

"Racers."—One of our exchanges has the following observation :

HORSES VS. MARES.

"It is a very remarkable fact that during the century only three mares have won the Derby. Eleanor in 1801, Blinkbonnie in 1857 and Shotover in 1882. They have done rather better in the St. Leger, which is run in September. This race was established in 1776, and in 124 years the St. Leger has been won 23 times by mares. Both in the Derby and St. Leger horses have therefore beaten mares very decidedly."

To our idea this is by no means remarkable, for the Derby is run on the last Wednesday in May, a season in which mares are very likely to be horsing. The St. Leger, on the other hand, is run on the Wednesday in the second week in September, a time when mares are mostly over their season; never cared to back mares for any summer race when we were, "plus ou moins," on the turf; can't depend upon their running true. As a proof of this, note that mares and geldings are always allowed a certain weight off in weight-for-age races.

"Stale-furrow."—Many years ago, we asked a farmer from one of the eastern counties of England how it came about that the heavy land of that district grew such superb malting barley. His reply was, that the seed was invariably "Chevalier" barley, and was always sown on a "stale furrow."

By a "stale furrow" is meant a furrow that has been ploughed some weeks previous to the seedtime and allowed to lie untouched, so that sun, rain, wind, and frost may work their will upon it. Hence the reason that in the reports of the farming in different parts of England, as sent to the agricultural papers, we so frequently see the following remarks :

"The prospects for barley-seeding are very good, as the weather being open, the plough is close up to the fold." This needs a little interpretation; it means that the land on which the turnips, or

rape, is being fed off by the sheep in folds composed of hurdles, has been all ploughed up to the part on which the sheep are then folded, so that, when seed-time comes, the part ploughed up to the date in question will be "a stale furrow." This, of course, refers to the turnip-soils.

On the heavy land in Essex, Suffolk, etc., on the east coast, barley is sown either in fields that have born a crop of mangels, or other roots that have been drawn off, or after a "summer-fallow"; but, in both cases, the land is ploughed for the last time before Christmas, and the seed goes in on the same furrow, which, as barley, for malting, is always sown in spring, is of course "stale."

The advantage of this treatment of land intended for malting-barley is clear enough. The great desiderata of barley grown for the use of the brewer are, that when, after steeping, it goes on to the maltster's floor every grain should start into germination at the same time, continue its growth with regularity, and when arrived at the kiln-head every grain in the bulk should have the "acrosire" reaching as far up the back as its neighbour's. Of course, this would be an unattainable pitch of perfection, but the more nearly it is reached the better the quality of the malt.

Now, it must be clear to any one who thinks a little that land allowed to be acted upon by the weather, as our stale furrow is, must have its surface finely pulverised, and that it would be a blunder to turn that surface down with the plough, especially on heavy land, and run the risk of bringing up a lot of clods that will have to be worried about with harrows and roller with what often turns out to be the vain hope of bringing them to a fine mould; whereas, if the stale furrow plan be adopted, the only treatment needed is the passage of the grubber across the ridges, the drilling in of the seed after one or two strokes of the harrow, and a trifle of harrowing after the seed is in, to bring about the desired condition that every grain has been deposited, at the same