

Of all the mistakes and errors committed by small breeding farmers, there is none so prevalent or so fatal as to put a worn-out, half-bred mare to a second-rate, stilty racing stallion, with nothing to recommend him but the empty and worthless consideration of pedigree.

I have seen fine promising-looking colts thrown by old thorough-bred mares when nearly twenty years old, but this is only in the large breeding establishments, where, with rest and great care, the mare has been stronger at twenty years old than at five; this is a far different animal than one who has been worked till she can work no longer, until she is full of diseases and deformities, and then made use of for the reproduction of her species. Like begets its like, and we need not wonder when the breeders who pursue this line of policy are disappointed when the produce is sent to market, and that he gives up the idea of horse breeding in disgust.

Hunters should be bred from mares in the prime of life, while their functions are at their utmost vigour. They should be selected for their power, speed, endurance, and courage, perfectly free from defects, diseases, or deformity; and should be put to short-legged stallions, with deep ribs, powerful quarters, strong loins and shoulders, with sound, well-to-med feet, and a smart, intelligent-looking head, well set on. If both the sire and dam be thorough-bred, so much the better; but thorough-bred horses with substance are becoming scarcer every year; indeed, how can they be otherwise when mares and yearlings are forced like a hot house gardener forces his grapes and pine-apples—his owner may get the size and outward semblance, but none of the substance or quality of the fruit when grown in a natural state, and allowed its own time to ripen.

There was a time when children were worked (in the cotton factories of Manchester and its districts) until it was a rarity to see one grown to maturity in the same form that God made him; the result was the notorious transmission of their infirmities to their progeny. Then it was that the legislature interfered, and effectually prevented factory owners from working children until they were qualified to stand the fatigue, without the risk of deformity. I am no advocate for government interference with private enterprise; but I think the time will come when it will be forced, in self-defence, to interfere more seriously in the matter of horse-breeding than it has hitherto done. We have too much of the present quality of racing blood running through the veins of our troopers, which renders them constitutionally weak, and unfit to stand the rigour of a winter at the picket post, especially when existing upon the uncertain supply of forage which is incidental to all armies on a campaign in a strange and perhaps hostile country. The infusion of the racing blood of the present day into the veins of troop horses

also makes them too light for the purpose they are required; a light dragoon will, with his k ride an average weight of eighteen stone. It is clear, then, that he requires a horse with substance, but it is also essential that trooper should be well-bred; and this class of horse commonly called the seven-eights bred one, can not be produced at the price given by government, indeed they cannot be produced at all except through the medium of worn-out racing stallions and mongrel-bred mares. But if government could procure a number of brood mares and stallions of the class above recommended to form the nucleus of a breeding establishment and by these means produce a number of horses and mares with good blood and substance, keeping them solely for breeding purposes, they might then without difficulty produce, by the aid of a cross with a lower, but stronger breed of horses, the finest cavalry horses that ever look through a bridle.

I cannot but think that a national stake of a heavy amount, say four or five thousand pounds, would have a most beneficial effect, no horse to start under five years old, to carry twelve or thirteen stone, a distance of four miles. We know that notwithstanding the unnatural treatment to which the race horse is now subjected that he sometimes attains very fine proportions at six or seven years old. When sent to stud he thickens, lets down his belly, and as far as regards looks, is quite a different animal what he appeared during his racing career. We may have some idea what a magnificent sight would be afforded by a field of such animals, if they were kept and prepared from their youth for this one great event. What to prevent such a race being established? I am convinced that it only wants starting in the most influential quarters, and the object would be gained; it would give a great impetus to horse-breeding by drawing the attention of capitalists to the subject, and awakening the understanding of those who up to this period bred nothing but weedy mongrels, not worth the shelter they lie upon. The money would soon be subscribed by masters of hounds, members of bunts, and the plucky horse-proud gentlemen of our own tight little island, and the sister country, from whence I opine many of the candidates would come.

This great event might be run off at Ascot—say in six years from the first of January, 1862—it should be open to all nations, and no allowance as to height, weight, or breed, should be made, but no horse should be allowed to start that has ever run in a race previously.

There would be one advantage to the breeding of horses for this event; that, if bred with judgment, the losers, of which there would be a great number, would find a ready market for them at remunerative prices, as animals bred with a view to win such an event would be worth