

Oats, because it is the easiest of digestion and contains the most nourishment ; oats should be full, clean, free from bad smell, and sweet to the taste, they should weigh from 38 pounds the bushel upwards. On service when a dragoon may be obliged to take bad oats, and time allows, he should wash them clean, dry them either in the sun or in an oven, and give them to his horse mixed with a little salt.

When oats are not to be had, what other kinds of forage should be looked for ?

Barley or wheat, the former should be given mixed with chopped straw, and on account of the greater weight, in less quantity than oats ; it becomes lighter and more easily digested by being boiled for a short time. Wheat is not so wholesome as barley, and when given must be in feeds smaller by one half than the usual allowance of oats. When there is neither time nor convenience for boiling, it must if possible be mixed up with chopped straw and well watered. When new and in too large quantities, wheat is apt to bring on inflammation, gripes, and other diseases. Where none of these are to be found, maize or Indian corn, rye, vetches, lentils or beans, may be given, but always in small quantities, never fresh, and when practicable mixed with chopped straw. Buck wheat mixed with oats or barley is good food. When rye is given to horses they should not be watered less than a full hour before or after eating it. After feeding with barley with the straw, the men should clean out the horse's mouths to prevent the beard from accumulating under the tongue and sides of the jaws, which might cause sores. The dragoon should also endeavour to accustom his horse to bread, for on service he will find that during an engagement or in pursuit of the enemy, where there is but little time for feeding, a piece steeped in beer or water, or in a little wine or brandy will prove a great refreshment to the animal. Mouldy bread must never be used, and stale always in preference to new.

How are meal and bran to be used ?

The first given in the horse's water is strengthening and nourishing ; bran contains but little nourishment and has the effect of relaxing the bowels ; in many cases bran mashes are entirely substituted for other food.

What is to be attended to with regard to hay ?

It ought to smell sweet and to have plenty of herbage ; coarse, rank, or musty hay is very bad. Where a dragoon may be obliged to take very indifferent hay, he should carefully pick out the damaged parts, shake it well to get rid of