

formative period for the training of its members, have promoted a style of riding that may be said to be necessarily military and characteristically British.

Position in the saddle, or "seat", to use the horseman's terminology, has changed radically since the turn of the century. Military manuals on cavalry drill of that time favoured a rigid body position and straight leg with foot held parallel to the horse's side.

Motion pictures provided means for making a closer scientific study of the action of horse and rider and resulted in the general adoption of new theories on balance and pace, according to the type of work and the country with which the rider must contend, until gradually the seat has acquired its present variations—flat-racing seat, steeple-chase seat, Western or cowboy seat and the military seats of Italy, France, Britain, United States, and so forth.

To fit him for the multifarious duties he will be called upon to perform, whether in a crowded urban centre or at a lonely Northern post, the Mounted Police recruit is taught numerous academic subjects through many lecture periods. Physical training, swimming, foot drill, small-arms drill and equitation combine with this course to provide a well-balanced training curriculum from both the mental and physical standpoints, and though horsemanship may no longer be the most vital knowledge the recruit can assimilate, it is safe to say he would remain a less wise and less efficient public servant without it.

The primary object of instruction in equitation is to teach the pupil to acquire a secure and well-balanced seat and to apply correctly the aids so that he will be capable of using his horse to advan-

tage in the control of crowds; the mounted man should be able, without conscious effort, to retain complete control of his horse while concentrating his energy on the effective use of his weapons.

The methods of teaching equitation have changed as drastically as has the seat. The cracking of long whips and resulting wild melees, often purposely created by the instructor, belong to by-gone days and are no longer considered necessary or desirable. Quietness dispels nervousness in both horses and riders and is more effective than the old "Hit 'em and hold 'em" method.

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**N**C.O.'s employed as riding instructors must be experienced horsemen, able to demonstrate not only the correct methods but the results of their incorrect application. They must aim at instilling confidence in the recruit, by avoiding accidents or injuries and encouraging in him a desire to emulate their skill and technique. They must display patience both with pupils and horses, boldness and determination, severity tempered with sympathy, and be liberal in reward for a job well done.

Police horses are gentle, well broken and reliable, but due to an exuberance of energy and spirit will often, through a collective breach of good manners, create havoc by emptying saddles of unwary amateurs who invariably pick themselves up, surprised at both the rapidity of their involuntary dismount and total absence of bodily injury. When pupils display spontaneous amusement at the discomfiture of their companions and show the sportsman's attitude if they themselves suffer the indignity of a toss their confidence is established and nervousness eliminated.

As experience is gained and a reasonable degree of control acquired, horses sense the hand of restraint on rein and the equine dictatorial attitude subsides; no longer passive, riders are now taking an active part in the proceedings.

#### OPPOSITE—

**Top:** This is awfully boring.

**Middle:** Siesta.

**Bottom:** Definitely undignified.