

action, and the same warranty as to wind, eyes, and hocks. With rarely any pedigree to fall back upon, appearance and soundness must be the chief recommendation of the farmer's mare: and even such a verdict based upon such conclusions must not be too hastily arrived at. Many a comparatively mean looking-one has before now thrown the best of stock, as that peerage of their order, the *Stud Book*, would assure us: mares that need carefully looking into before they are condemned or passed over. To give an illustration, however, direct to our purpose: about the grandest cock-tails I ever saw were Mr. Foster's Combat, Challenger, and Nike, all capital runners at welter-weights, and all the children or grand-children of, I am assured, as common-looking an animal as could be. The old mare had, no doubt, much within her "that passeth show," brought out as this was by the cross to the thoroughbred horse. In fact, if the dam be but clear of hereditary unsoundness, and with good action, I do not think we should be too scrupulous in asking the tenant to send nothing but the great, fine, slashing mares which they would, as half-bred, be scarcely justified in buying up. A friend in Devonshire has sent me a few lines on the way in which the "packhorse" answered to the superior cross, that I must give here as especially in place in a west of England journal:—

"The true pack-horse is extinct, and has been ever since my horse-recollection, that is, for about the last twenty years. The animals then going, in 1840, called 'pack,' were out of pack-mares, but their sires had crosses of blood of Yorkshire. Old Gainsborough, the thoroughbred of household notoriety in Devonshire, one who flourished somewhere about 1830, is generally credited with *never having got a bad one*. I attribute this to being the first cross with the true old pack-mares; and I believe that any moderately good thoroughbred would have produced a similar result, could he have had a chance with the same sort of mares. The animals resulting from Gainsborough and these pack mares—and I have several in my mind's eye—were perfection in make, shape, and action, weigh-carriers, everlasting, perhaps scarcely speed enough for the present fashion of spurting across the grass counties, although safe to shine through a severe thing and be at the finish. This Gainsborough generation of riding horses has also gone, and *no young Gainsborough cocktail stallion ever got a good horse*. It is a public misfortune that the line of the old pack-horse has not been continued in a pure stock, both for his own excellent inherent qualities, and for the value of the first cross with the thoroughbred. The big half-bred mares of this cross put again to a good sound, thoroughbred sire produced the animals to go the pace and carry the weight brilliantly in any country, and this is my pet process for a breeding line."

Of late years the west country farmers appear to have been crossing and re-crossing out of all

rhyme and reason, until they have nothing left but the horse of all-work, which, as amusingly demonstrated at Truro, they hardly knew how to class, either as a riding horse or as a common draught-horse. However, as my friend adds, "Every Devon farmer, as a rule, breeds or tries to breed riding stock, and as a consequence, in some hole-and-corner holdings a stylish, promising nag colt is often dropped upon where a stranger would think it about as likely to find an elephant."

So much for a fitting foundation. But let the thoroughbred stallion, under the countenance of the Hunt, be ever so well adapted for his purpose, and the mare really worthy of his caresses, the business of breeding is yet only in the beginning. Better-bred-stock require better treatment, and pay better for it. Half a horse's goodness, as it is said, goes in at his mouth; and it will be idle for farmers to attempt rearing riding horses without they do them a deal better than, as a rule, they hitherto have done. A half-starved foal never forgets it; and from the day he is dropped he must be the object of some care and attention. Does the dam give a good supply of milk? Does the young thing look as if he was doing well? Let his feet be looked to, as he grows on; and above all, let him be well kept, have a fair supply of corn, comfortable sheltered quarters, and so forth. I am no advocate for ever-coddling, nor would I wish to see the hunting colt brought on as if his mission was to win the Derby; but liberal rations, kindly treatment, and gentle handling will all tell by the time he is first led into the show-ring, or delivered over to the breaker. I confess to have some dread of the same country breaker, with all his wonderful paraphernalia and apparently indispensable habit of hanging about public-houses, as a means of making young horses handy. No man needs more watching; and as I have just intimated, a vast deal may be done towards making the young one temperate before ever he reaches this trying stage in his career.

The horse is by nature a social animal, and especially after weaning, two or three of the foals will do better in company, due care being taken that any one of them does not become much of "the master pig," and get all the good things for himself—to correct which they should be separated at feeding time. When together they will challenge each other to "strike out a bit, whereas the solitary mopes about with a little incentive to try his paces, and is much like a boy brought up at his mother's apron-string, or a young fox-hound that has lost his friend. I should hope by this that a duly-qualified veterinary surgeon is within hail of most farms, and I would leave it to this gentleman to thin his eye occasionally over the little stud, arrange the proper period for castration, and other detail that will necessarily have to be adapted to time and place. On any such minutiae of matter it is not within my purpose here to en-