

which characterizes young horses when they are first brought into work. The trouble will, in cases of this kind, right itself of its own accord in course of time, but such cases hardly concern us here, as defective action is not really at the bottom of it in these circumstances. It is the permanent and incurable form of brushing which is so objectionable. This arises from deeper seated causes, a principal one being undue closeness of the action, which results in the feet, either in front or behind, being carried within the line of the opposite limb when the horse is moving, causing the fetlock to be brushed or hit by the other foot. The fact of a horse going close does not necessarily give rise to the evil, but as it very commonly does so, and indubitably predisposes a horse to brush, close action is a fault that cannot be rated too seriously. Legs which are badly or not truly placed underneath the body, and abnormalities in the position of the feet, such as turned-in toes, a condition commonly described as pigeon-toed, or turned-out toes, are other causes which are responsible for cutting. A variety of special devices are resorted to in the shoeing of horses which are given to brushing, with the object of remedying the trouble, such as the use of feather-edged and knock-up shoes, but though these may, in favorable cases, minimize the evil, they are not often found to be entirely successful in overcoming it. The best safeguard always is to let a horse which has a tendency to brush wear a fetlock boot or boots—as the case may require—so as to protect the limb from injury. But in a serious case of brushing even this expedient will not, by any means, ensure complete immunity from bruises and consequent lameness. Certainly it is a fatal mistake ever to buy a horse which brushes badly, for an animal of this kind will never give satisfaction, at any rate, not if wanted for work at fast paces, though possibly it could be regulated to slow work with more satisfactory results, as under these circumstances its cutting propensities, as we have seen, will not entail such injurious effects.

Speedy-cutting is liable to be productive of the most dangerous consequences. Speedy-cutting consists in a fore leg being hit just below the knee by the opposite foot when a horse is trotting, and the pain inflicted when this happens may be so intense as to bring the animal down to the ground, dropping as if shot. The risks which such an accident involve will readily be understood. Repeated blows resulting from speedy-cutting will generally cause a bony enlargement to form on the part which is hit, or, at any rate, leave a scar, so that little difficulty will be experienced in finding out whether a horse is subject to this defect of action when contemplating a purchase, and if there is any indication of it the horse should be avoided at any price. A special kind of leg boot is used in cases of speedy-cutting, but while this may lessen the effects of the trouble, it will not obviate the risk incidental to it. Speedy-cutting is in particular specially liable to occur in high-actioned horses, but fortunately it is not of very frequent occurrence.

Horses are occasionally caused to come down in a similar manner, as happens when they hit themselves a bad speedy-cutting blow, through hitting a leg lower down in consequence of brushing or owing to very close action. A horse liable to this mishap is at the best very unsafe to use, owing to the risk of accident which it involves.

Over-reaching is also a common fault. It consists in a fore leg being struck into or hit by a hind foot. Serious injuries and cuts may be inflicted on the back tendons or the heels in this way. Sometimes horses with perfectly good and true action will accidentally over-reach, but in this case the mishap occurs only as an isolated and exceptional instance, whereas when faulty action causes the trouble, it is permanently repeated on and off at intervals. A horse afflicted with a propensity to over-reach should wear a suitable kind of boot or legging as a protection for the leg against being cut by the hind shoe when struck into. Over-reaching occurs mainly when a horse is cantering fast or galloping, and it often happens in jumping, especially in the case of unpractised jumpers. A horse is also liable to inflict a cut on the heel of a fore leg with a hind foot when forced to trot a faster gait than it can conveniently compass.

Frequently, defective action results in stumbling or tripping—or blundering, as many horse-men prefer to call it. There are, however, various other underlying causes besides a faulty and sluggish action which may occasion such insecurity of foothold, including fatigue, want of condition, a bad carriage, a lazy disposition, weak or unsound legs, and an excessively heavy forehead. Stumbling is by no means necessarily associated with low-striding action, as is often assumed, though probably the greatest proportion of stumblers and trippers are to be found among horses possessing what is known as a daisy-cutting style of motion, but the defect not infrequently affects also high-actioned animals. A useful safeguard in cases where there is a propensity to stumble is to keep the horse well on his mettle.

Forging, also known as clicking, calls for brief notice, this oftentimes being a concomitant of unbalanced action or a slovenly gait. Apart, however, from the fact that the sound which is produced by forging is annoying, and that it proclaims the horse's action to be abnormal, this failing is innocuous, for it gives rise to no untoward consequences. It can, moreover, in most cases be cured by adopting suitable remedial measures.

How a Western Farmer Winters Idle Horses.

How best to winter the idle horse is a problem confronting horse owners East and West. On most farms in Eastern Canada, as well as on the Prairie, there is not work in harness for all the horses which are found necessary for the tillage and harvest seasons. A writer in "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal," Winnipeg, Man., describes his method of handling horses in winter, and there are points in it for horse owners in Ontario and the Eastern Provinces, as well as for those situated in the West.

"An idle animal of any kind soon becomes a vexed question. It is very unnatural for a horse to be idle. If kept so for any length of time cooped up in a stable, he becomes irascible to ailments, discouraged and lifeless. It does not and will not pay to keep a horse in idleness.

"Much of the difficulty in horses not being in full trim for work in spring is simply because they have lost courage, vitality and energy by being idle during the winter months when there is nothing to do. To take 15 to 50 idle horses out every day during the winter season and exercise them sufficiently to keep them in normal heart and condition is an undertaking very few farmers care to tackle. We have come to the conclusion that to throw a horse upon his own resources during the daytime to rustle for part of his living, he will generally reach spring a horse full of courage, muscle, vivacity and energy, capable of doing his full share of the work required of him. Horses that are idle are generally overfed, and those allowed to run at large night and day are apt to be underfed. Each method unconditions a horse for heavy continuous work.

"As soon as continuous heavy work ceases in the fall, we continue the ordinary feeding for two or three weeks in order to rest and put them in good heart and condition. We then gradually knock off the heavy feeding until winter feeding begins. In the morning we practically feed nothing, simply give them all the water they will drink and turn them out to the prairie and bluffs

and have never had a horse go back on us during the season's heavy work.

"We do not work the idle horses during winter if it is at all possible to avoid it. All the winter work is done with teams kept and fed for the purpose. We stable at nights and on very cold and stormy days. Under no circumstances do we leave them out over night. We have followed this combination plan for years and unhesitatingly advise its adoption and practice. We doubt very much if there is a more satisfactory, lazy and economical system of wintering idle horses and colts. It is nature's plan combined with a little commonsense aid by man.

"Two to four weeks before work begins in spring we commence to feed and exercise up to full rations and work. As for grooming, we must admit we are just a trifle lazy. The most aesthetically groomed horse we ever saw, would if turned out, fix up his grooming in fine shape at the first piece of naked plowing he came to. Still it is well to brush off snow, ice or dirt, with a soft brush on their return to the stable, being careful not to disturb nature's arrangement of the winter coat too much.

"Cautions: In case of the necessary use of an idle horse do not overwork or over-drive him. Do not overfeed. Do not allow him to stand in the cold or wind. Do not immediately turn him out of doors after work. Many horses are ruined in violating these negatives."

This article, written by J. E. Frith, of Saskatchewan, emphasizes what we have always laid particular stress upon—exercise. Every horse owner should see to it that his horses, particularly the colts, get all the exercise possible during the winter months. Several hours each day (excepting, of course, very stormy days) should be spent out of doors.

LIVE STOCK.

Finish the cattle.

Produce what the market demands.

There is a movement started in Pennsylvania to raise more calves. Watch it spread.

Buck lambs are not wanted on the market. Next spring should see castration of grade lambs in general practice.

There is a big demand for stockers and feeders. There is almost sure to be an equally strong demand next spring for finished beef.

When the rancher is entirely driven out by the grain farmer, where will the cattle come from unless more of the veal calves are raised?

When a veal calf, at 160 pounds, sells as high as a yearling steer did a few years ago, is there any wonder many of these youngsters are slaughtered?

Do not sell the grain this winter. Get a big price for it as finished meat or as milk or some of the products made from it, and have the greater portion of the plant food it contains to spread on the fields for a bigger crop in 1914.

"Not one man in a thousand has accuracy of eye and judgment sufficient to become an eminent breeder." These are the words of a noted breeder of Shorthorn cattle in the United States. But it must be added that training and observation can do considerable.

The buyer of stockers, the feeder, the butcher and the exporter all want the low-set, deep, thick, even-fleshed type of animal. There is room for improvement in the type of bulls being used in many sections. Get rid of the scrub sire, and plan to make something of the calves rather than to kill them at birth.

If all the live stock marketed was as good as the choice types, how much greater would the feeder's net returns be? A visit to a few of the large markets reveals the fact that too great a portion of the offerings consists of inferior stock, apparently due more to bad breeding than to bad feeding, although the two quite frequently are closely connected.



Miss Brae 26th.

Champion Hereford female at Toronto, 1913. Owned by L. O. Clifford, Oshawa, Ontario.

for the day. During the day their mangers are filled with oat, barley or flax straw. Their stalls are cleaned and bedded with fresh clean wheat straw. Some kind of grain, a sheaf of oats or barley or a couple of pints of boiling-hot trash from the fanning mill is given to them in the evening on their return from their day's grubbing. This evening ration is varied in quantity so as to keep them in good condition. Salt is accessible to them in the yard. Vegetables of any kind are "sweet bits" to them and are highly relished at any time.

"This system of feeding done regularly keeps the horses and colts out all day with a sure return to the stables in the evening. These horses are not idle. They get regular and continuous exercise, and each spring are in the pink of working condition, and will fill the bill all summer. Since this system and method of wintering horses was adopted and practiced we have not lost one animal from carelessness in feeding and exercising.