

## BREEDERS' DEPARTMENT

## SENSIBLE HORSE TALK.

**H**ORSES that labor require grain apportioned out at regular intervals—about three times per day for slow work and five times for fast work. They require a thorough dressing at least once a day, and should be cleaned and rubbed dry after severe labor. The comb and brush remove the dirt from the roots of the hair, and a linen cloth or wisp of straw polishes the coat and gives it a fine silky appearance. All tend to open the pores of the skin and keep up a healthy action of insensible perspiration, which fits the horse to perform more labor without injury. Hand-rubbing the legs from the knee and hock downwards stimulates the arterial circulation, which is essential to great speed. Grooming improves the health, increases the vigor of action, cleans the skin of all impurities, which become a self-generating oil conductor that moistens the hair and gives it a healthy, glossy appearance. The horse should be led from two to four hours before being put to severe labor. Racers are allowed no hay on the days of racing until their labors are over. It prevents free respiration and loads them down with useless weight. They need free action. Digestion ceases in nervous excitement. The overtaken horse should be cooled gradually with the body. They have been raised to the highest tension by severe exertions; they should be brought to the mean temperature by exercise.

Flesh worked on to a horse gives him a preternatural power, a more solid and permanent condition, than flesh put on in the stable; young colts and working horses must be kept in good condition. It is a passport to favor with the buyer, that the horse has two years of good keeping in him. "Starvation checks the growth and destroys the shape; horses that have been ill-fed when young are almost invariably small, long-legged, light-carcased, and narrow-chested." They may be over fed. Those wide deep chests and broad loins will over-gorge themselves with hard food, and cause their legs to stock, or founder the chest. High feed, without sufficient exercise, loads the system down with fat, which fevers up the body and pounds out the legs. Greedy eaters must be stinted to a moderate supply of

grain. It will improve their action, health and condition.

No wild horse, or tame horse in his natural state, can last a single day with one trained or seasoned—fitted up to the staying point. Drawing or sweating the horse by active exercise is one of the agents of conditioning him to endure labor. It lightens the carcass, and improves the wind for long-road-work. Taking away the surplus fat gives the lungs more room to expand, and blood-vessels and air-tubes have ample space for active and free circulation. These are the engines that propel the muscles. The horse in condition has the ability to breathe rapidly, and can travel fast. It increases the pulsations of the heart, which shows the active circulation of the blood. The more air they consume, the longer they last. The horse that has large nostrils, chest and wind-pipe, has the best wind. Their wind will outlast their legs.

Training must be apportioned out according to the constitution. The robust horse may require a sweat once a week, while the delicate nervous animal may not require any drawing. The high-spirited horse will not stand fast work without much repose; constant exertion will impair their condition. Condition is preserved by health, food, and exercise. The want of condition may destroy a good horse in a single journey. Founder, sprains, puffs and spavins are the consequences of overtaking an unseasoned horse. He must have a previous preparation corresponding to the labor required. No horse can endure ten miles an hour on the road or race course, for any length of time, without being fitted for the task. He must have the vital, action clear, and the physical condition firm to stand the wear and tear of long drives.

Early maturity gives value to the horse. The colt that matures at three years old is worth twice as much as the animal that matures at six. If the former cost fifty dollars to raise, the latter would cost one hundred dollars. One is no more subject to premature decay than the other, provided they are broken upon the principle of exercise and weight for age. The ability to perform young depends upon the constitution. The same cause that enables the colt to perform service will operate upon the old horse. One of the highest encomiums passed upon