

## The Horse and Stable.

### Breeding Horses.

After the farmer has decided on the class of horses he intends to breed, his next step is to select his mare or mares to breed from, and on the judgment he manifests in his choice of mares, depends in a great measure his success as a breeder of horses. Whatever the class, the brood mare should be sound, healthy, of an excellent constitution, and exhibiting the chief points of excellence that characterize her breed, and young mares are considered by some breeders, superior to old ones, though age can scarcely be an objection, if the constitution remains unimpaired, and the vital organs in good order. The breeder of pure blooded animals must understand the points of that class thoroughly to succeed in raising them, and requires experience just as the breeder of the short-horn does for success with his herd. A mare should never be used to breed from, that is blemished, or has her vitality impaired in any way, and the habit among some farmers of using mares of this character for this purpose cannot be too strongly condemned. The choice of a stallion as a sire is of the greatest importance, though if the farmer wishes to use a heavy draught horse, he cannot at the present time go greatly astray in Ontario, for we have a class of draught stallions in this Province, of which any country might well be proud, and too much credit cannot be given to those whose energy and enterprise in importing such superior animals will doubtless have a marked effect on the rising stock of the country. The form, style, action, &c., of the stallion used are only of secondary importance compared with the stock from which he is descended, for his ability to transmit the faults of his ancestors to his offspring is equal to his power to perpetuate their points of excellence, and it is on this principle that horses are bred up to the high standard of the pure breed of either blood or draught; consequently it is wise to examine the breeding of the sire; and the majority of the cross-bred, mongrel stallions that perambulate the country during the season, insuring colts for whatever the farmer chooses to give them, should be avoided, as the few dollars saved in the price of insurance is often lost several times over in the failure of the stock, whilst the extra price paid for the service of a well-bred stallion is more than made up by the quality of the colt secured. The question should not be the price of service as is too often the case, but the breeding and value of the sire used. The question of working a brood mare is a disputed one, though, if the mare is gentle, slow light work with moderate feeding, it is generally considered, will do no harm. Some people err in feeding too high, for an excess of flesh is not desirable and tends to injure the constitution and development of the offspring, while others fail in the opposite direction, for a good healthy thriving condition of the mare is indispensable to the proper development of the colt. Over-exertion, over-feeding, and fast driving should be carefully avoided while the mare is carrying her foal, and after foaling, she and her colt should be kept as much as possible from other horses, for most of the injuries among colts are caused by the foal, whose bones and tendons are so tender, being chased by other larger colts; and the practice by many of driving the mare on the road, and allowing the colt to follow, is a very injurious one to the foal. The bones of the colt are soft and naturally incapable of enduring fatigue, the young animal soon becomes tired by the over exertion, while the travel over the hard road injures the feet and legs often causing contraction, ringbone, &c. The pasture is the place for the foal until fit for harness. Great care and gentleness should at all times be used towards both the mare and foal, for harshness excites and injures the one, and has a pernicious effect on the disposition of the other. No cast-iron rule can be laid down as to the proper time for weaning colts, the farmer must decide this according to his circumstances, though the longer a colt is allowed to suck up to nine or ten months, the better.

### Diseases of the Horse's Foot—Corns.

A corn is possibly the most common disease of the horse's foot, and consists in a bruise of the sensitive sole and laminated structure of the bars in the angle of the heel, and the extravasated serum. The result of the bruise produces a reddened condition of the horn of the heel. This disease has been called corn, from the affection known by the same name and so common in the human subject; but, although resulting from a bruise or undue pressure, it is of quite a different nature from a corn in the human being causes. Some horses are more subject to this disease than others, such as those with broad flat feet, or horses that have weak heels, and defective action, where the weight is thrown heavily upon the inside heel. The great exciting causes are hard work, fast driving, and bad shoeing. So long as horses are used upon the farm or soft roads, any kind of shoeing will almost do; but when a horse is badly shod and subjected to hard and fast work, upon macadamised roads or paved streets, a bruise is the result, producing a corn. Another common cause is allowing the shoes to remain on too long without removing regularly.

**Symptoms.** Lameness in the most of cases which, as a matter of course, varies according to the severity of the bruise, and in cases when the inflammatory action terminates in suppuration, the pain and lameness are very severe.

The horse, when standing, points or favors the affected foot; and the lameness is greatly increased when he is trotted out upon hard ground. The heels are hot, and the parts very tender if tapped with a hammer. When matter forms, the patient will knuckle at the fetlock, and this symptom is very apt to mislead as to the true seat of the disease. If the shoe is removed and the sole thinned, the discolored horn is easily noticed, although, when occurring in a strong foot, from being situated well up in the heel, it may be overlooked when not carefully examined. Lameness may occur before the horn becomes discolored.

In the treatment of corns, the affected parts should be carefully pared, and a shoe properly applied, so as to take the weight off the diseased parts, and this is best done on weak feet by the use of the bar-shoe. When the tenderness is great, it will be necessary to rest the patient, and allay the pain by poultices, or standing in cold water for a short time daily during warm weather, and in certain cases it is also beneficial to apply a leather sole. When suppuration occurs, the horny sole must be thinned to the sensitive structure, and the pus allowed to escape, or else it will find its way to the coronet and form a quitter, which is a most serious disease. The foot must be poulticed until the irritation is removed, and afterwards apply a well-fitting shoe. Very great harm is frequently done to the foot by cutting into the sensitive parts, and then pouring in nitric acid or other caustics, with the erroneous idea of burning out the corn. Horses affected with corns should be regularly shod every three or four weeks.

### Stable Drainage.

Notwithstanding all that has been written on the important subject of stable architecture, there are a very few stables in the country where a really efficient provision is made for removing and utilizing the liquid manure that is furnished by horses and cattle, who pass a great portion of their time confined in stalls. Not only is there, in consequence, a great loss of valuable fertilizer, but the liquid excrement accumulates and rapidly putrefies, giving rise to various noxious gases, which contaminate the air, and cannot fail to prove injurious to the animals who are compelled to breathe the poisoned atmosphere.

In some stables we find no pretence whatever at drainage of any sort. In others, perhaps in the majority of such buildings, drainage is attempted, but on various accounts is ineffectual. For example, the floor is made of common pine plank, a soft material, which trampling and kicking of horses soon wears into hollows, in which the urine stands, a constant source of discomfort to the horse, and trouble to the groom. These floors, in most cases slope back to a gutter in the rear. This arrangement compels the animal confined in the stall, to stand always up hill, and puts a very uneasy strain on the sinews of the legs. To relieve themselves of this strain, we constantly find horses hanging back, and getting as far from the manger as the halter will allow. Then, again, either

from shrinkage or original carelessness in fitting the planks, and joints in the floor on each side of the gutter behind, are so open as frequently to allow more liquid to pass through below than is carried away in the desired direction. This very large proportion of the urine seeping through the floor, completely saturates the ground underneath; and thus being entirely lost to the farm, accumulates and putrefies in a hidden mass of filth, enough to render the most malignant forms of disease. Besides all this, it too often happens that the liquid manure which does not find its way outside the stable it, for want of proper arrangements to receive and dispose it allowed to flow over the farm yard, or is washed away by the first heavy shower of rain that falls. Now, this state of things so common on our farms, is both a serious waste of valuable material and a great detriment to health. It is a great mistake to suppose that any such impurity can be other than highly injurious to the animals in confinement.—*American Stock Journal*.

### Care of Horses.

All horses must not be fed in the same proportions, without regard to their ages, their constitutions and their work, the impropriety of such a practice is self-evident. Yet it is constantly done, and is the basis of disease of every kind.

Never use bad hay on account of its cheapness, because there is no proper nourishment in it.

Damaged corn is exceedingly injurious, because it brings on inflammation of the bowels and skin diseases.

Chaff is better for old horses than hay, because they can chew and digest it better.

Mix chaff with corn or beans, and do not give the latter alone, because it makes the horse chew his food more and digest it better.

Hay or grass alone will not support a horse under hard work, because there is not sufficient nutritive body in either.

When a horse is worked hard its food should be chiefly oats—if not worked hard its food should be chiefly hay—because oats supply more nourishment and flesh-making material than any other kind of food; hay not so much.

For saddle or coach horse, half a peck of sound oats and eighteen pounds of hay are sufficient. If the hay is not good, add a quarter of a peck more oats. A horse which works harder may have rather more of each; one that works little should have less.

Rack feeding is wasteful. The better plan is to feed with chopped hay from a manger, because the food is not then thrown about, and is more easily chewed and digested.

Oats should be bruised for an old horse, but not for a young one, because the former, through age and defective teeth, cannot chew them properly. The young horse can do so, and they are thus properly mixed with saliva, and turned into wholesome nutriment.—*London Horse Book*.

### Grooming a Horse.

Much care is necessary in handling the sensitive parts of the horse, viz: the belly, flank and inside of the thigh. Many horses are made troublesome by being constantly teased by a reckless groom. I believe that a currycomb should never be used upon a trotting horse during the training season. If the hide is once clean the stable swept twice per day as it ought to be, the bedding kept dry and clean, and the horse always rubbed dry when sweating, there will be no excuse for using anything except a rubber and brush. If a part becomes a little stained during the night, a little blood warm water should be used and the part immediately rubbed dry. Now, in rubbing these sensitive and all important parts, let the flat hand, covered with a rubber, be placed moderately firm upon the part, without any curling of the fingers, and without constantly removing it as many do during the process of rubbing, and the horse will soon believe that he is not to be tickled, and will be quite a different horse as it regards kicking or biting, and far less excitable in many other respects. A person will bear a hard rub upon the bottom of his bare foot with the flat hand, but if done with the ends of the fingers, he could hardly be kept in his skin. No words should be used to the horse that he cannot well understand, and they should not be repeated so often as to make him headless, but they should be spoken in a mild tone of voice. The language and other signs in grooming, driving and all other exercises should not only be limited and to the point, but should be applied with strict regularity, that they may be well understood, and that the call and response may be mutual. A neglect in the horse to answer a call is an error in the manager when there is an error in the call.—*N. H. Farmer*.