

CONDITIONING HORSES FOR SHOW.
HIGH FEEDING ESSENTIAL.]

The proper conditioning and preparing of horses for the show-ring requires considerable skill and care, and involves some trouble. To bring a horse into perfect show condition, so that it may make the most favorable impression on the judges when led into the ring, is not an easy matter. The great importance of showing horses in perfect condition and in good fettle need hardly be emphasised, and the proper conditioning of horses for show certainly plays an important part in attaining success in the show-ring.

One of the principal points in preparing horses for show is to make an early start, so that there may be plenty of time to get them into good form, for the preparation cannot be satisfactorily done in a hurry. The more time the exhibitor allows himself the more easily and the more successfully can the object be accomplished. The usage of the show-ring at the present time requires that horses should be shown in well-fleshed, not to say in fat condition. They must have plenty of flesh on their ribs, and the contours of the body are required to be well rounded. There are not a few horse breeders and owners who condemn the present day fashion in regard to show condition, considering that this fashion is harmful and productive of injurious results by reason of its undue artificiality, and rightly so. Be this, however, as it may, and whatever opinions an exhibitor may personally hold in regard to this subject of show condition in horses, he must conform to the requirements of fashion as it rules at present in the show-ring, and must exhibit his horse or horses in the recognised show condition if he is desirous of attaining success.

Liberal feeding on grain is, of course, indispensable. While in all cases a plentiful allowance of oats must be given, the exact quantity that should be fed depends very largely upon the particular circumstances and requirements of each case, and beyond stating that a comparatively plentiful ration is necessary no definite instructions can be laid down. The exhibitor must use his discretion and judgment in regard to this matter, being guided by the horse's bodily condition. Sound oats of good quality are the right kind of grain to use but if given too lavishly, may produce surfeit and cause the legs to fill.

EXERCISE.

The effects of high feeding should be counteracted as far as is practical by providing the horse with plenty of laxative food of a cooling nature, such as bran mashes, bran and linseed mashes, carrots, and cut forage of every kind. It is of great importance that the system of horses that are being conditioned for the show-ring should be kept cool, so that they may remain in the best of health. In the case of Shire horses, and also sometimes in that of other breeds of horses, some linseed cake is included in the diet. Linseed cake judiciously used is of course, a fine thing for making a horse put on flesh and fat, and for heightening the gloss on the coat. The cake is a help in preparing horses of the heavy draft breeds for show, and can be advantageously employed. Its richness must, however, be born in mind, and on no account must the feeding with cake be overdone. For horses of the light class cake is not to be recommended; in their case a little linseed meal answers the purpose far better and more satisfactorily.

In order to bring horses into perfect show form it is necessary that they should be regularly and sufficiently exercised or worked. In the first place, a certain amount of exercise or work is necessary for them, simply to keep them in good health, and to allow of their being highly fed without suffering bad effects. As long as a horse gets sufficient exercise it can stand high feeding for a certain time without much harm. Quite apart from this, however, exercise or work is essential, in order to bring out their muscles. The more the muscles of a horse are developed the better does the animal look. Mere fat can never take the place of well-developed muscle, even from the show-ring point of view, and the fact of a horse showing plenty of muscular development is bound to make a favorable impression. As, however, the horse is required to be in well-

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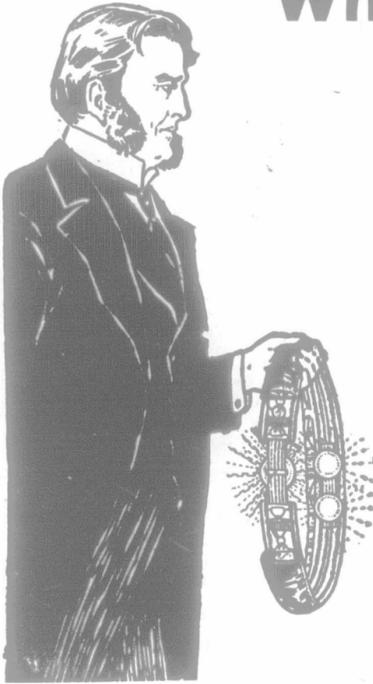
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