

THE CARE OF STALLIONS.

Some Valuable and Instructive Points from an Expert Authority.

A RECENT number of the *Chicago Horseman* goes extensively into the question of the care of stallions during the breeding season. It says that "though on the great breeding farms where racehorses are bred it is the aim of the owners to have the foals dropped as soon after January 1 of each year as the climate will allow, most of the mares in the United States are bred in the latter half of April, May and June. The season ostensibly begins in March, but for many reasons—not the least potent of which is the weather generally prevailing in the blustering month—the majority of men do not bother to take their mares to the horse till the time mentioned. As a general thing farmers and other small breeders have not suitable conveniences for taking proper care of colts foaled before April. As a result of this the bulk of the stallion's work is crowded into ten or twelve weeks, and to get the most profitable results the very best colts must be taken of him. Some weeks ago we advocated the practice of giving a stallion plenty to eat and plenty of exercise in the winter months so that at no time might his system become 'run down,' granting that his muscles are hard and his health good when the mares begin to come, common sense will teach almost anyone what is necessary to get good results. It is the experience of almost every stallion owner that the mares which come first are the hardest to settle, and this may be accounted for by the fact that mares are not prone to become pregnant during cold weather. This is a fact the stallion owner should remember. It may aid him in conserving his horse's powers."

"The point which the stallion owner must keep in view is that the mares get in the fall are those which yield the best colts. In other words, it is not the number of mares covered, but the number of foals resulting from which revenue is derived. Again, the man who puts his money in a stallion does so in the belief that his success will be largely dependent on the class of foals begotten. To begin with, then, the greatest attention must be paid to keep the stallion in good shape and as vigorous as possible. Nothing will do this but good food and exercise. Some of the most successful owners make a practice of feeding their horses four times a day during the season, and there is much to be said in favor of this plan. More especially does it work well with a very nervous horse. A friend of the writer who has kept stallions in Scotland and America for the past forty years feeds his stallions at 5 in the morning, at 11, at 5 in the afternoon and at 9 at night. He says that by so doing he frequently gets a very high-strung horse to eat two good meals a day, whereas if he fed three times he would eat but one. The largest foals are given in the morning and late at night. This owner says that when nervous horses are given but three feeds a day very often the last one remains uneaten; but, under his method it does not make so much difference whether the 3 o'clock 'bite' is taken or not. At 7 or 8 half an hour earlier the horses are watered and given an awful of grass. Possibly, however, the best way will be to describe his daily routine. At 5 his stallions are given a pail of water, fed from four to five quarts of oats with one quart of bran and some cut hay. Then they are thoroughly groomed and taken out to exercise. In very warm weather the horses are restricted to an hour's walking before feeding time. This gives them the advantage of their exercise in the coolest part of the day. After this they are thoroughly cooled off, fed, groomed and allowed to rest till 7:30, when they get more exercise, are again

cooled out and then they are ready for their work. When the weather is not so very warm the horses get an hour and a half on the road after they have been groomed. At 11 they are fed a lighter ration and some grass, and again at 5 the same amount of grain with some bright hay. At 7 business for the day closes, the horses are watered and given more grass, and then the yards are kept as quiet as a church-yard till next morning except when the feeder gives the stallions a grain ration similar to the one fed in the morning and a bunch of hay. No distinction of any kind is maintained around the barns after the stallions are 'supper' up. By this means a nervous horse is enabled to thoroughly cool out and settle down before feeding time, and the bites between times keep them all from getting too hungry. Whether it is necessary to feed hourly, even-dispositioned stallions four times a day is a question we are not inclined to answer in the affirmative. The above practice is detailed because it is eminently successful, and is the best we know to pursue with shy feeding or very nervous stallions. In addition the exercising arrangements and the insistence on perfect quiet around the stables at night teach their own valuable lessons.

"With an eye to the stallion's reputation as a getter of good stock some discrimination should be exercised in the selection of the mares that are accepted. The prevailing cry this season does not indicate that any stallion owner is turning away mares, but the man who owns a good stallion should never consider all that comes to his net. Mares that are obviously unsound, shy breeders, or mares that are known to produce poor foals year after year: should be turned away. A poor foal growing up into a worthless brute may keep away several mares some future year, and the few dollars received for the service fee will prove a bad investment. There are generally enough mares to be had without this loss. It is the result of the writer's experience that a mare suffering from a heavy cold, pink-eye, or other malady involving the mucous membranes rarely, if ever, gets with foal, and hence it is peculiarly important to get them right away recovered. A little finessing may be necessary to do this in some cases. It is poor judgment to waste the powers of the horse."

"Another important point in the management of a stallion in the breeding season is to avoid as far as possible any contraction of venereal disease. Leucorrhoea and kindred troubles are by no means uncommon in the equine subject, and when any indication of them is present the mare should be unhesitatingly refused. When any doubt exists a liberal application of warm water with a sponge should be made after the mare is served. This will gently secure the stallion immunity from the contraction of inflammatory disorders. This may be pooh-poohed by some, but it is well known that many a good stallion has been incapacitated for a season at a time or ruined entirely because this was not done."

"A shield should, through the breeding season, be kept on all stallions. Several of these devices are positive in their action and their utility counterbalances their cost. The home-made 'cup-cupions' of curly-corn or dandy brush should be banished. They are dangerous from the fact that they have power to wound. They may have served their turn before shields were invented, but their day has passed. It is well even to put a shield on a two-year-old. The mention of a two-year-old recalls the fact that the question is often asked 'Should a two-year-old be used in the stud, and if so, to how many mares?' If a mare is at this green so-called well developed there is not reason why he should not serve from six

IN A DAY.



LAWRENCE, KANS., U. S. A., Aug. 9, 1888.
George Patterson fell from a second-story window, striking a fence. I found him using

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to ten mares. He should not be allowed more than one a week, so the number he serves will be determined by the length of his season and the way they settle. Ten should be the limit, though of course they can serve many more. The writer knew in England a Shire colt which was bred to seventy-two mares the spring he was two years old and sired from them upwards of fifty foals. The story sounds almost incredible, but it is nevertheless quite true. The colt was sold the following autumn for exportation to America, came here and proved an utter failure as a breeder. This will invariably follow a two-year-old is bred to too many mares. A three-year-old can serve from thirty to forty mares, a four-year-old fifty and stallions five years old and upwards can generally accomplish all that is asked of them. Still there is a limit, and the average of foals begotten to mares served will be reduced when the figures reach proportions at all unwieldy. The number of mares a horse should be permitted to serve in a day varies greatly. Some should not have more than one, while others can handle four. The owner referred to in the earlier part of this article has a hard and fast rule, which allows only two, and in the majority of instances this will be found about right.

"Great care should be taken with young stallions in their initial efforts. Horses have been ruined for life by careless handling the first time they were led out to mares. No one but an experienced groom can owners to take care of the youngster, and the hobbles should never be omitted. And here we wish to reiterate what we said once before in relation to hobbles. If a stallion is worth breeding to he is worth taking proper care of, and consequently every mare should be hobbled before being covered. It does not take long, and the insurance against injury is worth far more than the time and trouble it takes to adjust them."

GREAT BATTLES OF THE WORLD.

REPORTS OF THE following prize fights have appeared in THE ADVOCATE:

Tom Sayers and J. C. Heenan.
Tom King and J. C. Heenan.
Tom Hyer and Yankee Sullivan.
Nat Langham and Tom Sayers.
John Morrissey and J. C. Heenan.
Bendigo and Gaunt.
Tom Sayers and Bob Brettle.
Jem Mac and Tom King (No. 1).
Jem Mac and Tom King (No. 2).
Wm. Thompson (Bendigo) and "Deaf" Burke.
Tom Sayers and Wm. Perry (the Tip-ton Slasher).
Wm. Perry (the Slasher) and Charles Freeman (the Ameri can Giant).
Tom Sayers and Harry Poulson.

These reports are discontinued for the summer on account of the pressure on our space owing to the fact that the racing and general sporting season is upon us. They will be renewed in the fall. In the meantime reports of all racing events, both running and trotting, will be wel-

comed, as well as any news of the breeding, selling or performing of horses. As Nos. 1 and 2 of THE ADVOCATE have run out of print we shall be obliged if anybody having a copy of those papers, and who does not wish to bind, will return either one or the other or both to the office.



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