other horse. The stuffing will require some alteration after Christmas, as by that time most horses in a small stable will have worked somewhat light in flesh. A numnah is quite useless if the saddles are properly stuffed and made. The poor man cannot afford to be economical in his saddles, he must have good saddles from good makers. A plain flap saddle seems to me the more comfortable kind, but that is a matter of

taste which each man must decide for himself. Many horses require a breastplate, but they are not the fashion. Nevertheless, I should put one on if I thought it desirable. In the same way ladies' saddles must be of the very best make, straight-seated and with safety bars, but not safety stirrups. There is no more extravagant article than a second-rate lady's saddle, and the most expensive article I ever had was a cheap (so called) side saddle. It gave every horse it touched a sore back, and when I complained I got an uncivil letter from the makers.

I agree with Mrs. O'Donoghue, that those saddles are the best for hunting in which the rider can herself tighten the girths from the saddle.

One more subject requires to be dealt with, and that is the dress of the rider.

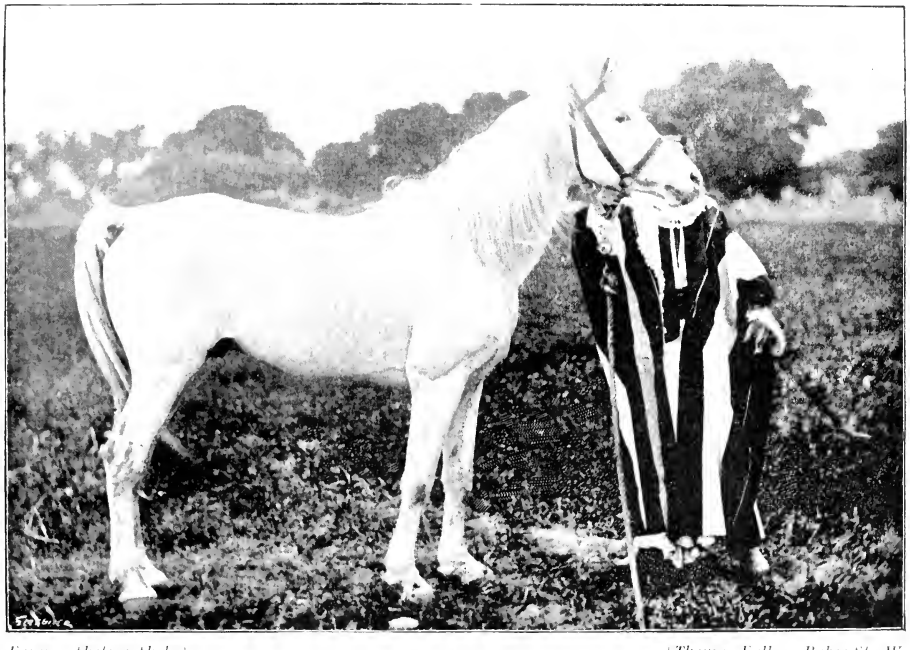
For ordinary men hunting on a moderate scale, a black coat, a tall hat and white breeches are the thing. Leathers are objectionable if you do not keep a man, and a really serviceable white washing material is still a desideratum. Next to these some of the close-woven fabrics made for breeches are useful, and top boots and neat, not patent, butcher boots well cleaned. Dogskin gloves and a neatly-tied hunting scarf complete the outfit. Everything should be well made and of the best of its

kind. A good tailor who knows his business is as necessary as a good saddler. A good tailor's work wears twice as long as that of an inferior maker, and those who have studied the needs of the hunting man will make him smart and comfortable. No man can look smart who is not comfortable, and no man can feel comfortable who is not smart. However plain and unpretending your get-up, if it is well-made and good of its kind, you need not be ashamed to present yourself in any field, however fashionable. It is scarcely necessary to say that no one may wear a hunting cap, Napoleon boots, or carry a hunting crop without a lash, and retain his self-respect.

CHAPTER IX

DRIVING

DRIVING is a useful but a much neglected art. Good drivers are much scarcer now than in former days when they had the high standard of the stage coachmen before their eyes, and if any one will take the trouble to look at the drivers' hands during a walk down Piccadilly, he will see very few real coachmen, except, perhaps, some of the omnibus drivers. The very congestion of the traffic makes driving in London comparatively easy. We get into the stream and are carried along by it until we reach our destination, or turn off into some quieter side street. The real perils of driving are to be found in the country, where the roads are dangerous by reason of the hideous presence of the traction engine, and its tail of rumbling, rattling cars. Yet a great many people drive in the country,



From a photograph by] IBU NUREH. [*Thomas Fall, 9, Baker St., W.*

and it is therefore well worth while to learn to drive well, even if it be only a pony-cart in which we have to exercise our skill. Now the danger of driving, when once the first principles are acquired and a certain amount of practice obtained, is in inverse proportion to the number of horses (up to four; beyond that I have no experience) you drive. Thus a single horse is more dangerous than a pair or a tandem, and the latter methods have more chance of disaster than a team of four. For there is always the chance with more horses than one, that they will not take it into their heads to do the same thing at once. It is seldom that we drive a pair or a team all of which are of the same disposition, and we are often able to play them off one against another, and balance the strength and weight of one horse by that of his companions. But if we have a single horse, we have to deal with only one will, and have fewer chances in our favour. It is equally impossible to hold one horse or four if he or they are determined to bolt, but it is, as all coachmen know, not a common thing for four horses to make up their minds to go at once, and then there is the weight of the coach to count upon. Therefore I strongly advise all people who drive to learn something of the art, and not to despise good coachmanship, even if

it be only needed to drive a dog-cart. There is, in fact, a very wide difference in the comfort and pleasure in driving beside or behind a man or woman who really knows how to drive. There has been a great advance in the driving power and the skill of women of late years, and the driving competitions held at Hurlingham and Ranelagh have not been without their uses, as for single harness, pair, or tandem the light hands of a woman are well suited. When it comes to drive four horses—well, I have never seen a woman drive a team really well, not perhaps so much from want of skill as from want of strength. A fairly light carriage and a team of cobs or ponies I have seen handled with grace and skill, but never a heavy coach with four big horses.

All who drive, then, should endeavour to gain a knowledge of sound principles, and the first matter—I had almost said the most important — is harnessing the horse or horses. Everything should fit. Many good horses are spoilt and accidents happen because the harness pinches them somewhere. The best, and by far the simplest way to learn, is to put a horse to yourself sometimes. This, as a matter of fact, most country-bred children do learn, and in my boyish days I never missed seeing the horses put to if I could possibly

escape to the stable. Later I learned to help in the process, and in the course of doing so I acquired some useful information, such as that a horse should draw in single harness by the traces and not by the shafts; that in the case of a pair the inside traces should be half a hole shorter than the outside; that it is a mistake to pole horses up too tight for a long journey; that a pair of horses require the coupling reins frequently shortened or lengthened, horses seldom going exactly in the same form two days alike; that on rough country roads the couplings should be longer, as horses' heads require more freedom on them than on London pavement; again, some horses require bitting differently on different days. I had a pair once of which the near horse would go at the cheek quite pleasantly for some days, and then would need to be put in the middle bar in order to make him work properly and easily. At all events, when the horse or horses are properly put to, the journey is half over and the difficulty of driving half surmounted.

When the carriage comes to the door the reins should be taken in the right hand before mounting the box or driving seat. In no case should a driver mount the box without the reins in his hands. When seated the reins should be held in the left hand; the near rein

over the top of the first finger, the off between the second and third fingers. The whip should be in the right hand and should, as a rule, be carried in the hand, not in the socket. The whip bears an important part in the art of driving, not indeed as an instrument of punishment, but rather as a means of conveying our wishes to the horse. The start should be by gently tightening the reins in the hand and whistling quietly to him at the same moment ; or if a pair, by laying the whip gently on the less willing of the two, so that both may go up into their collars together. Is it necessary to add that the driver should not give way to the abominable new fashion of saying "Pull ep!"? Start quietly, never going off with a rush or permitting the horses to do so. It will be time enough to let them step along when you and they have settled down. Never take the off rein out of the left hand, but use the right hand as an aid, not as a regular instrument, in driving. If the left hand is held in the right position, with the knuckles towards the splashboard, and a gentle, even pull is kept on the horses' mouths, a turn of the wrist will suffice to guide your horses and leave your right hand free to use the whip to keep your inside horse off the curb if he tries to turn too sharply. To take a pull, put your

right hand in front of the left, but if you wish a stronger hold, put the right hand over the left, and holding the reins in the right hand, draw it back, slipping the left hand in front of the right again. Never poke your hands out in front. It is well, too, to remember how slight a touch is needed to guide your horse or horses, if they are well bitted and properly harnessed.

In trotting horses should never be allowed to lollop along in the slovenly fashion so often seen, but should always go collectedly and apparently well within their speed: that is, if a horse is going eight miles an hour, he should give to spectators the impression he could do ten if his driver would let him.

There is another much-disputed point on which I must say a word, and that is bearing-reins. Little cobs and ponies do not want them. Big horses are pleasanter to drive, and, as I verily believe, go with more comfort to themselves with a bearing-rein properly put on. Of course it need not be said that the absurd and cruel bearing-up, too often still to be seen in the London streets, is an abuse. But if the bearing-rein be so put on as not to wrinkle up the corners of the horse's mouth and to give him liberty to carry his head in a natural position, then I think it is useful, and with a woman,

or with a weak-wristed man, almost essential to pleasure and comfort.

Thus we see that the essentials of good driving are: first, well-fitting harness properly put on; second, to make the left hand the main instrument; third, judicious use of the whip; fourth, a light touch. Other qualifications there are, such as nerve and experience, but these no writer can do more than suggest. Nothing has been said of the horse to drive, since most of my readers will have to do the best they can with the horses they have, and this is, after all, where coachmanship comes in. Nearly any one can drive well-broken animals on good roads, after a fashion, but it takes a coachman to make moderate or indifferent horses do their work well over every kind of ground. And after all it is worth while; for the enjoyment of driving a horse we have ourselves made, is one of the many pleasures of driving as a fine art.

CHAPTER X

TANDEM DRIVING

THE tandem is the poor man's team, and is somewhat neglected by many who might obtain a great deal of amusement from it. But driving tandem is not only an amusement, for it is an excellent and economical method of traversing bad roads for long distances. On this point I may claim to speak with some certainty, having driven a tandem for something like eighteen hundred to two thousand miles in a year, for three consecutive years, over some of the worst roads on our Indian frontier. In fact, for the whole of the cold weather and a considerable portion of the hot season too, I was always driving. It is needless to say that this was excellent practice. In fact it is in my opinion impossible to learn to drive well until you have had some experience of driving journeys. In the old days, the

coaching books tell us, those who had a taste for coaching, qualified in the art by driving the stage-coaches, and no doubt this was an incomparable school for coachmen. Roads of all sorts, horses of all kinds and seldom of the best, with loads of varying weight, and time to keep, taught them to be thorough coachmen, judges of pace, strong with a weak team, and gentle with a strong one, so as to get the most work with the least expenditure of the horses' strength.

When in 1881 I was appointed to the frontier, I found that part of my duties would consist in driving from one end of the frontier to the other, from Bannu to Rajanpore. My immediate predecessor had done the journey on a camel, but I have no taste for camel riding. The ordinary riding-camel is dull work, and the trotting-camels from Bhowalpur are expensive, and carry little or nothing besides the rider. The journey might be ridden on horseback, but there was the question of baggage. Why not drive tandem? "Oh," said everybody, "that is impossible. The roads are so bad, no cart would stand them, and you would not get twenty miles." I am afraid I am not very good at taking advice, and experience has told me that not one man in a hundred knows anything about a road over which he may have travelled

often enough. So I took my own course, bought four ponies, and had a "bamboo" cart built for me. I had the seat placed rather high and on it a box, literally a box—which I found most useful, for it carried my books and pipes — from which to drive. The net underneath carried the baggage, and the whole was drawn by two ponies tandem fashion. The road was rough and in places very heavy, but it was nowhere impracticable, and I drove over the whole of it for three years without a serious accident. The low centre of gravity of a bamboo cart makes the danger of upsetting small.

But it may be gathered that during the three years I drove up and down the frontier, I learned something of tandem-driving from a practical point of view.

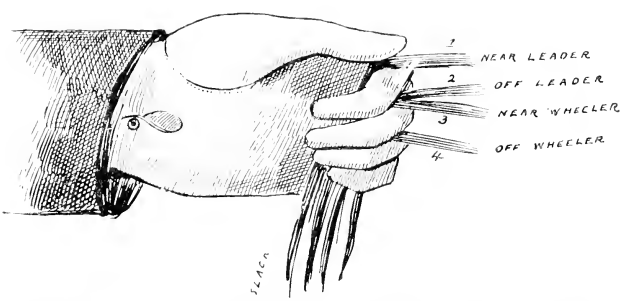
For example, I learned that breast harness is not nearly so good as collars on rough roads, and that horses that will draw well in a collar will hang back and sometimes take to jibbing altogether in breast harness. In very rough and stiff ground where I wanted all the draft power I could get, I used to unhook the leader's traces from the usual place and put them on to rings put for that purpose at the end of the shafts. This gave a more direct pull on the load, and certainly made more effectual use of the horse power.

As a rule, however, I drove with the ordinary long traces. This works well enough with a fairly good or willing horse, but with an awkward leader they add greatly to the difficulties of driving, for if the leader hangs back obstinately the wheeler may get its leg over the traces. Of course, when driving fresh-caught Indian country-breds of various sorts, an awkward leader was not uncommon, and many very good travellers were a bit nasty at starting, especially until they got used to it. I may say truly that I have had my leader in every possible and impossible position in relation to the cart. I have had him riding on the step, of course, but that is a commonplace of tandem-driving. I have had him with his head under the shafts *behind* the wheeler's tail. I have had him on his back *under* the cart; I have had him rolled up into a kind of tangle so that he had to be cut out of his harness, but I always got to my journey's end. Yet much of my trouble might have been saved me if I had begun as I ended, by driving with bars. To my mind these have simplified tandem-driving immensely, have reduced the danger, if there ever was any, and added greatly to the pleasure. With long traces a certain space was always required to turn in, but with bars a tandem can easily be turned in its own

length, and the leader is much more easily put to or detached.

Now for a few practical hints as to driving tandem. First of all let us clear the way by removing some fallacies which are current on the subject. I have heard it said often enough that to drive tandem is harder than to drive a team, and people have even gone further and deduced from this the conclusion that if you can do one, you can do the other. There never was a greater piece of self-deception. Assuming for a moment that your leader will go straight, tandem is by far the easiest form of coachmanship, and if fairly well done, the safest. Two horses driven as a pair are far more likely to make up their minds together to run away, than two horses tandem fashion. I have three times been run away with in a tandem, and have each time been able to stop the horses by playing them off one against the other, as it were. But let us begin at the beginning and consider what sort of cart is best for a tandem. In the first place it should not be too light, for horses go better if they have something to draw, and a tandem cart should be able to balance well and carry four people, and if necessary some luggage. No better measurements for a tandem cart can be found than those given by Lady Georgiana

Curzon in her most excellent article on the subject in the Badminton volume on Driving. I speak with confidence, for I have had two carts built to the measurements there laid down and found them answer admirably. With regard to the harness, I like it as light as possible, but I prefer, in the country certainly, on a tour, to have breeching on the wheeler.



POSITION OF THE HANDS FOR DRIVING FOUR-IN-HAND OR TANDEM.

It is on the whole more convenient to pass the leader's reins through the ear-rings of the wheeler than to have them through the terrets often affixed to the sides of the wheelers' heads. Lead reins so arranged have a greater tendency to worry the wheelers, the objection to them being precisely the same as to head-terrets for the wheelers in a team. I prefer to attach the leader by a bar, but if long traces are pre-

ferred there is no objection to them, always bearing in mind, however, that the lead traces should not be one inch longer than is necessary. The shorter a tandem is the better it looks, and the easier it is to drive. Collars look smarter and are a better method of draught than breast harness. The only advantage that I can see in the latter is that it fits any pony. This is no doubt a gain, for tandem is a very useful way of driving in a polo stable. There is no better way of exercising the choicest animals of the stud than putting them in the lead of a tandem. Trotting out with no weight on their backs is capital exercise, and exercise is just the one thing of which there is seldom enough in a polo stable. And here I may say that tandem-driving is more suited for small than large animals, and it certainly looks much better.

Polo playing and tandem-driving go well together. I remember well when living at some distance from a polo ground in India, I often put two ponies into a tandem cart and drove the five or six miles, with my groom up behind with sticks and saddles. I then took the ponies out, played polo, and drove home again, finding both ponies as fresh as possible the next day. In fact I look on a tandem cart and harness from all points of view as a most

useful adjunct to a polo stable. It is very convenient in the country, it saves labour in the stable, and is an excellent method of keeping ponies in condition. I am also of opinion that being driven in a tandem tends to make ponies handy, and I have found it an excellent plan with shy or nervous ponies wanted for polo. In the country one is always having to drive into the town for something, and nothing is better for young ponies than to go to the station, stand outside a shop, or turn in and out of gates. But for young ponies intended for polo I should certainly not recommend harness work in a cart, carrying three people, whereas as leader in a tandem no possible harm can be done, and a great deal of useful work is put in and some excellent lessons are taught.

But all this time nothing has been said about the whip, which is a most important help to tandem-driving. It is possible to drive a coach some distance without unfolding your thong, and there are a good many men who drive four horses who are shy of using their whips in public. This part of his education, however, the would-be tandem-driver must not shirk; he must absolutely gain considerable skill with the whip if he is to make a creditable appearance. Nothing betrays awkwardness so

certainly as the whip of the tandem-driver. It may, and will, unless used deftly, catch in all sorts of places in the harness or even wind itself round the axle. Therefore it is necessary to handle the whip lightly and quickly, and above all to catch it neatly, or some such humiliating accident may happen as occurred to the writer. I have already told how I used a tandem as a means of conveyance along the frontier roads. There was one part of the road leading to a large village where the going was not bad, save for the fact that the native farmers had built right across it little *bunds* or banks about two feet in height, and with water-channels on the top. The object of these was to irrigate the fields on the other side of the road to that on which the wells were situated. Thus at every hundred yards for about half a mile before the village was reached, there was one of these banks. It was plain that the best way to take them was to go fast and keep straight, especially as my wheeler was a mare somewhat given to jibbing if checked suddenly Accordingly I straightened my team, hit my wheeler with the double thong, and let out the lash so as to catch the leader under the bar and make him tighten his traces at the critical moment.

Once this happened, and we flew the little

obstacle in capital style. But in the excitement of the moment I failed to bring back the lash to my hand—it was in the early days—and it flew back, wound round the neck of my syce who was sitting behind, at the very moment when the cart bounded up into the air and shot the man out. The effect was to break a new whip, far away from all means of having it mended, and very hard work it is to drive a tandem one hundred and fifty miles without a whip. Then I learned to realise how important a part in tandem-driving the whip plays, far more than in any other kind of driving. The tandem coachman's whip, then, must be always ready.

Over smooth or level roads the leader should do little or no work. It is a fault of young drivers that they allow the leader to pull the whole affair; this should never be. Consequently when the leader is wanted to help he will require a reminder with the whip. This must be quickly and lightly done with a sure hand so as not to disturb the wheeler, still less to hit him by mistake. Then after a time wheelers grow cunning and hang back to let the leader do more than his share, and many wheelers require reminders from time to time. Of course in long journeys over bad roads such as those I have described above when both

animals will have to work hard in order to get the load through, the whip will be of still greater use and value, and the mastery of it will be much rewarded. For example, in the sandy bed of a river, I have known a not too high-couraged leader to pull up, and turning half round look at me as much as to say, "You never expect me to pull through this stuff, do you?" but a sharp touch with the whip, and as he straightened a cut on the other side, often served to get him to work again. All the use of the whip in a tandem in bad ground should be quick, neat, and light. As soon as you come to flogging it is only a question of time when the team will stop. It is better then to send a man to the leader's head. It is always necessary and wise to remember the weak point of a tandem, which is this—if your leader will not work and wishes to turn round, you cannot really prevent him. Much must be trusted to the honour of the leader. To paraphrase slightly a well-known coaching saying, much that the four-in-hand coachman can do by direct means the tandem driver must achieve by artifice.

It is therefore evident that the use of the whip must be mastered to some extent before a man can hope to drive tandem with safety or comfort. To learn the use of the whip

neatly and effectively is a matter of practice. The best and indeed the only way with which I am acquainted is to sit beside a good coachman and watch the action of his wrist as he lets out his thong and catches it again, bringing it round the crop with a couple of neat turns. As soon as you think you know *how* it should be done, the rest is simple — not easy — for that is quite another matter. Practice is what is needed. Perched on a driving seat you must throw out and catch the whip until you can do it with neatness, lightness, and precision. It is very seldom necessary in driving tandem to hit either of your horses hard, it is often necessary to hit them quickly. A light touch in time will often prevent a nervous leader from coming round. Then wheelers grow cunning and scamp the corners, necessitating often a sharp stroke with the double thong to keep them away at a turn. And here I may say that it is well always to give yourself plenty of room at a corner, especially if you are unable to see round it.

One of the great secrets of tandem driving is a light hand, another is to keep your hands still. I have found in practice that many animals which pull hard in the saddle or in the wheel, will not pull an ounce as leaders

in a tandem. Then if you want your team to go well and look well keep your hands still, for when once you have the team straight the reins should need little or no changing. A tandem team can be turned with the slightest movement of the wrist, for when once the horses are going it is the very lightest and handiest of teams. Half the trouble and embarrassment in driving comes from pulling too hard, and in driving tandem it is well to recollect how slight a touch is needed. Women, few if any of whom have the strength requisite to drive four horses, can and do drive a tandem beautifully. And it is most delightful to drive a free-going tandem, with horses in a straight line trotting out freely, their hoofs rattling gaily on the road.

As you glance over your team before starting see that everything is in its place, the back-band is sufficiently loose, and the cart so balanced that the wheeler trots comfortably; the tongues of the buckles standing up from time to time. A glance shows you that the wheeler is drawing from his traces and not from the shafts, while the leader is just barely carrying his bar. Then as you come to a rise in the ground the thong flies lightly off the crop, touching the leader under the bar and making him spring forward into

his collar. As you reach the crown of the hill or just before it, you loop back the leader's reins. The clink of the bar and chains tell you the leader is no longer drawing, and you go steadily down the descent. It is evident that one of the dangers of tandem-driving is that a too free leader will pull the wheeler on to his nose. The leader ought never to be really at work save up a rise or in very deep ground. The wheeler of course does most of the work, but it is wonderful what a great difference to his power of work the leader makes. At the hardest points of the road there are two instead of one. Besides horses go much more gaily when there are two than when there is only one. My last stage in, on one of my frontier journeys was about ten miles, part of which was over a deep and sandy road. On one occasion after the change the syce let the leader from the last stage go, and she came galloping up and ranged alongside the leader with a whinny. She trotted beside him all the way, having of course, not a stitch of harness on. Never had my team gone so pleasantly or easily. Always after that the mare was let loose over that last stage and always trotted home with the team, seeming to encourage and cheer those at work. I found in practice that I averaged

with a tandem, with a heavy load and rough roads, about seven and a half to eight miles an hour, which must be considered fair going, and I did about thirty miles a day with the teams. Thus in the morning one team was sent out seven or eight miles. When I overtook it I changed, going on to the place where I halted for breakfast. The pair that came in first went out first in the afternoon, and the change was effected in the same way: all thus, of course, travelled thirty miles, but were in harness for only fifteen. The ponies—ordinary country-bred polo ponies—were never sick or sorry.

Many amusing little incidents I recollect, but only two adventures. On one stage the evening journey ended at a little police-station. There was no regular rest house, but there were a couple of rooms for the use of European or superior native officers when travelling. This stood in the middle of a wide and treeless plain. One day I was driving along quietly as usual when my attention was attracted by thunder growling on the horizon. I looked up, for rain is rare in those parts, but there on three sides were three separate storms creeping along towards us. Tropical thunderstorms and rains are not pleasant to be out in on a bare plain, besides I

had my bedding strapped on under the driving-seat and the nights were chill, so I decided to race the storm. I think the ponies were a bit frightened, for they laid themselves out to gallop well, and soon I had them at full stretch. The thunder growled, the crimson lightning ran along the ground, the darkness swept down over us till I could barely see my leader's ears, and it was all I could do to keep the team on the road. Soon I did not know where I was, when I saw the dark square of the little police post loom up, pulled up, unstrapped the bedding, and bolted for shelter just as the rain came down in sheets. As it happened the little post was the very centre of the disturbance and we were lucky to get the horses and ourselves into shelter.

I have spoken about being run away with in a tandem. My experience suggests that this is a rare occurrence, but it has happened to me, and, as it illustrates the usefulness of being handy with the whip, I may relate my experience here. I had driven out a twenty-mile stage from Dera Ghazi Khan to meet a local dignitary on a tour of inspection, and I had to take him back to the station. Now I had fever at the time, and was weak, and had, too, a leader which had only been at work in harness a short time. Almost as soon as we

got into the cart the leader, a powerful, rather nasty-tempered, but very useful animal, shied at a loaded camel and bolted. Unluckily the wheeler was fresh, and joined in the game. I took a pull, but found that I was powerless, and, moreover, I recognised that, being weakened by fever, I might easily exhaust my strength and roll off my seat. The road was clear and rather sandy, so I devoted my attention to keeping the team straight. All was going well if rather fast, and I felt I should soon get a pull at my rebellious team, when I recollected that a short distance ahead was an Irish bridge across a nullah. An Irish bridge is so called because it goes under instead of over the water, and is a favourite frontier method of preserving roads which are liable to sudden floods. The dry watercourse is bricked where the road crosses it, which preserves the road and gives a sound bottom in times of flood. The descents are, however, often steep, and generally, as you approach these bridges the brickwork stands above the road by four or five inches. Knowing the tendency of country-breds in general and my black in particular to shy, I pictured to myself a sudden swerve, the wheeler's legs caught in the trace, and a general smash up. I tried a pull, but found they were still full of go. Then the best thing to do was to keep

them going, and as we approached the critical point I hit the leader and wheeler, drawing the whip, as it were, the length of the team, and sat tight. Up jumped the cart, down flew the ponies, their feet rattling on the bricks, and up the further side with the traces as tight as possible. I think the sudden change in the road and the swift descent and the weight of the cart as we scrambled up the far side steadied them, for I found I had got hold of them directly we were once more in the road, and the rest of the drive passed without incident.

Thus, then, I bring these notes on tandem-driving to a close. It is to my mind a delightful way of travelling, not, I acknowledge, so good as a coach, but then not every one has a coach to drive, and it is far more interesting than one horse and more exciting than a pair. Yet as the dangers and difficulties are for the most part imaginary, I can recommend it with a clear conscience to those who live in the country, have two ponies, and a steady running, well-built cart. It is no more expensive than single-horse driving if, that is to say, you do not break too many whips. With a few parting counsels to those who may think of taking to tandem-driving I leave the subject. First, do not have the crop of

your whip too long—five feet is quite long enough. Don't be alarmed if your leader gets the rein under his tail; let out the rein till it hangs loose, when it will mostly drop out of itself. If you get into any difficulty, let some one put the team straight for you, and start afresh. If you get the point of the whip caught up in any part of the cart or harness, do not be too proud to pull up and let some one pull it out for you.

CHAPTER XI

FOUR-IN-HAND DRIVING

THERE is no doubt that driving a tandem is easier than driving a team. In the first place, unless the coachman has large and powerful hands, he will find the weight of the four horses in itself a serious difficulty. The near wheeler's rein in particular is apt to slip when the hand gets tired, especially if the horse in question should lean on the driver's hand at all heavily. It would be a great mistake for a fairly expert tandem-driver to imagine that he could at once climb up on to the box of a coach and drive away. But, although the man who has learned to drive tandem has not by any means made himself a coachman thereby, yet he has gone some way along the road to perfection in that art. Such an one can hold his reins in the right way, has learned to keep his hand quiet and to drive as

From an engraving lent by] [*Messrs. Turner & Horsley.*

THE MIGHTY BOAR.

much as possible with one hand, and he will have either acquired a fairly light hand or given up tandem-driving in disgust. Moreover, he will know how to handle his whip; and though it is of course easier to hit one leader than two, yet all that there is to learn will come with practice, patience, and perseverance, and at all events he will know how to catch his thong.

As a matter of fact the tandem-driver will of necessity know nothing of the art of putting four horses into a coach. In harnessing four horses to a coach, and in doing so properly, lies one-half of the art of coaching. No book can teach this, for it is made up of many things of which perhaps experience is the first and most important. No two horses go exactly the same way in harness—nay, more, the same horse does not go every day in the same form. Thus the intending driver of a team should take every opportunity of sitting on the box seat by the side of a good coachman. While there keep your eyes open and see how the harness acts. If the horses are well put together and well driven, you will find the coach run steadily behind you, while the horses in front will trot easily and comfortably, apparently going about six miles an hour, but really doing nine or ten. This means that the team

has been properly put to, that the harness fits, and that, above all, the horses are properly coupled and bitted. If, then, you are allowed to catch hold of such a team, you will find it a fairly easy matter to drive them along a straight road. The first difficulty you will find is that very likely the weight of the reins will incline you to be rough on the horses' mouths. It is not until the hand gets used to the size and weight of four-in-hand reins that a coachman is able to appreciate how delicate is the handling required by four coach-horses. By far the best way to begin when once you know how to handle the reins and whip, as the tandem-driver will have done, is to drive four steady horses an easy stage on a road coach, or else on a stretch of level road to take hold of a team which has been started and brought into form by an experienced coachman. The very first exercise is to learn to hold the reins comfortably to yourself and to your horses, and to get used to driving with the heavy reins requisite for a coach. This must be repeated until you feel at home with the four-in-hand reins and can shorten them at your will. The method of holding the reins is of course the same as in tandem. The next point is to see that the team works well and evenly. On slight slopes or nearly level ground the wheelers should do

the chief part of the work, the leaders just, and only just, carrying their bars. Nothing looks worse than to see the leaders drawing a coach by themselves. It is also dangerous, since they are apt to drag the wheelers on to their noses. The whole art of coachmanship is summed up in the power to make each of the four horses do its share of the work. With a private team of well-broken horses this is comparatively easy, but the real art and pleasure of coaching is surely to be found in working different teams over a distance, and learning to make different horses adapt their powers to drawing the coach with ease to themselves and pleasure to their passengers.

To this end two things are necessary—caution and nerve. No coachman worthy of the name will neglect such precautions as may be necessary to the safety of the coach. First among these is care in descending a hill, for it is during such descents that the worst dangers arise. The coach should start steadily from the crown of the hill at a slow trot, the leaders doing no work at all. Nothing is more dangerous and uncoachmanlike than for four horses to go slinging down a hill with the coach rocking behind them. Then if anything goes wrong, an accident is a certainty. But if the horses are started steadily off the crown

of the hill, the pace can be quickened without danger as the foot of the incline is reached, and advantage taken of a clear road, to steal a bit from the ascent which is against them, by springing them up the slope.

But nerve is wanted when things do not go smoothly. In coaching it is often the unexpected which happens, and the safety of coach and passengers will often depend on the promptness with which the driver acts. Let me give some instances of what I mean, all of which happened to a coach running in the neighbourhood of my present residence.

In the first case the coach, with a heavy load of pleasure-seekers, was coming down a steep hill when the off-lead rein broke. There was on the near side of the road a house with a portico standing right on to the road. The coachman, without a moment's hesitation, put his brake hard on and whipped his leaders into the porch, so that they were rubbing their noses against the door, and thus brought the coach up standing almost before the box seat passengers realised what had happened. The promptness of the action saved a serious mishap. The second instance is an example of the same need of promptness coupled with strength and boldness. The coach had just started, and the horses, rather a free team,

were pulling hard and going a bit faster than they should through the streets of a county town. Coming round a corner, the coachman found a hay-cart right in the middle of the road, or it may be, if anything, rather hanging to the off side. There was no time to pull up, the carter had never heard the horn, so the driver—it was an amateur this time—pulled his leaders on to the pavement, where they slithered and stumbled but kept their feet, followed by the off wheeler and the off wheels, and the coach just got past in safety by the exercise of nerve, promptness, and strength. Yet a third instance of the same kind may be interesting, as showing the line of action to be pursued under somewhat different but at the same time perilous circumstances. The team was the same, the off leader being a hard puller, and always driven with a side rein. Just on the top of a hill, which sloped under a railway arch but luckily went up a sharp ascent the other side, the coach met a runaway carriage. In order to avoid a collision the coachman had to swing away sharply to the near side, and he just shaved the ditch and got past. But his team, startled by the rattle of the runaway, bolted and set off racing down the slope. "Steer them if you can. Don't pull them," was the counsel of the professional

behind to the amateur, and this was thoroughly sound. Directly you try to pull up four galloping horses on a slope the coach begins to rock and an upset is probable. The road in the case I am speaking of was straight and fairly wide, and the coachman, who was young, strong, active, and plucky, kept the team straight until in the natural course of things they were checked by coming into their collars on the opposite slope.

If your nerves are out of order, don't try to drive four horses on a country road. In London it is much easier, as omnibus drivers and others are generally willing to give way to a coach. If you follow the stream, drive steadily, and do not get too close to the vehicle in front, you will find yourself in far less danger in the streets of London than on an open country road. All the same, on wood pavement or asphalte it is as well to remember that a coach runs very lightly, and that you have scarcely any weight wherewith to check your horses, the whole strain consequently coming on your arms. Any one who has steered a coach, say, to Ranelagh with a fresh team must have felt the relief, after crossing Hammersmith Bridge, when he got on the macadam, generally rather rough, of the Castelnau Road.

It has fallen to me to drive queerish teams over indifferent roads in India, and this has made me somewhat sceptical as to the value of some of the rules laid down by modern professors of driving as a fine art. When we get into savage surroundings we are apt to fall back into barbarous, if not unpractical, customs and ways. It is not wise, however, "to differ from the kindly race of men," and therefore if I were driving in London I should observe all the little customary rules, many of which, however, belong rather to the etiquette than to the necessities of driving. But for those who read this book, and who may, for the love of the thing and want of cash, have to drive awkward horses over rough roads, I will suggest some little variations from established practice that I have found useful. In the first place, as to the use of the whip, if you carry the thong folded over the crop in the orthodox fashion, it takes an appreciable time to unfold, and it often happens with a sticky leader in bad ground that it is necessary to hit hard and hit quickly. On these occasions I have followed the plan adopted by the old coachmen, and caught the point under my thumb; then the lash can fly out in a second, and a leader will spring forward into his collar at the critical moment.

Then as to shortening the reins. I am well aware that the orthodox plan is to push the reins back from the front with the right hand, but it is nevertheless convenient sometimes to pull them back from behind the left hand with the right. There seems to me no possible reason why this should not be done on occasion. Again, if you are driving the same team for a long distance, when your hand gets tired and perhaps the wheelers are leaning a bit on your arm, it seems to me quite permissible to bring the right hand in front of the left and take the reins, and then, putting the left in front of the right, to draw the left back, thus shortening the reins without disturbing the horses' mouths. As to the position of the hand, if you are sitting well and easily on the driving seat with enough bend in your knees to get power by straightening your legs and pressing your feet down, it matters little whether the hand is held higher or lower. When a team is going smoothly and, as it were, driving themselves, as they will do, it is a rest to put the hand down and let them go easily; but if while they are fresh the hand is slightly raised on a level with the top button of your trousers, it will give a lighter and more sympathetic touch on the mouths of the horses. Of course it is not necessary to point out that

the hand should not be stretched out awkwardly, but should just rest easily in front. On this point I may quote from an excellent article on "Four-Horse Coachmen," published in *The Field*, July 8, 1899, the whole of which may be read with profit by would-be coachmen: "What the correct position of the left hand may be has never really been decided. Some coachmen, particularly strong physically, have advocated that the hand should be held well up, while others, and among them even the majority of the old coachmen, were in favour of a low position. The omnibus driver of to-day, although he has two horses instead of four, does not hold up his hand on a level with his watch-pocket, the top button of his trousers, or watch chain, as sundry directions have ruled, but drives with an almost straight arm, a position which is advocated by Colonel Corbett in his 'Old Coachman's Chatter.' But then the old coachman had to turn but few corners, and he was content to let his hands lie on his lap. But when he had to pull up, to turn a corner, or drive into an inn yard, his hands had to come up."

The fact is that the position of the left hand is a good deal a matter of strength, and I should be surprised to find that any coachman working over a distance of ground, habitually held his hands up.

It now seems to me that we have arrived at the point at which some hints may be offered as to putting the horses together. Strictly speaking, of course, harnessing comes before driving, but in practice it is necessary to have obtained a considerable amount of experience in driving before the eye will tell us what changes, if any, are necessary in the harness. Indeed, horses need to be driven some distance before even a practised coachman can see what is wanted. Of this the following anecdote given by "Nimrod" is an instance: "I was going by a coach, the proprietors of which I knew, and was in the act of getting on the box with the reins in my hand, when a celebrated performer from another coach requested I would let the coachman take them, as he was going, by the desire of his master (who was also Johnny Raw's master) to put his team a bit straight for him, as his horses were sinking for want of being better put together. The artist looked, but said nothing till we had proceeded about four miles, when desiring the driver to pull up, he got down and made the necessary alterations. The effect was immediately visible, the horses were brought closer to their work, their heads put into their proper places, and their power applied where it ought to be." Unfortunately "Nimrod" does not go into details, but I have no doubt that the "artist"

shortened the inside wheeler's traces a hole and altered the couplings, and perhaps crossed the leader's traces. Let us consider what he saw during those four miles. First of all he would note that the wheelers were pulling unevenly and stood a good chance of sore shoulders, their inside traces being always, or nearly always, loose. Then he would note that the wheelers had not sufficient liberty for road work, and were polled up too tight. Possibly, too, the coupling of one of the wheelers wanted shortening, and the near horse putting on a lower bar of the near side. Then one of the leaders was a much bolder, freer horse than the other, and consequently his bar was always in front, when the lead horses were carrying their bars. This, of course, made the team uneven. Lastly, he would note that one leader kept tossing his head and fretting the mouth of his fellow, and that the leaders' heads were too far apart.

Therefore when the "artist" got down, he would first shorten the wheeler's inside trace, give them a link or two more of the pole chains and lower the near wheeler's rein one or two bars. Then he would cross the leader's traces hooking his off trace (if the free horse was as he should be in the near lead) on to the near hook of his companion's bar and bringing

the off horse's near trace hook to the off-side bar. Then he would put the rein of the fidgetty horse *over* that of his companion and alter the couplings of the leaders so as to bring their heads nearer together. The horses so changed would be pleasanter to drive and would all do their share of work with ease to themselves. It was also said that the "artist" brought the horses nearer their work, and it is as a rule impossible for horses to be too near their work. There is nothing more unsightly than a straggling team, nor is there anything more wasteful of power.

But with one side of the question I have not attempted to deal so far, and that is the expense. Well, of course, a coach and four can never in the nature of things be a cheap toy. But the system of subscription coaches which makes it possible to get practice in driving, under the eyes of some of the best professional coachmen of the day, is by far the best way to learn to drive. The would-be coachman of moderate means should never lose a chance of driving, and once in the "swim," and known to be a steady and fairly competent coachman, plenty of practice will be found possible.

To land-owners and farmers who breed a few horses I suggest that there is more money in teams and pairs well matched and put together

than in any other sort, except heavy horses, and that the time and money expended on becoming competent coachmen will not be lost for them. Horses that know their business are worth more than raw ones by many a pound.

Of the pleasure of driving I say nothing, for that will make itself known as skill and experience comes, but one thing there is about driving a team, and that is that however much one knows there is always something more to learn.

But to get the full enjoyment out of coaching we must drive many different horses over all sorts of roads. Become a partner or subscriber to a road coach, or if there is not one within reach, do as a friend of mine did who owned some land, and who, therefore, we may be sure, was not rich. He bought, matched, and broke various teams, finding for them a ready market and getting his fun for nothing. But if any one should think of trying this, and it is well worth it, let me offer one piece of advice. Be sure you get hold of one really steady horse, old or young, sound or unsound, that you can put anywhere in a team. Such a tutor is invaluable and will save his cost and keep in carriage maker's bills and harness repairer's charges. If you obtain such a horse keep him and let no

money part you, for with his assistance you may break the wildest spirit that ever tried to kick himself out of his harness. Four young horses should never be driven together, because it is possible that they may all decide to bolt together, whereas with one or more older horses you may be pretty sure that they will not be able to agree among themselves what to do.

No man living can hold four, or for the matter of that, two, horses that mean going; therefore in dealing with a team the old Roman maxim, "Divide et Impera," is a good one.

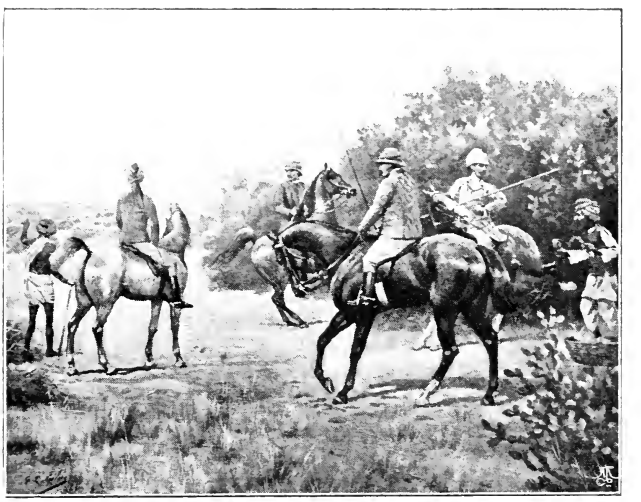
But let no one think that team driving is a dangerous amusement. It is not, for in a team or tandem it is far less likely that your horses will combine against you than when driving a pair. In fact, with a single horse there is the most danger, and with a pair the next. The young gentleman who said he believed it was very difficult to upset a coach was probably right, as the following story may illustrate. A friend of mine, whose courage and strength are much in advance of his skill as a driver, subscribed to a coach and invited a party to his first drive. Something went wrong before they had gone far and the horses bolted. They galloped down a road for nearly two miles, part of the time the off wheel being on the footpath, and part the near wheel in the ditch. At length

they were brought up by the coachman driving up against a telegraph post, which threw the horses down, broke the harness, but brought the coach up standing, and so saved both it and its freight.

CHAPTER XII

HOG-HUNTING

HOG-HUNTING, or as it is more familiarly termed, pig-sticking, is one of the finest wild sports that is left us. To enter into the old dispute as to whether of the two fox-hunting or hog-hunting is the finer sport is as far from my intentions as it would be from my taste, for though the question is often discussed there is no real comparison between the two, each being, under the peculiar conditions which make it possible, as nearly perfect as sport can be. For my own part I would never willingly lose an opportunity of enjoying either, and while sharing in one sport should not desire the other, as each demands all our attention and excites all our enthusiasm. This being the case it is perhaps strange to be obliged to say that there has been a considerable decay in the enthusiasm for pig-sticking in India during the last quarter



From an engraving lent by] [*Messrs. Turner & Horsley.*

PREPARING TO RIDE.

of a century. The reason for this, however, is not difficult to find. Money in India is scarce, and the widespread popularity of polo in that country has taken up the spare time and money of a great many men, who would otherwise have devoted both the one and the other to the chase of the grim, grey boar.

There is not much difference in the cost, but polo has this advantage, that you can obtain it now nearly everywhere and practically all the year round, whereas pig-sticking is only in season before the crops are high, and cannot be pursued everywhere for want of suitable ground and suitable covert. It is absolutely necessary that certain conditions should exist for the latter sport, and it is generally desirable that some care and attention should be paid to the preservation of pig in the district to be hunted, and to the management of the coverts. There are some few favoured spots where the sport can be enjoyed without much previous preparation, and where, with a few beaters, the sportsman can go out and enjoy a run and a kill by himself. Yet these places are few, and most men whose lot is cast in India will never be in them : for the majority of sportsmen by predilection are to be found amongst the soldiers and the police. Civilians are not so often fond of sport, and, indeed, their occupations are now so engrossing

and their duties so many and various that those who have the taste have not always the opportunity. I fancy, too, that the powers that be in India do not, to say the least of it, encourage sporting tastes among young civilians. To this, perhaps, may be attributed the fact which is most undoubted, that of sympathy and intercourse between natives and Europeans there is less, and not more, than there used to be. The native gentleman of the upper class is often a born sportsman, and shows his best side to those who will share his amusements. At all events I have always found that the natives of India of all classes are generally willing to help the sportsman. More particularly is this the case with the hog-hunter, who rids their crops of one of the most destructive animals in the country, and in the course of doing so leaves enough rupees behind him to compensate for the damage he has done. In one case in particular I remember that when the peasants of a neighbourhood had had some months' experience of a well-managed tent club, the pigs increased considerably, being evidently preserved in hopes of bringing the open-handed sahibs to hunt the neighbourhood.

Now the first thing to be done in considering the pursuit of an animal is to learn something of its habits and ways. In writing of the wild

pig the sportsman is only concerned with the full-grown male, for these only are ridden and speared. The boar is fit to hunt at about five years old, and is at his very best, from the hunter's point of view, from that to ten years of age. After that the boar loses his speed, though what he wants in pace he often makes up in ferocity. The younger boars generally seek safety in flight and only attack when pursued or wounded. The older males will sometimes attack you before you have interfered with them, and will almost always do so if you press them in the chase, even though you may not have touched them with the spear. The size of the boar varies according to the district you find him in, and the plentifulness of food, but the average pig runs about thirty-two inches. Many are not more than twenty-eight inches, and a boar of thirty-six inches is a big one, though in exceptional cases they may reach forty-two inches. The largest boar I ever saw killed measured a fraction over thirty-six and a half inches at the wither. His tushes, which I have, are nine inches, but seven to eight inches is a more ordinary length. The tushes I have make a circle, and this is generally the case with complete ones, but of course, when old boars are killed these are often found broken or imperfect. The tushes, which are found in the

lower jaw, so that about three or four inches protrude, are a very important instrument to the boar.

As long as the boar can keep with the sounder, the tushes are kept as sharp as razors, and are capable of inflicting a tremendous cut. Two examples of their sharpness, which I am not likely to forget, occur to me as I write. In the first case we had started a sounder, in which was one rideable boar, a fine, active, dark-coated one, with good tushes for his age, as white as the ivory handle of a new razor, and as sharp as its blade. One of my companions beat me in the race for the first spear, but the boar, turning away from the spear as they often will, let me in. There was a small patch of jungle, for which piggy made a most tremendous spurt, and he entered a few yards in front of me, going along a cattle trodden path. I knew the covert was a small one, and thinking that he would certainly go through, I rode in to get a view of him as he broke. Instead of this he waited, as a wounded pig will often do, and charged out at me as I galloped past. The attack was so sudden that I barely had time to lower the spear I was using, a long Bombay one, and the blade turned off along his back as he went past me. It was all over in a flash, and it was not till I felt the

horse falter and stop that I realised he had been cut. In a moment I was off, and I saw that he was bleeding from a long cut right across the gaskin, and that the near hind leg was hanging useless. In that instant the boar had severed the tendons and muscles, and the horse had to be shot.

The second case was one of more personal danger. A friend of mine—who has long since joined the majority—and I were after a boar. Each of us had speared him, but he had shown no fight so far. At last he laid up in a patch of thick, thorny jungle, and refused to come out. Stones and clods of earth pitched in, had no effect except to draw a surly "Oof-oof" from him. Then we made up our minds to go in on foot, since it was evident he did not mean to come out. There was a small track leading to the place where he was hiding. Not without some tremors did we push our way in. Suddenly he charged right down the path, knocking us both head over heels. My friend had on a pair of brown leather polo boots. These were slit with a clean cut right down the side. The pig, luckily however, had no stomach for the fight and went on, being killed in due course.

Sounders of pig often travel long distances to their feeding ground. They are especially

fond of potatoes, which are grown round cantonments. I knew a sounder which travelled regularly twelve miles every night to the gardens near a cantonment. I often rode out and watched them going back in the moonlight of the early morning. They always followed the same route. The old sow led, then the squeakers, and the boar brought up the rear. For him at last I determined to lie in ambush, so as to catch the sounder in the open at the early dawn, when there would be light enough to ride the pig. There was a slight eminence on which were some stunted bushes, which afforded shelter and concealment while commanding a view of the plain. Presently I saw the sounder lobbing along, a line of black spots. My horse saw them too. He was a nervous Kathiwar stallion and reared up. The sounder heard and saw us. They halted, and the boar and sow put their snouts together and apparently consulted as to the best course to take, with the result that they turned at right-angles to their usual route. I had a good gallop after the boar, but lost him at a river which he crossed on his way to another patch of jungle.

The sugar-cane patches, when they have grown up, are favourite haunts for solitary boar. You cannot beat these, as the covert

made by the cane is too thick. In one station where I was, the only chance of catching pig in rideable ground was to get information of the presence of fat old boars in the sugar-cane crops, and to rout them out with a pack of dogs of various sorts and sizes, of which by far the best was an imported and well-bred fox terrier bitch. She would get on to a pig and stick to him, keeping out of his reach, and yap till she bolted him. Generally speaking, these fat old boars did not run far, and a very short distance led to a fight. I have been charged by boars like this on sight. Once when riding on duty, and armed only with a whip, I was actually chivied down the public road for nearly a quarter of a mile by an angry boar, at which I had idly cracked my whip in passing.

As a rule dogs are in the way of the hog-hunter, but there was one village I used to pass when going to beat certain coverts, from which a large yellow pariah dog used to join me. How he knew I was coming I don't know, but he was sure to come out and follow me. There was a great deal of low covert in the district in which, as all pig-stickers know, it is very easy to lose a pig, and through this the dog would follow the boar. Many a time when I was thrown out I could see my yellow ally hunting alone, and ride to him only to

get a glimpse, as I threw my eyes forward, of the little spiral of dust a pig kicks up as he gallops over sandy grit.

But to return to one of the questions every beginner must ask himself. What horse shall I ride? The answer is the same as would be given to any one who was asking the same question in England. "It depends on the country you are going to hunt in." I have killed pig from a polo pony, and from a big Waler; but the best all-round horse I ever owned was an Arab. For courage and cleverness over rough ground I never saw his equal. I think the advice I should give would be, if you are hunting by yourself or in close, difficult country, the Arab is the horse, but if you are with a large party in fairly open country, a Waler will get most first spears; while it is better to ride a pony if the stable is short than not to go at all if you have the chance. One pony, at least, I have known which would follow the turns and twists of a pig as a terrier follows a rat. But whatever breed the horse may be of, one thing is necessary. He must have courage. It is not by any means every horse that will go right up to a boar, and fewer still will face a charging one. Nothing is more exasperating, and at the same time more dangerous, than a horse that will

just not go up to the pig. Arabs seldom fail in this, and with all their faults are the best and safest horses as a rule. The Waler when good is very good, and I have known casters from a dragoon regiment to make excellent pig-stickers.

Having considered the horse, let us turn to another matter of no slight importance to the hunter—the spear. There are two kinds of spears in use: the long spear about eight feet in length, which is used with a free wrist. This is a very easy, handy weapon, and on open ground is possibly the better in pursuit. In closer countries, and with a charging boar, the shorter, or Bengal spear, which is not more than six feet six, and weighted with lead, and is used with a jobbing stroke downwards, has great advantages. When racing with a party of fellow sportsman for the first spear the long spear is the easier to use, but when hunting alone the sportsman will find the short, heavy spear a more effective weapon. In any case a travelling sportsman should have both kinds, and learn to use them, as of course it is usual for all members of the hunt to use the same kind of spear. A caution which cannot be too strongly impressed on the young sportsman, is to be careful how he carries his spear. When not actually in use never let him, under any

excitement, point the spear at any one. It should always be carried with the point upwards, so that under no circumstances should it be directed at a rider or a horse, or so lowered as to catch in the ground. If a man be riding a fidgetty horse, and some horses are very excitable when hog-hunting is the sport, he should be careful to ride clear of the rest of the party. Carelessness with the spear has occasioned serious and sometimes fatal accidents to both man and horse. The spear-heads can be procured from Aurangabad, the best shape being the flat, oval blade.

The shaft of the spear is also of importance. It should be made of bamboo, and be strong and round, and should have plenty of spring without being whippy. It is somewhat difficult to describe accurately the feel of the right sort of spear-shaft, but a little practice will soon show the difference between a good and bad bamboo. The shaft should, of course, be thickest at the head, tapering to a point where the steel spear-head is fixed.

An Englishman who wishes to indulge in this, the finest of our wild sports, will naturally choose to go to India for it, and the first point to be settled will be the time of year for the trip. For various reasons connected with the course of husbandry in India, and the

cutting of the crops, from February to the end of June would be found to be the best time on the whole for the stations of Muttra, Agra, Delhi, or Meerut, and it is to one or other of these places that I should advise the sportsman to go. They are accessible, and in each there will be found either a tent club or some sportsmen of experience who will guide the footsteps of the new comer. The places are on the main line of the G.I.P. or N.W.R., and Muttra is easily reached from Aligarh. There are English troops at all the above places, and the pig-sticking at Muttra and Agra has been carefully organised by the different regiments which have been stationed there, notably by the 13th Hussars at Muttra, and 96th (Manchester) regiment at Agra. There are various ways of living at these places, most of them having Dâk bungalows, or hotels. If, however, the visitor is prepared to face the heat of May and June, which is very great, I should advise taking the whole or part of a bungalow, furniture, and servants from some one going to the hills for the hot weather. These are easily hired, and Indian hotels are neither remarkable for cleanliness nor good food. They are, however, not extravagant in their charges. The cost of living in any case, including the keep of the horses, would be about Rs. 400 a

month, *i.e.*, at the present rate of exchange, about £21.

For outfit you take your ordinary clothes, and a native tailor will, on your verandah, make you suits of kharki for jungle wear, and if you give him an old pair of good polo breeches to cut up, will make you a very passable article. For boots, brown polo boots are the best; and spurs, which should always be worn, should be of the short-necked kind. As to saddles, take what you have, or if you like to fit yourself out with new ones by makers who are known and trusted in India, Nicholls of Berkeley Street and Souter will always find purchasers when you leave. Raw hide girths are the best for hot weather, but I have found Fitzwilliam answer very well. Light double bridles, such as most people use for polo, are the most serviceable, but if you buy horses from men out in India, I should advise buying the bridle he is ridden in as well. On the whole a real hard-puller is rare in India, and I should certainly not buy one for pig-sticking, however good he was otherwise. I should prefer buying horses with a character, and that know the game to raw ones, even if they are a little knocked about; but in buying old horses be sure that age has not brought cunning, and that they will go right up to their

pig. Buy horses as good as possible; you have to sell them when you leave, and there is far less loss on good horses than bad ones. Indeed, in India as in England for good horses there is always a market. As to the number of horses, that must be limited by your purse, and the quantity of sport you hope to get. One thing, however, must be borne in mind, that a horse is little good to you anywhere if you cannot ride him comfortably. At pig-sticking he is no good at all. Granted that a horse has the power to carry you and boldness to go right up to a pig, or to meet a charging boar, it is absolutely necessary, if you hope to enjoy yourself, that he should be (to you) pleasant to ride. Though Arabs may fulfil your requirements most easily on this point, they are the most expensive, and you must not forget the risks of injury which are so considerable between bad ground, fierce pigs, and one's own awkwardness, that you will on the whole congratulate yourself, not unnaturally, if at the end of the season you have three out of your four horses uninjured. I have, indeed, known a man start on three months' leave for pig-sticking with five horses and two ponies, and come back at the end of three weeks because he had nothing to ride. True he was a very reckless and a very indifferent horseman.

On the whole, considering all things, I should mount myself, if I were on a visit in India, on country-breds, and for this reason: Four Arabs such as you would require would average at least Rs. 1,500, *i.e.*, Rs. 6,000 = between £300 and £400, whereas the country-breds should cost not more than half that sum. You would want two more, and then your outlay, taking them at Rs. 750 apiece, which is high, would be Rs. 4,700, or about £250. The cheapest and by no means the worst pig-stickers I have known were Waler casters, and these might cost anything down to Rs. 23, or about £1 5s., for which I once bought an excellent mare. If you are a rich man a good stud would be a Waler at Rs. 2,000 for open country, a couple of Arabs at Rs. 2,500, and a couple of country-breds or Kathiawar or Cabuli horses—though I don't care for the last, they are deficient in heart—and a pony or two. But people must "cut their coat according to their cloth," and if economy is to be considered, I prefer country-breds. They are often very good, and quantity is better than quality, and it is astonishing what you can do if you must. Quality you may have as much as you can get, but quantity you must have if you are to see sport for any length of time.

In going in search of pig you will assuredly

have to go into camp, no hardship even in hot weather. Personally I think the tent life is not the least delightful part of "Shikar" in India, and it is wholesome. Moreover, I am somewhat of a Spartan about tents, and prefer an equipment which is easy to move. The officer's Cabul tent is a very good one, and light—eighty pounds—and it only costs Rs. 75. A pâl for servants, a chair, a table, and one of the ordinary string charpoys used by poorer natives as a bed, are the other necessaries. One thing I must have is sleep, and all the camp beds I have ever had render sleep impossible. Never, except in cases of necessity, sleep on the ground, for it spells fever. A bath of some kind is desirable; I have always taken the ordinary zinc baths, which will hold many things, and can easily be packed on camels or mules, or in ekkas. A portable washstand and basin are among the necessaries of life.

Perhaps, however, the reader may be surprised at a recommendation to one not acclimatised to go hog-hunting in the hottest time of the year. The chances, however, are that with ordinary care and prudence the sportsman will not only not suffer from the heat, but will hardly feel it at all. If you spend three hot seasons in India, in the first

you will wonder why people make such a fuss about it; in the next you will think the days are long; and during the third you will wonder how people ever endure it and live. But although the new comer may not feel any great inconvenience from the heat, it nevertheless behoves him to be careful. Yet are the rules of prudence for the man who is engaged in healthy outdoor occupation very few and simple. But do not mistake: though simple and few, they are important. First, protect the head and spine from the sun. For this purpose a pith helmet, which after April has begun should have a quilted, cotton-wove cover and curtain, is best. Then there should be a quilted lining to the back of your hunting-coat. Both cover and the lining can be made by the *dirzi* (tailor). A flannel belt should always be worn round the waist. Every morning before starting your servant will bring you a cup of tea and some toast or biscuits; never by any chance go out without drinking the one and eating the other. Very little medicine will be needed, but two or three grains of quinine every morning will do no harm, and, in my experience, are useful as prophylactics against fever and cholera. There is one foe against which I can offer no protection, and that is prickly heat. This torment

attacks different people in different degrees, but if it is bad, and you have a skin like a boiled lobster and a temper like a rat-trap, there is nothing for it but flight to Naini Tal, Murree, or Simla, whichever station is the nearest to your hunting-ground. Lastly, never keep uncovered at night, however great the heat, but throw a light blanket over your middle. In the hot weather the changes of temperature are often very great. If you are in fairly good condition —and you certainly ought to be for pig-sticking —thirst will not trouble you, and you should, after the morning tea, drink as little as possible till the day's work is over.

Pig-sticking is a sport which is as delightful in its accompaniments as it is exciting in itself. For my own part I delight in it all, from the moment when one arrives at the camp till the return to ordinary life. Pleasant is the scene in the camp, pleasant the dinner, which is sure to be a good one ; pleasantest of all the cheroot in the clear, Eastern moonlight ; pleasant, too, to lie for a short time and listen to the barking of a distant dog or the wild chants of the jackals before you fall asleep. I have heard people abuse the cry of the jackal as melancholy, and even as blood-curdling, but to me it is always connected with the pleasures of the chase, and has, therefore, a music of its own.

There is nowhere such sleep as in camp, and it seems but a moment ere one hears the chant of the bearer, repeated till you awake, "*Cha tai-yar hai, sahib.*" By the time the tea is finished you are wide awake. Boots are pulled on easily: for the wise man in India always has his riding-boots a size too large for him, at all events for pig-sticking. Now pass your thumb along the edge of the spears, which should have been sharpened for the occasion; a blunt spear will spoil your hunt, and may cost you a good horse. Then comes the beat: either you may find yourself riding behind the line of beaters, or posted at favourable points for them to beat up to you—this depends on the nature of the covert. But wherever you are placed, stay there; and above all things do not attempt to ride the pig till the signal is given, or, if you are by yourself, until the pig is well away. If you ride pig too soon they will almost invariably jink back again to the jungle; and there no one can stop them, nor can they be induced to break again. The beat is an exciting moment. You know, of course, the pig are there, because the shikari should always have "harboured" them to a certain extent. The question is when and where they will break, and whether the big boar will be with them or whether he will have crept

through the beaters and charged back. Far in the distance rise the cries of the beaters and the rattle of the tom-toms, and the noise comes nearer till it is close to the clump of trees you are hidden in. Louder and more excited shouts tell you the sounder is afoot, and presently you will see a number of little black dots shoot out of the covert, pause for an instant as though to decide upon their point, and then canter off at no great pace, though they are going faster than they seem to. You note that of two big ones among them one is a sow the other a boar. If your eyes are keen, you will be able to catch the gleam of the tushes. You can judge pretty well by the boar's appearance what sort of a day you are going to have. If he is lanky and young he will go fast, jink sharply, and run far. If he is big, fat, and heavy he will very likely turn and fight before he has gone a great distance; but if, instead of the sounder, a solitary boar is seen lobbing at a dignified pace over the plain, then you will certainly have more fighting than galloping, and lucky—or, perhaps, I should say skilful—will that party be which comes off without one or more horses badly cut. The horse will probably have seen the pig before you do, and you will feel his heart beating against his ribs. The good beast knows the

danger and loves the excitement of the chase, and is willing, like his master, to risk the one for the sake of the other. One horse of mine, when it saw pig, would rear up quietly; but whether to get a better view, or from suppressed excitement, I do not know. I think, however, the former, as he never snatched at his bridle, and lowered himself quietly without attempting to bound off.

When the signal is given it may still be advisable to ride steadily behind the pig without pressing. It is a great thing with all animals of the chase to keep them on the move. But at last the moment comes, and we are all straining for the spear. As soon as the sounder realises that they are pursued, the little striped piglings will scatter in all directions, till the country seems alive with what the cockney child once described as a pig's "kittens." Then the sow jinks away, and gradually the boar is left alone, with his pursuers closing upon him. One man on the fastest horse has drawn nearest to the boar and the spear seems a certainty, but as the gleaming point approaches the bristly hide quick as thought the boar has jinked, has apparently put his head where his tail was, and is off in another direction. The leading horse cannot turn at once, and shoots ahead, and the

man behind is now on the pig, and wheeling a little so as to get him on the off side (never spear, except in extreme cases, on the near side), and is pursuing him close, closer, till he can see the little wicked eye and the gleam of the tushes. Then a change. With a sharp "oof-oof," round comes the pig and charges. Now keep the spear low, if a long one, for most pigs jump up as they deliver their attack, and, above all things, keep the spear steady. If you dig the least bit you will most likely miss him. The pig hurls himself on the spear, and at the pace you are going the sharp blade pierces the hide like a knife going into a pat of butter; yet if you try to spear a boar when you are both stationary it will take you all your strength to force the spear through his tough hide. "Oof-oof," and he turns off. Perhaps you break the spear in him; possibly it is wrenched out of your hand, and remains nodding and bending; a danger to those who come after you, for the wounded pig will now probably die charging. He may, of course, decline the fight, and die sulkily; but in, say, seven cases out of ten he will charge the next man, and mean business. Though mounted on a slower horse, the man who now has pig in hand is a veteran pig-sticker; and if he is using a short spear it smashes

down on the spine, and the boar rolls over dead.

There are infinite varieties of incident in the chase, and the ground over which it is carried on. The latter is mostly rough and stony; and it may be said that, generally speaking, the faster you ride over bad ground the less likely you are to fall. On the whole, I am surprised to recollect so few fatal accidents, or even serious falls; yet I have seen horses roll over like shot rabbits on rough ground when the stones were so thick that it seemed as if one's brains (if any) must be dashed out.

And so the days and the weeks go on till the increasing heat reminds us of the joys of cooler climates, or, it may be, we go off to Kashmir to shoot markhor, or to Central India for big game; but, go where we will, we shall never find sport like pig-sticking, and whatever be our opinion of the second half of the board-school boy's peroration to his essay on the pig, we shall all agree with the first, "The pig is interesting when alive, and refreshing when dead."

If this be true of the porker, how much more of the gamest of game beasts of the chase.

From an engraving lent by [*Messrs. Turner & Horsley.*

THE FIRST SPEAR.

CHAPTER XIII

JACKAL-HUNTING

HOG-HUNTING is, without doubt, the first and best of Indian sports, but it is not everywhere procurable. In some places the increase of fire-arms has made pig very scarce ; in others, though pig are fairly plentiful, you cannot ride them because the ground is not sufficiently open, or the coverts are too thick ; but almost everywhere you can get some excellent sport with the jackal. The jackal is larger and stronger than the English fox, and is very stout. It takes a great deal of killing, and affords good sport either with a pack of English foxhounds or with what is locally known as a " bobbery " pack. It is rather the fashion to depreciate Indian jackal-hunting ; but, as a matter of fact, its deficiencies arise rather from want of knowledge and management on the part of those who undertake it,

than in any inherent difficulty in the sport itself. The man who really wishes to have good sport with hounds in India must be prepared to take a great deal of trouble, and he must know something of hunting hounds. To sit on a horse and to blow a horn is not the whole art of hunting. The cost, too, is considerable, since, even with care and economy, a pack of hounds in India cannot be a cheap matter. Nevertheless it can be done, and has been done, and good sport has been shown whenever and wherever a pack of hounds has been kept, if only the master has been able and willing to give the requisite personal attention and trouble to the matter. The first thing, however, is to procure some hounds; and this can only be done in two ways, either by importing hounds or by buying those which have been in the country a season. The Bombay and Poonah hounds are generally sold at the close of their respective seasons, for both these hunts adopt the plan of importing a fresh pack every year. This is necessary, indeed, unless you are so near to the hills that you can, as the Peshawur Vale do, keep your hounds at a hill station for the hot months. My own experience leads me to think that the latter is the better plan where practicable. The best packs I have had have been those

which I bought in the country, while the imported hounds were generally less satisfactory in their first season. It is by no means every foxhound that will enter to jackal; and all, I think, hunt better in their second or third season. The latter, alas! is about the limit of time to which you can keep a foxhound in working order, and you must arrange to have a draft each year to make up deficiencies.

It need not be said that large packs are not often kept up in India; but then the jackal is not seldom found in the open. From six to fourteen couple is the number usually kept. I prefer the latter, of course; but have had very good sport with the former number. If you have much sugar-cane covert, a couple or two of good terriers will be found very useful, as it is most difficult to get the jackals to break from these, and the canes cut the hounds terribly. The best plan is to draw the coverts with tufters, consisting of the terriers and one or two trusty hounds. The rest of the pack, meantime, should be taken to a little distance. Very often one jackal, bolder than the rest, will break away first. If the whole pack are in covert, and there are other "jacks" there, they will hang to those that remain. Scent is so much better in covert than out, and it is so impossible for whippers-in to get to hounds,

that sport is often spoiled because hounds cannot be got away after the jackal, that the plan I have suggested is perhaps the best. If there is no sugar-cane, or if the crop has been cut, the jackal may be found in various coverts, or in the large native gardens, which are like small woods. These, though they are generally fairly open and easy to draw, frequently hold riot in the shape of sounders of pig and wild cat. I have on several occasions had hounds badly cut by boars. The scent of the wild pig is most ravishing to hounds, and they literally scream on his line, and are often most difficult to stop. The wild cat, too, gives a scent to which hounds, especially those fresh from England, stoop much more readily than to a jackal. Foxes in India are of no good for hunting, for they leave no scent to speak of.

We now turn to the management of the pack in kennel, which is by far the most difficult part of the business and the most important. It is difficult but not impossible to keep hounds in health in India, and it is a matter simply of the willingness to take trouble. The kennel may be made out of any outbuildings, for on one occasion mine, which was healthy but very simple, consisted of two unused servants' houses, with a door between and a yard in front. If I had to keep hounds again, I would put a covering

of matting over the yard so that hounds would be protected from the sun and yet able to lie in the open. But if this is not done, I advise putting them in their sleeping-rooms from say eleven till two, even in the cold weather, since nothing is so bad for hounds as lying in the sun. The day's routine with my hounds was as follows: I used to go out as soon as it was light and let the hounds out for five or ten minutes, and then getting on a pony and taking one of the kennel men—I kept one for each three couple of hounds—we went out for a trot along the road. While this was being done the kennels were thoroughly cleaned and swept and the straw beds put out in the sun. On the return of the pack I used to sit in the kennel while the hounds were cleaned, the following being the process: Each hound was damped—not wetted—with a cloth dipped into a weak solution of Jeyes' Fluid, then he was hand-rubbed all over and thoroughly dried, and last of all brushed over with a soft horse brush. This done, it was feeding time. The food consisted of legs, shoulders, and breasts of mutton with atta[1] boiled thoroughly, occasionally a little rice, and twice a week green vegetables mixed with it. Hounds should be drawn one by one by name in lots of two or

[1] Wheat flour.

three couple, the shy feeders first, the greedy ones last. As soon as the eye of the master was satisfied that the pack were fed evenly and well they were taken into an orchard under some trees and allowed to run about, during which time I gave a few Spratt's biscuits for the sake of making friends. At one time I gave bones, but we had so many narrow escapes of choking that although I am sure bones are most excellent for the health of hounds yet the risk was too great since it was impossible to replace a hound. The pack were then shut up and the men went off to their food. Hounds were taken out on foot in the evening, besides being let out once or twice in the course of the day for five or ten minutes as I could spare time. Occasionally a little food was given in the evening to delicate hounds. Clean water was always supplied, of course, and no droppings were ever permitted to remain. A man was always on duty, and he moved everything, and scattered a little sifted earth which was kept for the purpose in a pail near the kennel. I had no case of sickness in the kennel for a whole season, nor was it until the hounds went up to the hills that I lost any. This was the routine for ordinary days.

On hunting days we started for the fixture

early enough to enable us to reach the destined point by the time it was fairly light. I had one dark-coloured hound that came, I believe, from Dorsetshire, and when I could see him plainly from horseback it was time to draw. Many a good gallop we had, while the cheery cry of hounds in the cool, misty, morning air was itself a pleasure to the exile. One day's sport may stand for many, though, of course, by no means all were as good as this. There are quite as many disappointing days with hounds in India as in England, but not, I think, more. One day in particular I recollect when hounds drew a small wood round which there were a few fields of partly cut sugar-cane. I had not been in covert long before first one hound and then another gave tongue. There was a capital scent, and my good little pack flew together so quickly that they were away before I could get clear. For ten minutes they ran hard, and two of my field who came up late just nicked in with the hounds as they streamed away. I got to hounds as they checked, cast them up a sort of hedgerow, and hit off the line. Away we streamed into and round a walled native garden, where I feared the jackal would go to ground. However, he did not, but climbed out over the wall. A friend who

always acted as whipper-in and myself were on foot in the garden, and he viewed the jackal out. We had to lift the pack out one by one over the broken wall, and then the native whipper-in and the field brought us our horses. Once outside, the hounds ran as fast as ever; this was just about the time in the morning when the sun has warmed the dew and not yet dried the ground and the scent is at its very best. Hounds raced away again and about half an hour or so from the find I found myself back in the covert from which I had started, but the stout jackal was not done yet. For fully another hour we hunted him, though never at the same pace as at first, until at last hounds ran into him in the most orthodox fashion in a ditch.

I don't know who it was who first put forward the idea that foxhounds will not break up a jackal, but of the packs I have known not one has ever failed in keenness in that respect. I used to carry a hunting-knife and cut the skin, for it is so tough hounds cannot make much impression; some few hounds will not touch it, but then neither will many hounds break up a fox.

Now let us turn to the best way to hunt hounds in India. In the first place it is desirable to make them as handy as possible, for it

is not usual to have very good whippers-in. Personally I was fortunate in this, the friend who helped me being both keen and capable. But still you may find yourself without any assistance but that of your native kennel-man, and he, if fairly handy with hounds, is seldom much of a horseman. Another difficulty that besets an Indian huntsman is that his little pack is generally made up of drafts from all sorts of kennels, and it is not the best of hounds that are sent to India. On the other hand, when hunting two days a week the working pack on each day is not likely to consist of more than ten couples, and generally less. The first thing to do, then, is to get the hounds to hunt together and to come to the huntsman. The closest individual study of each hound and the friendship which is sure to exist between the master and his hounds will help greatly, and it is not unlikely that an enthusiast who would go through all the trouble necessary to keep a pack will spend a good many of his spare hours in the kennel. The first thing to do is to get hounds to answer to their names, which is best done quietly in the kennel with the assistance of pieces of biscuit. Hounds in India have practically two names each, for there are the kennel names they bring with them, and the native versions of the same, which they

seem readily to learn. Thus Rhapsody becomes "Rampasdy," Monarch "Munka," and so on. People who send out hounds do not, however, always send their names with them, and I once met a draft at an up-country station which had not a name between them. Apparently one savage old dog-hound so resented this as to begin the proceedings by flying at me as soon as he was let out of the horsebox. However, in a week they were re-named, and a fortnight later were handy enough to be hunted and become a very useful pack, with which we showed some capital sport. Every now and then, however, one gets hold of hounds which decline altogether to enter to jackal.

The greatest nuisance is a mute hound, of which we get not a few. Yet that master must be unlucky indeed who does not get at least one huntsman's friend, and the names of Victory and Villager I still gratefully remember. Villager was a big spotted hound with a lovely tongue and a fine nose which could always be trusted; while Victory was seldom wrong, only it was necessary to keep near her, for though not exactly mute she had the quietest sort of muffled note I ever heard, but her stern, which had lost its tip, was a most infallible sign: directly she shot off running and snuffling,

waving her stump, that was the line of the Jack, and the sooner the rest of the pack were got to her the better.

If we turn now from the kennel to the stable, the best class of horses are Walers if you can afford them, or country-breds if you want a cheaper animal. Myself and men were all mounted on country-bred horses and ponies, and we were very well carried on the whole. The jumps met with are small mud walls, then fences of dried bushes heaped together, and *bunds*, which are channels for carrying water from one field to another for irrigation purposes; they are about three feet six inches high and eighteen inches to two feet broad at the top. Then there are in many places irrigation canals, which may be anything from six feet to eighteen in breadth, but have generally sound bottoms. There is plenty of sport to be had, and two or three keen spirits joining together in places where there is no pig-sticking, might have excellent fun.

The cost of twelve to fourteen couple of hounds is about Rs. 150 a month, and each couple of hounds cost from Rs. 100 to Rs. 150 to buy. If, however, you have a station pack, and are assisted by a subscription, on Brigade holidays—every Thursday—I should advise running a carefully laid drag. Many

of your followers want to ride, and some have no experience of hounds, and as they believe that you have only to find a jackal and gallop away, are easily discouraged by the tedium of an ordinary hunt. This means keeping a few hounds for this work only, but five or six couple will be ample, and some hounds will serve in both packs. Of course, the best at hunting jackal will not be taken out with the drag.

II.—Bobbery Packs.

There is, however, another and a cheaper method of getting some sport, and that by keeping what is known as a "bobbery" pack, which is a mixed pack of all sorts of dogs. To get really good sport, these should be kennelled like hounds and treated much in the same way, except that you would need less labour. Small foxhounds, pure or cross-bred harriers, large fox-terriers, and mongrels of a sporting turn are all useful. Some hounds there must be, as they find the jackal and give tongue and thus keep the pack together. A capital cross for hunting purposes is a pariah dog, choosing a fine, healthy animal, and a foxhound; the puppies being brought up by and with the mother will have many of her ways. They will, however, usually, though not always, run mute. Leggy

terriers and spaniels also make a good cross. Directly the jackal breaks, get the fastest dogs away with him and let the others come as they can, and you will have many a good gallop. The use of the body of the pack is to find and to force the jackal out of covert. It is well to ride so as to view him as much as possible; if you lose sight of him you must wait till some of the "smell" dogs arrive on the scene. Very curious traits of canine character are seen in a bobbery pack. One dog I had, a cross between a spaniel and retriever, was an animal of extraordinary sagacity—one of those that could turn to any trade. His proper occupation was retrieving, and a capital retriever he was, but one morning he escaped and went out with the bobbery pack. For some time he watched the proceedings, then grasping the fact that finding a jackal was the object, he trotted straight off to the kennel of the quarry and roused him. After this he would always find the jack; he seemed to know by instinct if there was one in the covert. If not he would refuse to go in. No sooner did the run begin than poor old Dash was left miles behind and could be seen toiling across the plain, cutting off corners and striving to be up at the finish or to share in the work of turning the quarry out of some garden or coppice in which

he had taken refuge. A well-managed, well-hunted "bobbery" pack, on which a very little money and some trouble has been expended, will afford an interest to the morning's ride, and give a good deal of healthy pleasure and sport.

III.—Greyhounds.

There are places where greyhounds are the best of dogs for sport, because in some parts of India there is little rain, and the dry, rocky soil carries practically no scent at all. In these districts, however, jackals, foxes, hares, and even a wolf or hyæna may generally be found in the early morning. These you must of course sight yourself and lay the dogs on. The best animal for coursing in India, as in England, is the hare. The Indian hare is very small and has a reprehensible fondness for going to ground, but she has extraordinary staying powers and can dodge and turn in a wonderful manner. Many a good gallop have I seen with hares in the neighbourhood of Rajkote, where it was my good fortune once to be stationed. Next to hares, foxes I think are the best for coursing. Curiously enough the Indian fox is no use for hounds, as he leaves so little scent behind, and the pack cannot run him farther than they can see him. But he

has tremendous speed for a short distance, and he, like the hare, is full of dodges. For jackal coursing I do not care; the jack, though very stout and enduring before hounds, is not a very speedy animal, and can scarcely stand up before a good brace of greyhounds for more than about two hundred yards. It is, however, by no means every greyhound that will tackle a jackal when he has run up to him, and many will not do so at all. I remember once seeing a ludicrous sight. A friend of mine had brought out a Scotch deerhound of imposing size and appearance. It was of course decided to see what he could do. The place where we were was a dull little frontier station, and we none of us had any good dogs. Accordingly the new importation was taken out, and two or three couple of fox-terriers soon found a jackal for him. Away went the jackal over the plain, away the great hound after him in most approved style. Presently the dog overhauled the jackal. Up sat the jack on his haunches showing his teeth, the dog sat up too opposite him, but at a respectful distance. We came up and halloed the dog on, then the jack cleared out again, and again the dog went after him, but when the jackal found himself being caught he went through the same performance, and the dog responded by sitting up,

but always at a respectful distance. When it became plain that the dog was without any stomach for the fight he was sent home in disgrace to his bungalow. Was he afraid, or did his proud Highland soul disdain the unworthy quarry? I am afraid it looked very like the former.

From an engraving lent by] [*Messrs. Turner & Horsley.*

THE KILL.

CHAPTER XIV

RACING

THIS is a large theme for a little book, but it is not likely that the owners of large racing stables will come here for instruction, and as I have in my mind the man who can only indulge in sport within the limits of moderate means it is for him I write. Leather plating or polo pony racing shall, then, be my theme, the more that in my time I have shared in and enjoyed both these forms of racing. For the man who can train and ride his own horse or pony obtains more pleasure out of racing than many large owners. Nor, if he be fairly fortunate in his purchases, will he find the cost excessive, always provided that he is a very moderate bettor, or does not bet at all. For such a man there are plenty of opportunities of enjoying the sport he loves, especially if he wears her Majesty's

uniform. At regimental meetings, point-to-point races, and hunt meetings he can find events in which to enter his horse.

Race riding is like playing the fiddle, in that every one thinks he can do it if he tries, though, as a matter of fact, it is a fine art which cannot be attained without practice and pains, and then only a few men will really be first-rate. There are many races of value and importance in this country, and the rewards of successful jockeyship never were so great, yet the really fine horsemen now riding can be counted on the fingers of one hand, and the other would suffice for the average performers. Natural aptitude, considerable intelligence, combined with an infinite capacity for taking pains are necessary, and after all the jockey may be only a very moderate judge of pace. But though the standard of the best jockeyship is high, the amateur may console himself with the thought that most other men are in the same case as himself, while he, loving the sport greatly, may be willing to give to it all the time and trouble he can spare, and thus to attain a fair amount of proficiency for a gentleman rider. A certain relative of mine, a very smart officer, and afterwards adjutant of his regiment, in his early days overheard two sergeant-instructors discussing his own merits.

"I say Mr. Smith knows his drill very well," remarked one. "Pretty well," said the other. "Very —— well!" returned the first, getting excited. "Well, well," conceded the second, "he knows it very well for an officer"; and so if we can attain to ride "very well for a gentleman rider" we may therewith be content. Of course there are gentleman riders to whom most professionals certainly cannot give seven pounds, but they are only few.

Naturally, if we wish to ride races, the best thing is to learn from the beginning, and a light-weight who has time and opportunity cannot do better than ride exercise gallops in a training stable. One of the best, perhaps the very best gentleman rider seen in India in our day, used to get regular practice in this way, and the captain (he is a distinguished general now) might often be seen striding along on one of a string of thoroughbreds belonging to a much respected trainer jockey. Never lose a chance, and you will learn more than any book can teach you, or at least you will learn to form some idea of how much there is yet for you to know. This, it will be granted, is in itself not a little. But probably the man who reads this book will be one who will not want to ride often, but who, being a fair performer in the hunting field or on the polo ground,

wishes to ride in a regimental race, a hunt steeplechase, or a point-to-point, and to whom I should give advice in few words and simple, and chiefly in the negative. Do not ride in too small a saddle; better by far to carry a pound or two over-weight and ride in a saddle you are at your ease in; and do not roll about in your saddle more than you can help. Sit still and keep your hands low. Don't let your horse's head go. Don't carry a whip or spurs in a flat race, though in a steeplechase you must do so. Don't, if you are winning, be persuaded to "wait and make a race of it" by any thought of shining in the eyes of the gallery. The nearer you get to the winning-post the stiller you should sit; above all, don't try to finish. If your horse can't win, you can't do it for him. Do not for a moment forget you are neither Archer nor young Cannon, nor even Tod Sloan, still less Tom Cannon, Fordham, or Fred Webb. Don't race with every one who comes alongside you, but keep your horse at a little less than his best pace, and at one pace as far as possible. Never mind if you are two or three lengths behind, or even more, the others will come back to you. Don't wait too long, but after the last hurdle, or at the distance post, let the horse stride along. Don't look behind you;

don't get flurried; don't let your horse's head loose; and then, greatly to your astonishment, you may not improbably win, if the horse is good enough. Don't be too much elated at the applause of your backers if you win, nor depressed at the abuse of your friends if you do not; probably none of them know too much about it.

Now for a few positive counsels. I have said that in a steeplechase you must carry both whip and spurs, but you should use them as little as you can. Nevertheless there are times when both are necessary; some well-bred horses are lazy and require rousing at their fences. Do not, however, hit your horse just as he takes off, but give him one smart cut just behind the girths about three lengths before the fence. If he requires spurs, a sharp dig also behind the girths will be serviceable. A horse galloping at three-quarter speed over a fence wants all his wits about him, and should never be frightened or flurried. If your horse refuses to the near side and you notice any signs of faltering, bring your whip up and hit him sharply over your left shoulder. I have known horses taken by surprise and forget to refuse. Try to keep your horse straight at his fence, and make up your mind what place you want to jump at. If you are riding over

a made-up course, inasmuch as the whole fence is practicable do not look for weak places, but choose the spot where the take-off is soundest; a few inches makes no difference, and it is at weak, thin places that scrimmages occur and accidents happen. Sit right back as far as you can over all your fences, especially at water. Many blood horses give a tremendous hoist with their quarters, which will often pitch the unwary on to his ears. This will not improve your chance or that of your horse. I once said to a nimble and athletic young horse-soldier who was riding a horse of mine, "Mind, he jumps very big at water." The water was indeed for me the turning point of the race, and there I took up my stand. The little bay pricked his ears as he came near, and went at it as bold as brass, but the rider was fairly jumped off on to the horse's ears. For a moment he sat there, then swung round underneath on the near side. To my astonishment the rider, who was a clever gymnast, scrambled back again into the saddle, coming up on the off-side; but, alas! when he reached the saddle the four reins were all on one side!

If your horse shows any signs of distress, changes his legs, and if he rolls in his stride, take a steady pull at all costs. He may come

again—very likely he will—and perhaps you will win after all, but it is quite certain he cannot win if you press him at that moment. Choose your ground in a steeplechase, walking over it carefully before the race, noting the easiest galloping ground; a foot or two more or less in a fence makes no difference, but a bit of ground where your horse can gallop on the top will often win a race at the end. The horse that has had those few strides of good ground often has just that much left in him at the end to make an effort with. Lastly, if you are riding for any one else, ride strictly to orders. The owner or trainer ought to know best what will enable his horse to win the race. Well do I remember a race in which a certain gentleman rider was ordered to wait till the distance post, and then to collar the horse supposed to have the speed of his mount, but not believed to have the best heart in the world. Whether the rider mistook another post for the distance, or whether he thought he knew best, I cannot say, but at all events he began to race a quarter of a mile from home, and was beaten on the post by a head in consequence. The owner might have been mistaken, no doubt, but the rider was justly blamed for losing the race.

One more counsel I have to give. To ride

a race properly a man requires to be in the very best condition possible, and you must go into training as carefully and as strictly as you would for a place in your college boat. Take plenty of exercise, walk for an hour every day and bicycle for another hour. Live simply, don't smoke, and drink very little. There is nothing better than light table beer, and one or two glasses of a light, dry port. Do not touch spirits in any case.

Bread, pastry, and tobacco are the three things which are most deleterious to the wind. If you won't train, then don't ride. How often one sees the rider far more done than the horse! I well recollect seeing a young soldier land triumphantly over the last hurdle of a steeplechase and then roll off from pure exhaustion. It is difficult to make men who can ride ordinarily well realise that they cannot last through a three or four mile steeplechase without being in the very pink of condition.

Now let us turn to the always interesting topic of the horse and his training. Here our course is plain, for we have the main lines laid down for us. I think, however, that certain points may be, as it were, emphasised for the benefit of those who wish to give a horse some kind of preparation at home. This is very

interesting; indeed, to my mind, by far the most interesting part of racing.

First of all there is the horse, which may be a thoroughbred bought out of a selling race because he is not fast enough for the flat, or a hunter which may be only technically half-bred; or, again, he may be a horse of the useful hunter stamp which has, or is supposed to have, a turn of speed. Let us take the first of these, and perhaps it will be best to sketch the actual career of a horse which began life on the flat. He was a good-looking chestnut horse, and he was bought for something under £50 out of a selling race at Windsor as a three year old. The first thing done was to give him a dose of physic and turn him out for three months, handling him sufficiently to prevent him from forgetting all he knew. Then he was taken up and broken afresh, very carefully and patiently. At first he was a bit wild, but soon began to quiet down, and by the time he was four he had sobered into a very reasonable sort of lady's hack, and was a great pet with his mistress. All this time he was being taught to jump in a school, for his owner had one of those excellent things—a circular jumping school. In this the groom stands in the middle on a platform and lunges the pupil round over a variety of made fences.

No horse is ever kept long at a time in the school, it is so easy to sicken him of jumping. Then he was led over a small, made course, and finally ridden with a wonderful steady old hunter whose years numbered over twenty and whose wisdom was like that of a century of equine experience. Then came a season's hunting. At first the youngster was very hot and fidgetty, and his rider was obliged to keep him away from the other horses, while he plunged and half-reared and bucked to get away for a gallop. All he wanted was a romp, and at last he got it. It was a clear, bright morning with a touch of east in the wind and a bite in the air, when hounds dropped on an outlier as they were going to draw and raced him to ground in a drain fifteen minutes later. We all sat down to ride, and the little blood horse led the whole way, jumping a fair country and getting away of his own accord on the other side of each fence. This was the making of him; he was taken home with the glow of victory on him, and from that day was a game and gallant little horse, winning several steeplechases in fair company. His owner, who rides and wins a certain number of such races, though quite in a small way, believes, and rightly, that the amateur trainer should slip the work into them quietly, and, as it were, without their knowing

what he is about. Formal galloping on a made course is, as a rule, undesirable except occasionally, and when once a horse has been thoroughly schooled over jumps and knows his business he can't have too little of it. Walking exercise is necessary, and this must be given somehow for at least two hours a day. In his gallops a horse should never go quite his best pace nor should he cover the entire distance he is intended to go. Most amateur trainers give far too much work; they are for ever galloping horses and are often unconsciously as hard on their stomachs as on their legs. Every horse has a certain quantity of food he can digest, and it is no use giving him any more. You may upset his digestion and very likely make him a bad feeder. I had a capital mare that won several races, but by overfeeding her I made her so delicate a feeder that she would hardly eat a quartern of oats a day at last, and trained as light as a greyhound. When out of training and put to hunting she gradually recovered and grew quite fat. I am a great believer in giving horses soft food one day a week, and for all horses in hard work I give now the usual early morning feed on Sunday and the rest of the day bran and linseed mashes. I have always found that horses so treated feed better and come out

fresher on Monday morning for their day's abstinence from corn.

Half-bred horses require even more care in work and feeding than the blood ones, and should be brought to the post rather big. In preparing a horse for a hunt race, if he has been hunting all the season, he should have a fortnight's quiet exercise and then about a month's steady work before the race. Twice a week he should gallop the distance he has to go at half speed and once at least he should be galloped over fences. Many good hunters get into a deliberate way of negotiating their jumps, and, from want of practice, are apt to come down if hustled a bit in a race. If you can teach a horse to get away quickly on the other side of a fence it is some points in his favour. The best way is to put him between two horses that have been at the game before and gallop him over fences. They will, of course, gain on him at every jump, but between the fences he should be allowed to come up with them. He will soon learn to get away on the other side. Another point for amateurs to bear in mind is that the trainer should make up his mind at what pace the day's work is to be done and do it at that pace all the way through. Nothing upsets a horse, especially if he is a little hairy about the heels, so much as quickening him up

in his gallops. For a horse in the condition of a hunter, two or three nearly full speed gallops a week, for a fortnight or three weeks to finish up with, and a spin to open his pipes on the day of the race is quite enough fast work for the amateur to indulge in. Some very gross horses will need more, but I am convinced that as a rule amateurs ignorant of the art of training, which requires a lifetime of experience, will do well to err on the side of care and moderation. During the whole time the horse is being prepared his state of health should be carefully watched. The great sign that this is satisfactory is a bright eye and a healthy mouth. The state of the dung, too, should be noticed from time to time. When a horse is fit, his muscles will stand out firm and hard, his eye will be bright and clear. If he have a harassed, wild look it is a sure sign he is overdone, and he must have a day or two off. His legs should be cool and hard, and he should be gay and light-hearted when he comes out of his stable to do his morning's work, and after his work his sweat should dry rapidly, and he should not be very thirsty, for excessive thirst is a sign of bad condition whether in man or horse.

Pony Racing.

Though pony racing is a delightful sport in

India, or perhaps I should say it was when the Indian turf was less businesslike than it is now, and we mostly trained and rode our own ponies, I cannot say I regard it with much favour in England. It is true that I started the first Ranelagh pony races held by the club after its reconstruction in 1894. It is also true that at a gymkhana I regard the Polo Pony Scurry and the races on weight for inches conditions as the most interesting part of the programme, but this does not necessarily express approval. Polo pony races are fashionable and popular, and I think I see signs that they are becoming more so each year. Therefore they could hardly be left out in a book like the present. The reason I am rather inclined to look coldly on polo pony races—and that is the only form of pony racing that need concern us here—is that racing is not improving to most ponies, for it makes them excitable and nervous, and certainly often leads to pulling, one of the worst faults a polo pony can possibly have. Then it leads to men bringing long, awkward blood horses into the game, not because they are good at it, but to qualify for the annual pony races of the club. Now my own feelings are entirely in sympathy with the game of polo, and I think it demands all the energies of a pony, and that racing is in many ways an

undue tax on the pony's powers and temper. Yet as men will race polo ponies, a few words here on the best way to prepare them will not be out of place.

First, then, the pony should not be played for a month before the races come off. He should have plenty of steady, slow work, rather more corn, and the first week a couple of gallops of a quarter of a mile at about three-quarter speed—twelve annas I should say in India—if the race is for half a mile. The second week, if the pony is doing well, I should increase his food and again gallop him twice, only increasing the distance to three furlongs. The third week the distance should be the same, but the pace should increase, though not to his best. On the Saturday I should send him the whole distance at nearly full speed with another pony to bring him along; there should be, however, no racing, and the other pony should be pulled back some yards from home so that the one in training may finish alone. The day but one before the race I should give two short spins, and a pipe-opener of a quarter of a mile on the morning of the race. In the race get a good start and watch your chance of taking a pull so as to have something to finish with. Whip and spurs will be useless, but if the pre-

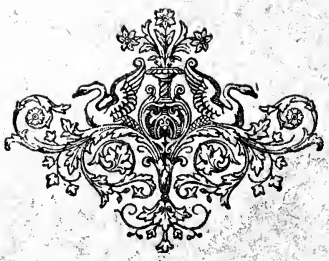
sence of the ladies in the pavilion demand them both, don't use either. Calculate the weight you have to carry, for you are responsible for this in weight for inch races, and have your saddle ready so as not to cause delay in the weighing-room. Don't make up your weight with your bridle, and always put in one pound more than your weight into the cloth. See the pony saddled yourself, don't have the girths too tight, and put the saddle on forward for a flat race, farther back for a gallop over sticks. When you have finished, if you are first, second, or third, pull up carefully and ride back to the weighing-shed. Obtain from a steward permission to dismount, and if you are only second or third and there is nothing for you, wait in your saddle till the "all right" is given. I remember an unlucky young subaltern in India who was riding for his colonel—winning a very fine race. The colonel, much pleased, went out to lead the pony back, and before the rider could be stopped he jumped off and exclaimed with satisfaction, "There, sir, I think we did that very well." It was the second pony that took the money, for our impetuous young friend was disqualified.

If you should be manager of a pony race meeting always see there is a judge in the box.

I saw a race run without a judge in the box at all once, and the odd thing was that nobody noticed it except myself. On another occasion the officer acting as judge at a soldier's meeting owned one of the ponies. He forgot all about the judge's duties, and was seen on the stand cheering his rider in an exciting finish, which there was naturally no judge to see, and which therefore had to be run over again, when the race fell to an outsider.

However private and friendly a meeting is, rules are rules, and should be observed as strictly as though the event were as valuable as the Eclipse Stakes itself.

There is one bright side to pony racing—it is good for the club, and a well-managed gymkhana like those at Hurlingham, Ranelagh, Stansted, Cirencester, or other clubs, gives a good deal of pleasure, and attracts those honorary members who greatly help the finances of the club.



UNWIN·BROTHERS,LTD
Printers in Antique
The·Gresham·Press
WOKING·SURREY·and
Ship Street LONDON EC