

like men, are fond of variety in their food, and an occasional change of diet is conducive to health. Wheat bran is an invaluable adjunct to the grain ration, and can never be dispensed with. It is the cheapest, safest, and best of all regulators for the bowels, and it is especially rich in some of the most important elements of nutrition. No specific directions as to the quantity of food can be given. Some horses will require nearly twice as much as others; and the quantity that may be safely given will depend somewhat upon the amount of exercise in any given case. Some horsemen recommend feeding three, and others four times a day; but in either case no more should ever be given than will promptly be eaten up clean. If any food should be left in the box it should be at once removed and the quantity at the next time of feeding should be reduced accordingly. As a rule, it will be safe to feed as much as the horse will eat with apparent relish; and then, with plenty of exercise, he will not become overloaded with fat. The hay, as well as the grain feed, should be sound and free from mould and dust, and the stall should be kept clean, well lighted, and perfectly ventilated.

The amount of exercise to be given will vary somewhat with the condition and habit of the horse. If he be thin in flesh, and it is thought best to fatten him up, the exercise should be lighter than it otherwise would be; and, on the other hand, if there is a tendency to become too fat may be corrected by increasing the amount of exercise that is given. Draught horses should rarely be led or driven faster than a walk in taking their exercise, and they will require much less of it than the roadster or the running horse—a moderate "jog" daily will benefit them. I am clearly of the opinion that in no one particular is there more faulty management on the part of lazy grooms and stable hands than in the matter of exercising stallions while doing service in the stud. They should not be walked or jogged so long that they will become jaded or wearied, but should have enough of it daily to keep the muscles hard and firm, the appetite good, and to prevent them from laying on an undue amount of fat. No draught horse, under ordinary circumstances, should have less exercise than five miles a day, and the roadster and running horse may safely have six miles, which in some cases should be increased to eight or even ten.

The point to be aimed at in the stable management of the stallion is to so feed, groom, and exercise as to keep the horse to the very highest possible pitch of strength and vigor. The idea which prevails among many stable grooms that feeding this or that nostrum will increase the ability of a horse to get foals is sheer nonsense. Anything that adds to the health, strength, and vigor of the horse will increase his virility or sexual power, simply because the sexual organs will partake of the general tone of the system; and, on the contrary, whatever tends to impair the health and vigor of the general system will have a deleterious effect upon the sexual organs. A healthy horse needs nothing but good food, pure air, plenty of exercise, with due attention to cleanliness and regularity in feeding and watering; and when all these things are attended to properly the drugs and nostrums that stable lore prescribes as "good for a horse" would better be thrown to the dogs.

For the use of the stallion I like a box stall not less than twelve by eighteen feet, without any manger or rack whatever for the hay, and with a box snugly fitted in the corner for the grain. Many prefer that the feed boxes should be entirely detached from the stall, to be removed as soon as the horse is done eating. The hay is put on the floor in one corner of the

stall, and thus there is nothing—no projections, boxes, racks, mangers, sharp angles, etc.—upon which a spirited, restless horse may injure himself. If, in addition to these precautions, the sides of the stall be lined all around—door and all—with stout boards, standing out at the bottom about one foot from the wall, and sloping upward and towards the wall for a height of three and a half feet, you will have a stall in which it will be well nigh impossible for a horse to injure his mane or tail by rubbing. In such a box the horse need not be kept haltered, and the owner may feel assured that the liability to injury is reduced to a minimum.

#### CONTROLLING THE STALLION WHEN IN USE.

While the temper and disposition of the stallion are largely matters of inheritance, yet much depends upon the breaking and management. It is easier to spoil a horse than it is to cure him of bad habits, after these are once formed. If there is any appearance of a disposition to be "herdstrong" and unruly, he should never be led out except by a bridle that will enable the groom to exercise the most perfect control over him. The one that I have found most effectual is made by taking an ordinary "snaffle" bit, with rings of moderate size, and with the head-piece made in the usual way; get a blacksmith to attach a well-polished, round iron bar to the right hand ring, by means of a small link connecting the bar and the ring; to the other end of the bar attach the usual sliding rein used on stallion bridles. Put the bridle on the horse in the usual way, and then, with the right hand on the bar and the left on the bridle-ring next to you, press the bar back and the ring forward until the bar will pass through the ring in the left hand. This bar should be made just as long as it can be to admit of its being passed into the other ring in this manner, and the bit and rings should be so adapted to the size of the mouth and under jaw that, when a little pressure is brought to bear upon the rein attached to the end of the lever formed by this iron bar, the rings of the bit will be brought within an inch of touching each other. The leverage given by this appliance, when well fitted, will enable anyone to hold the most unruly and herdstrong horse in check. It is not necessarily severe when the horse behaves himself, and when he is not disposed to do this he can very suddenly be brought back on his haunches by a moderate touch on the rein. When the bar is not needed the rein to which it is attached may be passed over the head and down through the ring on the near side, instead of under the jaw. I have described this device fully because it is cheap, simple, and effective, and yet it does not appear to have been extensively used.

It requires some skill and a good deal of patience to teach a stallion how to behave himself properly when brought out to serve a mare. He should never be allowed to go on to her with a rush; but he should be led up on the near side of the mare to within about ten to fifteen feet of her, and made to stand with his head towards the mare, about opposite her head; and when he is ready he should be led towards her, and made to commence the mount when at her side, instead of going for a rod or so with his fore feet sawing the air, as is often the case. By observing these directions there will be but little danger of injury to the stallion by a kick from the mare when he is mounting, especially if a good man is at her head to prevent her from wheeling towards the horse when he approaches. The danger to the horse is always greatest when he is coming off, because many mares will kick then that will stand perfectly still when he is mounting. To obviate this it is always better for the groom who holds the horse to seize the mare by the bits with his

left hand at this moment and bring her head around towards him by a sudden jerk as the horse is coming off.

But in most cases, indeed in *all* cases where there is not an absolute certainty that the mare will stand perfectly quiet, the hobbles should be used, and then there can be no danger. To make these, prepare two straps of very strong but soft harness leather, two inches in width, and long enough to buckle comfortably around the mare's hind pasterns. The buckles must be strong and well made, and in each of these straps there should be sewed a strong, flattened ring. Next prepare a collar-piece of two-inch leather, and about as large as an ordinary horse collar, so that the mare's head will readily pass through it; to this collar fasten securely two stout straps, each an inch and a half wide, and just long enough to pass down between the fore legs and reach the straps on the hind legs; attach stout buckles near the ends of these straps, but far enough from the ends to leave room to adjust them to different sized mares; buckle these straps to the rings in the straps that are fastened to the hind legs, and buckle up short enough to effectually prevent the mare from kicking, if she should be disposed to do so. All this can be adjusted in a moment's time, and by its use all danger from kicking is avoided.

#### WHEN THE MARE SHOULD BE TRIED.

A point upon which there is great diversity of opinion is when and how often a mare should be tried after she has been served by the stallion. A mare will almost invariably be "in heat" on the ninth day after foaling, if she is healthy and has received no injury in giving birth to her foal; and in most cases it is best that she should receive the horse at that time, if it is desired that she should be kept for breeding purposes. I can remember when it was the almost universal custom to try mares every week after they had been served, but that is not the present practice of experienced horsemen. The rule that now receives the most general sanction is, not to try the mare again after service before the lapse of two weeks. I have taken a great deal of pains during the past four years to ascertain the views of prominent, intelligent, and experienced breeders upon this point, and I find them with very great unanimity agreeing that after the ninth day from foaling there is no regular period for the return of heat, neither is the period uniform in duration. Some mares will appear to be in heat nearly all the time, while with others it recurs but rarely and lasts but a very short time; consequently if the mare, after service, goes out of heat within a few days she should be served when she comes in again, even if that should be within nine days; but should the period not pass off she should not be served again under eighteen days. As a rule, it is best to try the mare again within from two weeks to eighteen days after service, and then, if she refuses the horse, she should be tried every week for some four weeks; and if she fails to come in within that time it will be reasonably certain that she is in foal. She ought to be closely watched, however, for some weeks afterwards, because in some cases mares will pass over a period of one or two months, or even longer, without any appearance of heat, and yet not be pregnant. Again, there are other mares—and they are more numerous than one would suppose—that will appear to be in heat and will freely receive the horse when they are in foal, and even almost up to the time of foaling. Such mares are always very annoying both to their owners and to the keepers of stallions.

For convenience in trying mares it is best to