

together, or their growth is affected to a certain extent. Occasionally, one of the best fillies is kept to replace the oldest or worst breeding mare in the stud, and, if big enough, is sometimes served to foal as a three-year-old, in which case she is not broken to farm work till she has reared her foal. The other fillies find buyers readily enough at from one and a half to two and a half years old; it is seldom, indeed, that we are allowed to keep the selling ones till they are three-year-olds. The geldings and keeping fillies are put to work at 27 or 28 months old, two taking the place of one seasoned horse; that is, working half-day about at, say, stubble-plowing, to begin with, and later on lea-plowing till February, when the geldings may be sold off, though in some cases they have to be kept to take the place of early-foaling mares.

As to the care of the feet and legs, we find it advisable to keep the feet of young horses at all times pared and rasped level, very slightly fuller on the outside halves, of course, leaving the frog and the upper part of the wall severely alone. The toes should be kept short and the heels low, to allow of the frog doing its duty as a pad. The legs, if of the right, flinty sort, and carrying the right kind of silky hair, are quite able to take care of themselves, and require no blistering or preparations such as our Shire friends use.

"SCOTTIE."

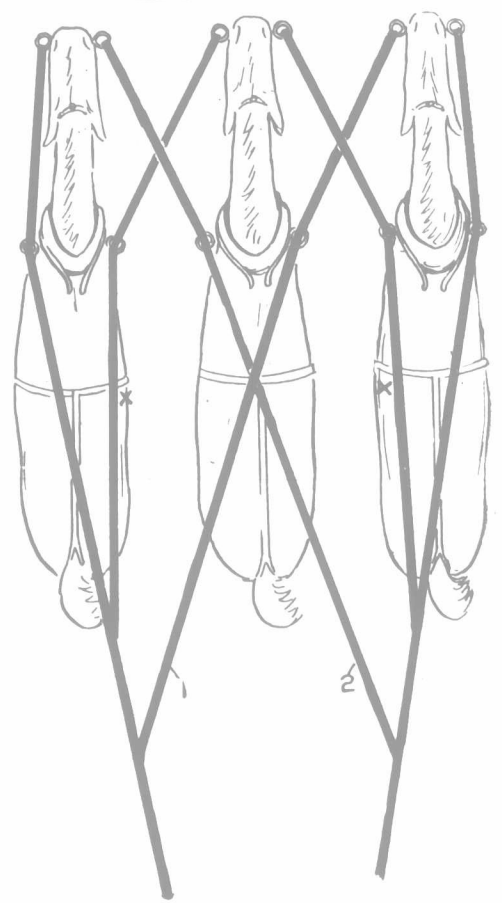
### Working Colts.

While it is, unquestionably, wise to handle colts, and teach them to go in harness or saddle, or both, while young, we think it a great mistake to expect them to perform the labors of a horse until they are well matured. There is too great haste in getting colts at regular work. The general idea is that a colt at three years old should at least "earn its keep." This applies to both heavy and light horses. It is not unknown for a man to ask his two-year-old to "earn its board," but, fortunately, cases of this kind are rare. Between two and three years of age a colt should be handled somewhat, and taught to go in harness, but on no account should he be asked to do any regular work. A three-year-old is able to do considerable light work, if intelligently handled, without materially interfering with the prospects of his ultimate utility and value; but the trouble is that in many cases he is not "intelligently handled." Take a case of a pair of three-year-old colts on a farm. If there be enough horse-force on the farm, without depending upon the colts for regular work, and the owner or his son handles them, it is quite possible no injury will be done; but if horse-force be scarce, and the colts are expected to do the work of a team, and especially if given into the hands of hired help, the results may be different. At three years of age, the animal is still a youngster. His bone is not thoroughly formed, nor his muscles developed, and even a few days' hard and steady work may so interfere with their development as to do permanent harm. This probably applies more forcibly in the spring than at other seasons. The team, while probably trained to go in harness, have had little exercise during the winter, hence, are not only undeveloped youngsters, but unaccustomed to work. Spring seeding commences; a large amount of work is expected to be done in two or three weeks; the hired man goes to the field with his team; he knows that his employer expects a day's work, and he sets out to perform it, and during the two or three weeks this pair of colts are expected to do the work of a mature team; and in many cases they can do it, but in too many cases it is at the expense of permanently-enlarged joints, puffy fetlock joints, puffy hocks, cocked fetlocks, or other abnormalities. In other cases there are apparently no evil results; the team remain sound and able to continue their work, which they may be called upon to perform with more or less regularity until the next winter, when they will probably have an easy time for a few months, and as four-year-olds will again be worked steadily for seven or eight months, and still remain sound. Occurrences of this kind tend to verify the idea that a three-year-old should be expected to do a horse's work, but observation and experience teaches us that colts that have been used in this way are practically "old horses" while still comparatively young. They do not wear as long as those that have reached maturity before being asked to do the work of a mature animal. Hence, we claim that, where it can be avoided, three-year-olds should not be depended upon to do much work. The same remarks apply to the lighter classes, whether for harness or saddle purposes. It requires a very careful man to do any considerable regular driving with a three-year-old, without danger of permanent injury. A man may want a driver to do a little driving, and he can purchase a three-year-old for less money than a five-year-old of the same class, or possibly he has a three-year-old. He expects to have to drive only a few miles every week or every day, and he expects to have plenty of time to do it, and he decides that the colt is quite able to do it without injury; and probably he is, if the driving should

be only what is expected. But so many unexpected conditions arise which necessitate longer drives and less time than was figured on, and the colt simply has to go. This occurring frequently, the colt becomes tired, his gait becomes awkward, he hits his hind or fore ankles, acquires the habit of stumbling, etc., and often becomes blemished or lame. If the roads be hard, he is liable to become permanently lame in fore feet, cocked on pasterns, etc. In fact, it is not uncommon for a three-year-old to do so much roading that he is of little value afterwards. Hence we claim that he should not be depended upon as a roadster. It is all right to have him as an extra, and do a little light driving, but under no conditions should he be driven a long distance in limited time. It may be claimed that even though a colt that is worked or driven while young may not remain serviceable to as great an age as under other conditions, that it is profitable to work them while young, as it is so expensive to keep idle horses. This argument may hold good in some cases, but we must consider that, when a colt is allowed to reach maturity before being asked to do regular work, he may reasonably be expected to remain serviceable for many years longer than the one that was worked too young, and that his services will be more satisfactory; and, while it may at the time seem expensive to keep three-year-olds in comparative or complete idleness, it will pay in the end. Besides the monetary consideration, a man has the satisfaction of knowing that he has not been guilty of overworking or overdriving an undeveloped colt, and that he has given the colt a reasonable opportunity of being able to perform the functions for which he was designed, with comfort to himself and satisfaction to his owner.

The question may be asked, "At what age is the ordinary colt fit to do a horse's work?" Some claim that a three-year-old is better able to work than a four-year-old, but, of course, this is wrong. It is claimed that the teeth of a three-year-old are better able to masticate the food than those of a four-year-old. This is also a mistake. A colt should have a full mouth of molar teeth at four years old; while, between three and four, a temporary molar in each row (four all told) is being shed and replaced by a permanent one, and the sixth tooth in each row is appearing, all to be well up by the time the animal is actually four years old. Hence, we consider that a four-year-old is much better prepared for hard work than a three-year-old, but that he is not fully developed until at least five years. The

writer can call to mind a number of horses that were not asked to do hard or regular work until five and some six years old; and, where no accidents occurred, these horses became remarkable for their serviceability at a ripe old age. Hence, we plead for the colt. Give him a chance. Allow him to mature before asking him to do much, and he will give you long and satisfactory service. We ask horse-owners to consider these matters from a humane, as well as monetary standpoint.



Three-horse Lines.

The above cut of three-horse lines is published in response to a request from Huron Co., Ont. The cut is self-explanatory.



Golden Key [9997] (14694).

Clydesdale stallion, bay; foaled 1906. Imported and owned by T. J. Berry, Hensall, Ont. Sire Lord Lonsdale. (See "Gossip," page 579.)