

HORSES.

Horse Shows.

Spring horse shows are of two or three classes: those in which classes for stallions alone are made; those which include classes for breeding animals, both male and female; and those which include not only the breeding classes, but all classes—harness horses, saddle horses, hunters, and horses shown on the halter. The first class of show is much the more common, mostly every leading horse section holding one. In most cases the prizes are not large. There are prizes given for stallions of all recognized breeds and classes, and while the money offered is not sufficient to induce owners of stallions to go to the trouble and expense of exhibiting, the opportunity of exhibiting their animals before the horse-breeding public is usually considered sufficient inducement. Farmers and others who contemplate breeding one or more mares attend these shows for the purpose of seeing the stallions of the particular class or classes which they are breeding. Seeing several animals of the same class together gives one a better opportunity of judging their respective or comparative merits than seeing each horse singly, and he will usually decide upon the horse he will patronize. This decision is usually influenced to a greater or less extent by the awards, and this is especially the case if he be not a good judge of horses himself, he naturally taking it for granted that the best animals will win the best places. It is a matter of great importance for a man to win at the spring shows with his stallion. The honor of winning the prize is of much greater importance than the prize money, as it gives his horse a reputation and gains him patronage in the stud. Hence, while it is important in all cases that correct judgment be given in the ring, it is of greater importance in the case of stallions than in others. The man who exhibits a stallion in any class and is beaten by an inferior animal, either through incompetency or favoritism on the part of the judge or judges, suffers a greater injustice than is generally supposed; hence the necessity of extreme care being exercised in the selection of judges. In many cases a man is asked to judge, not because he is supposed to have any special knowledge of the characteristics of the class or classes upon the merits of which he is to pass judgment, but because he is considered a horseman, and at all events is a good fellow and a particular friend of some of the directors or probable exhibitors. He promises to act. Possibly he is aware of his inability to do justice to exhibitors, but he does not like to refuse the invitation of his friend, and concludes that at all events there will be some one associated with him whose judgment will be more valuable, and between them they will pull through some way. The day of the show arrives. Something unexpectedly occurs which makes it inconvenient for him to attend; he has not time to supply a competent substitute nor yet to send word to the directors of his inability to be present. Under circumstances somewhat like this it is often noticed that one or more of the judges who had promised to act are not on hand. Something must be done, and done quickly. Time is up, the crowd is present, stallion owners or grooms have their exhibits ready and are waiting to be called. The directors consult, and decide that they are forced to get some one or two of the crowd to act, so they buttonhole the first man they meet who has any knowledge of horses, and endeavor to persuade him to judge. It may be he is incompetent and knows it, and will not be persuaded into accepting, as he realizes the importance of the functions which he is asked to perform. Nothing daunted, they tackle the next man, and eventually succeed in filling the vacancies created by the absence of those originally selected. In many cases those acting will have a friend or neighbor with an exhibit in some of the sections, while the other exhibitors are strangers, and it is noticed that the friend often receives a better place than the merits of his exhibit warrant. This may be done either through ignorance or incompetency, but it is a great injustice to the exhibitor with the better animal. It is certainly laudable for a man to do his neighbor a kindness when it is not done at the expense of another, but when he is doing an injustice to another to favor his friend, it is dishonest. I favor the single-judge system, but this is open to argument. Whether one, two or three judges be selected, care should be taken that each is competent. It is not sufficient to have one good man and one or two indifferent ones. I claim that one good judge will arrive at satisfactory decisions more quickly than two or more, and he will be more particular, as if he make a mistake he alone is responsible, and cannot lay the blame on anyone else; while if there be two or three judges their opinions may differ. If there be three, two may agree, and the third, even though he may be right, will have to give in to the two. On the other hand, no two may agree, or if there be only two, each will have his own opinion, and they must either agree or call in others; as a rule, one will give way in

order to save trouble. Then, at the next disagreement, the one who gave way at first will hold fast to his opinion, and claim that as he gave in last time, it is only fair that his associates give way to him this time, and usually this is done. Hence the facts are that the awards are not altogether to the satisfaction of any one of the judges, and each has the opportunity of laying the blame of any mistake on his associates. No man is justified in accepting an invitation to act as judge unless he thoroughly understands, as far as it is possible to understand, the desirable qualities of the classes he undertakes to judge. He should be so sure of his knowledge that having once made up his mind how the awards should be placed he will not consent to any other allotment. He, of course, must be thoroughly honest and know neither friend nor foe in the ring. In order to do justice to himself, the exhibitors and the society that employs him, he must judge the exhibits solely on their merits, not in the slightest degree taking into consideration who the exhibitors are. In fact, he should not know who owns the animals. In some cases it is not possible to prevent this knowledge, still care should not be taken to impart it. In shows where there are catalogues, you will usually see the judge or judges furnished with them, and all they have to do is to turn up and see who owns a certain number. Now, I think this is not right. If a case should occur in which the judge has difficulty in deciding between two exhibits, even though he is trying to be perfectly honest, if he be a friend of one exhibitor human nature will assert itself and incline him to favor his friend, while the animals alone should be considered.

I would like, also, to say something about judging other classes than stallions, and espe-



THE LATE MR. JAMES I. DAVIDSON.

cially the saddle and hunting classes. I claim that no man can be a good judge of saddle horses unless he can ride, and especially can no man give satisfaction in judging hunters unless he be a cross-country rider. The value of a saddle horse and his right to win depends so much upon his mouth, manners and paces, that it requires a man who can ride to place proper value upon these points. And the same remarks apply to the hunter, in addition to his manner of performing over obstacles. No man who is not a cross-country rider can thoroughly appreciate the difference between the comfort experienced when mounted on a horse with good mouth, good paces, and a nice way of taking his jumps in his stride without altering his pace, and one that is a puller or the extreme opposite, has unpleasant paces, and bucks over the jumps. Many judges of the hunting classes seem to consider that if a horse takes his jumps without knocking them down or tipping them, that it is all that is required, apparently not knowing, or forgetting, that a good hunter must be able to gallop fast and stay, and take the leaps with comfort to his rider and ease to himself. Another point that is often apparently overlooked by the judges in these classes is that hunters are of three classes, viz., light, medium and heavy weights, and that no horse can belong to any two of these classes. How often do we see a horse win in the lightweight class one day, and with the same judges win in the heavyweight class the next. This is certainly wrong; we do not blame the exhibitor so much as the judges. The conditions for this section read something like this: "Heavyweight hunters, up to 200 pounds to hounds, carrying not less than 180 pounds over six hurdles, etc." I have frequently heard judges justify their actions in giving the same horse prizes in both

classes by saying that he carried the specified weight of 180 pounds, and hence could not be disqualified. Now, this is rather funny philosophy. The conditions state that he be up to 200 pounds to hounds, and the fact that a horse can, with apparent ease, carry 180 pounds over a few hurdles on the tanbark or grass does not show his ability to carry 200 pounds across country after hounds for ten or fifteen miles or more. I consider it the duty of the judge or judges in the hunting classes to line the entries up as soon as they appear in the ring and look carefully over them. If any be out of their class they should be disqualified and sent out of the ring—not allowed to compete at all. No hunter should be on any account allowed to compete unless he be well up to the weight demanded; hence, where there are only two classes given, viz., heavy and light weights, medium weights must compete in the lightweight class. Shows are supposed to be educational to those who are seeking knowledge in the line of live stock, as well as entertaining to the general public and profitable to the exhibitor. Supposing a prospective breeder, intending to produce heavyweight hunters, should attend one of these shows with the idea of seeing the ideal animal of this class. He watches with keen interest the lightweight hunter class perform, and sees a grand little fellow of say 1,050 pounds, with all the attributes of a hunter, win first place. This is amusing and instructive, as it gives him pleasure to see the noble animals perform, and teaches him what an ideal lightweight hunter should be, as regards type, style, size, action and performance, but it is the heavyweight in which he is particularly interested. He waits until the "heavyweight" class is called, and is surprised to see some of the same animals that competed in the lightweight class a few hours or the day before, but his surprise is intensified to see the champion of yesterday win to-day in this class before the same judges. This man, who is looking for information, is supposed to know little about horses, and nothing about the tricks of exhibitors, but naturally supposes that the men who are asked to judge at a high-class show understand their business, else they would not have accepted, and that when these gentlemen give a prize to an animal in a certain class, that that animal is at least a fair representative of the class, and when he notices the same animal win in two classes where such difference in size is demanded, he must arrive at the conclusion that he has come to the wrong place for information. Many instances of somewhat the same nature could be cited in other classes. Such things should not be. In all classes where the exhibits are not at least fairly typical, they should be disqualified, and the judge should be able to give his reasons for the disqualification. If judges were required to publicly give reasons for their awards, state why the first-prize animal should be placed ahead of the second, the second ahead of the third, etc., it would make it much more interesting and instructive for both exhibitors and spectators, and would have the effect of preventing a person from accepting the position of judge unless he felt quite competent. As it is, if a judge makes a mistake, either through ignorance or favoritism, he is subjected to uncomplimentary remarks by those who know better, but he hears few, if any, of those remarks. But if he had to give reasons for his awards, he would often hold himself up to ridicule in endeavoring to justify them, and would either quit the business or qualify himself to do better work, and be more careful. Of course, no man can expect to satisfy all exhibitors or have his reasons accepted in all cases by some exhibitors who have failed to take first place. Still, if he be "the right man in the right place," he will be able to satisfy himself and the majority of those who understand the desirable characteristics of the class under discussion. Opinions will differ, but if a man can give his reasons for his decision, he will be respected by others who are capable of judging, even though their opinions may not agree with his. Therefore, I claim that in the selection of judges, either for the stallion classes or other classes of stock, or, in fact, for any animal or article that is up for competition, greater care should be taken than is generally exercised, and I also claim that no man is justified in accepting a position as judge unless he is well qualified, and can convince the public of such qualification by publicly giving reasons as above stated.

"WHIP."

The Remount Scandal.

In the British House of Commons, it has been charged that the Government paid £33 per head for horses bought in the open market in Hungary for £10 and £12, the difference going into the pockets of certain smart individuals who obtained contracts from the War Office, and sold them again and again, at large profits. About the only defence set up was that of incompetence on the part of departmental officials, but the British Weekly, voicing a very general sentiment throughout that country, says: "The public demands that the incompetents be discovered and punished, and the fools fired out."