

ON THE MANAGEMENT OF HORSES.

The principle of horse breeding consists in matching the horse and mare, in respect to size, substance, blood, and a certain conventional symmetry, so as to obtain a form in the foal in which may subsist a union of strength and ability for labor, with the powers of activity and speedy progression.

The procreative faculty in the horse remains to a very late age, sometimes upwards of thirty years. Four years is generally the earliest period in England; three years is common in America.

The head of the horse should be lean, neither long nor short, and set on with somewhat of a curve; the thropple loose and open, the neck not reversed, (ewe-neck,) but rather arched; the loins wide and substantial, more especially the back should not be long; the tail not drooping, but nearly on a level with the spine; the hinder quarters well spread, as a support to the loins, and as a security against the approach to each other of the pasterns in progression, whence results cutting them with the hoofs. The hinder legs should descend straight laterally from the hocks, as a preventive to the defect called *stickle houghed*, or hammed; at the same time, the curve from the hock should be to the degree that the feet may be placed sufficiently forward to prop the loins, and that the horse may not be said to leave his legs behind him. The muscles of the thigh and fore arm should be solid and full, though some horses are heavy and overdone by nature in those parts. The horse, of whatever description, should not be leggy, and of the extremes, short legs are preferable. The canon, or leg bone below the knee, should not be long, but of good substance, and the pasterns and feet of a size to accord with the size of the horse; the hoof dark, feet and frog tough, heel wide and open; the fore feet should stand perfectly level, the toe pointing forward in a right line, else the horse will knock or "cut on the speed," however wide his chest; in plain terms, he will either strike and wound his pasterns or his legs, immediately below the knees, or both. A full, clear azure eye.

The feed of the horse through the winter should be plenty of hay, (clover, timothy or millet,) fodder occasionally, with a plenty of cut oats, and a moderate feed of corn twice a day; and when they suckle, meal, instead of corn, with their oats, till grass is plenty; their corn and oats night and morning, without hay.

The best food while the mare is with the horse, is meal and oats. A colt, before weaning, should be pushed by feeding its dam high, and also put in fine pasturage, and especially if intended for early training and running.

A mare should not be ridden any distance, after being with the horse, and a mare not accustomed to use, should be rested a few days.

Colts that come before the 1st of May, may be weaned between the 1st of September and 13th of October. These foals late, suck six months; and fall foals through the winter. The operation is not gradual, but sudden, and thus

performed; they are enclosed in the large stable for about a week: watered, and fed with meal and cut oats, and their mother's milk, and crop grass. They are then turned into a corn field, and salted once or twice a week.

Both stallion and brood mare may be put to accustomed labor, that of the mare particularly being moderate. The term of gestation with the mare is variable; from eleven months and odd days, to three hundred and sixty-three days, which latter may be deemed the utmost. She is supposed to carry her first foal longer than the succeeding. The approach of parturition is indicated a few days previous, by the swelling of the udder, the appearance of milk, the swollen state of the matrix, and the thrusting out of the tail. She should then be watched night and day. In cold, wet, and bad weather, best under cover. At the eleventh month the mare should be watched, or taken to a place of safety. She should afterwards have the best and most succulent pasturage, without which the growth of the foal will be nipped in the bud.

The country chosen should be dry, hilly, and irregular; the soil calcareous, with sweet herbage, and good water in abundance. Should the mare have foaled successfully abroad, in a well sheltered pasture, her milk appearing copious and fluent, and the weather favorable, she may be suffered to remain, requiring nothing more than daily inspection and her allowance of corn, if such should be bestowed. If her milk should be obstructed or should fail, she should be taken to the stable, and enticed to lie down on straw. Warm ale should be allowed, with mashes of corn and pollard. In cases of chill and great weakness, the cordial ball may be given. But should the case be inflammation, from previous high condition and fullness of blood, cordial balls and all stimulants should be strictly avoided, and the regimen confined to warm water and gruel in copious quantities; and a moderate quantity of blood may be drawn. Daily walking exercise abroad should succeed.

During the inability of the mare to suck, the foal must be sustained on cow's milk. Foals should not be weaned till as late in the fall as possible. Castration is best performed at two years old.

Colts are generally broke at two years old; but it is well to accustom them to the halter as early as possible. The only remedy in the case of shying, is to hold hard and sit quiet. To whip a shying horse is utterly useless, and indeed makes him worse—unless he is an *affected* shy.

The long hairs around the eyes are pulled, and those upon the nose and lips cut with scissors, as well as those of the ears exactly within their margins. The mane is pulled with the fingers. The heels are trimmed close with comb and scissors.

The snaffle and curb bridle—the curb not being severe—is a good bridle; but a single snaffle is best.

As a tribute to the horse, to bring him into condition and fine hair in the spring—*Recipe*,