

FEEDING HORSES.

In the remarks on the feeding of horses which we last made, we estimated the cost of the best kind of food per week for hacks at 10s; harness horses from 11s to 12s; and for hunters 13s 6d each, exclusive of litter. We propose now to show the saving which may be effected in the management of the two first kinds; for no one will dream of adopting in the last any change which is founded upon £ s. d. only, the object being with hunters and racehorses to get them into the highest possible condition, without any considerations of economy, excepting as to the best mode of obtaining the hay and corn upon which they are fed.

On referring to the extract from the report of M. Renault we find that each horse of the London General Omnibus Company, fed on the new plan, consumed daily of bruised oats 16 lbs., or 9s 7½d per week; hay 7½ lbs., or 2s per week; straw 2½ lbs., which, with the labor of bruising oats and chaff-cutting, would come to about 1s—altogether 12s. 7½d. Now, contrasting this with the other plan adopted by the company, we find the quantity of unbruised oats consumed daily to be 19 lbs., costing weekly 11s. 8d, which added to 3s 6d, the cost of the hay, comes to 14s 2d, or about 1s 6d per week more than the cost of the bruised oats and cut provender, which kept an equal number of horses in as good condition. These quantities are, however, much greater than the usual allowance in private stables, which may be stated as follows, taking the scale which we gave last week as the point of comparison. Thus, supposing hacks to require 11½ lbs. of unbruised oats and 12 lbs. of hay, daily, they will do nearly equally well on the following rations, viz.: bruised oats 10 lbs. per day, or per week 1½ bushel, costing 6s 1½d; hay 7 lbs., straw, 2½ lbs., with cutting and bruising per week, 3s—altogether 9s 1½d, effecting a weekly saving of 10½d. There is an outlay of from £8 to £10 required for the bruising and chaff-cutting machines, the interest on which with repairs, amount to about 3d per week; but as in the above estimate the cutting and bruising have been calculated at about that sum, and as in private stables no additional labour is required, the one may fairly be set against the other, and the saving may be said to be something under a shilling per week. In well-managed stables it is customary to cut the chaff once or twice a week, for if larger quantities are done at a time they become musty, and are not relished by the horses. The oats should be bruised daily, or every other day, and should not be mixed with the chaff until they are just about to be consumed.

Such is the ordinary plan pursued in stables conducted on economical principles in this country; but of late years a still cheaper food has been tried and found to answer well. This consists in the substitution of Indian corn and beans for oats; and the mixture of these two appears to agree remarkably well with the horse. In America Indian corn is very generally given without beans, but we doubt whether it would suit the animal in this climate. We have never known it tried alone; but the experiment with it mixed with beans has come within our observation, and, as far as a continuance for six months may be considered a sufficient test, it has been fully successful. The horses fed on it were worked quite up to the average in private stables, and their condition was excellent, showing the blooming coats and hard muscle, slightly inclining to fat, which is what is desired, in the hack and carriage horse. It was found that 7 lbs. of crushed Indian corn and 1 lb. of split beans were quite sufficient, and produced as good an effect as 10 lbs. of crushed oats; and as the price of all three of these varieties is as nearly as may be 1d per pound, the saving effected is 2d per day, or about 1s 2d per week. A closer calculation may be made which would give the price to a fraction, but for ordinary purposes the above will, we think, be found most convenient.—Whenever Indian corn is adopted for horses, bran mashes must be given twice a week, at a cost of about 2d, so that the actual weekly outlay for the food of horses on this plan may be set down at about 8s 1½d. We do not ourselves vouch for the correctness of the facts relating to the use of Indian meal, but we believe that the experiments have been carefully conducted, and we are quite sure they have been related in good faith. The subject is, at all events, worthy of a further trial, and we shall be happy to record any experiments made by our readers with this kind of grain, which is now so largely imported into England. We believe it is too hard to be readily split in the oat-bruising and bean-splitting machine as usually sold, but it can always be purchased in the state known as "hominy," which is that in which it was employed in the instances to which we have alluded.—*Field*.