

SCHOOL-TRAINING

FOR HORSES



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Sir Charles Staveley.



JOHN A. SEAVERNIS

A SYSTEM OF
SCHOOL-TRAINING
FOR HORSES.

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

I THINK it fit that I should offer some explanation for advocating the school system of training, since it is generally regarded as something fanciful and useless, if not positively mischievous.

I shall first say a few words concerning the importance of a thorough method in the training of horses for the saddle, and I shall then answer, as far as I am able, the objections

that are raised against the systems of the schools.

Whether it be in the field, upon the road, or in the troop, the rider must follow some sort of method in the management of his horse.

Every horse that can be ridden is to some extent schooled, as we understand it in the *manège*, and the more amenable he is to the will of the rider the more nearly the object of every system of the schools has been obtained, no matter whether his trainer knew or was ignorant of what he was effecting or how it was brought about.

Teaching the horse to turn to the right or to the left, driving him forward with the heels, and measuring his speed and perfecting his paces, are

things that every rider endeavours to accomplish, and these are, all of them, primary principles of the schools.

Is it not well to go further, and to teach the horse a ready and precise obedience to the every wish of his rider? For the object of school methods is simply to acquire control over the horse under all circumstances, and the various movements practised are, for the purpose of rendering him quick and willing to answer the demands of his rider.

As to the uselessness of this training and its results, where shall the line be drawn between the highly trained charger and the awkward, stubborn colt? It may not be necessary for the gentleman who follows the

hounds, or takes a ride in the park, to move about at the traverse or to exhibit the action of his horse in the Spanish trot, but if he can make his horse perform these movements he will have an animal that is the safer and pleasanter to ride, by reason of his lightness and obedience.

Nor do I see any grounds for the principal objection against school training, that it decreases the speed of the horse. It is true that in the balanced movements of the *manège* the horse is made to step short, both to retain the balance in the direct line and to enable the animal to make short and sudden changes of direction. But to enable a horse to carry himself in the equilibrium of the school his every

muscle must be suppld and strengthened, and I hold that it is self-evident that when the horse is *permitted* to extend himself his speed would be the greater and his going the stronger for his training. This is evidenced, too, in the buck-jumps and the other high movements of the *manège*. In the limited area of the riding-school, the trained horse will take leaps that would do credit to the most active hunter, while the latter would not find room to turn in his lumbering gallop. Why this suppleness and strength should decrease the natural speed of the horse I cannot conceive, and I think that the idea originated in the belief that the short step of the balanced horse is the natural result

of a cramped training-ground, and not, as is the fact, purposely brought about by strengthening and suppling the animal, so that he may carry himself lightly.

It should be observed that in modern school-riding, the forces of the horse are brought into balance, so that no undue weight falls upon either extremity. Thus another objection to the system is groundless.

To kick a horse along and to pull him to the right or to the left by sheer force, is, to a certain extent, riding, and I suppose will satisfy the requirements of most horsemen, but it is not the highest standard of horsemanship, and the more it is improved upon the better for the horse and his rider.

It is not necessary that every man should learn or that every horse should be taught all the movements of the *manège*. It will be enough for all practical purposes of ordinary riding if the horse carries himself in equilibrium and obeys the indications of the hand and legs, and the rider has a seat that permits him to make a measured use of the aids under every circumstance of motion and action. But that which remains to make a thorough horseman and a schooled horse is so little, that I have here given a method for those movements of the *manège* that have been found most useful in giving the horse control of his powers and in making him obedient to the will of his rider.

There can be no objection to a rider becoming skilful in the management of his horse, or to the horse being rendered obedient to his master's wishes. A perfectly schooled horse is a horse perfectly fitted for any use; and a rider who has a seat that permits him to apply the aids in the vigorous movements of the *manège* is prepared for any emergency, upon the road or in the field.

There are those who hold the opinion that no one can learn to ride from the rules laid down in books. How is one to learn to ride? From the first there is little that the beginner must not learn, from rule or from example, and, according to his aptitude for the exercise, he improves in skill by

practising that which he has acquired by observation or through instruction. The general rules of the art are the results of ages of experiment, and it is doubtful whether a man would ever, by his unaided efforts, reach any great proficiency in riding. One may consider himself to be self-taught; but the fact is that nearly everything he knows about riding is derived from imitating those who have in some way gained a knowledge of proper usages, and afterwards by deducing natural sequences from these established rules.

If the pupil is fortunate enough to have the personal instruction of a skilled master, he will, perhaps, learn more rapidly than by following the precepts of a book. But he is much

more apt to find a proper system in some work that has received the approbation of the authorities upon the subject than in the instruction he receives from grooms and self-styled masters. The instructions given to the recruits in the military riding-schools are, for the greater part, a repetition by the instructor of the printed rules, which he must learn by rote. I have known many *good riders* who owed all they knew in the art to a study of the intricate laws laid down by Baucher. I have many times taught movements to horses by following the directions of competent writers, and I have never failed in accomplishing that which I undertook.

I wrote *How to Ride*, and I write

this work, from a love of my subject, and because I am convinced that a pupil may learn to ride and to school a horse from books.

While I do not think that this book can in any sense be considered a compilation, I wish to say that I have studied the works of nearly all the modern writers upon my subject and have had instruction from several professional school-riders; but I have also had the experience of many years in training my own horses, and I believe that there will be found no chapter in which I have not presented original ideas, not inconsistent, I hope, with proved methods.

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SCHOOL - TRAINING FOR HORSES.

CHAPTER I.

THE EQUILIBRIUM.

It is useless to attempt to school a horse until he has been taught to carry himself under his rider in equilibrium. For, no matter how perfectly balanced the horse may be naturally, the conditions of affairs are changed when we put a bit in his mouth to hamper his voluntary movements, and place upon his back the weight of a man and his trappings; and the horse must be care-

fully taught to conform his carriage to the new disposition of weights and forces.

With equal care and greater labour must the ill-formed animal be taught to correct his natural defects by a new bearing, and to carry his burden in an acquired equilibrium.

The conformation of each horse will suggest the means to be employed in each case, so that by giving him a balanced carriage it will be possible for him to obey the demands of his rider.

But our efforts in every case will be directed to the end that we may obtain control over the collected and balanced forces.

The horse is propelled by the hind-

quarters and guided by the fore-hand, and it is to collect and govern the forces of these parts that we now turn our attention.

We desire to bring and maintain in equilibrium these forces, so that the movements of the horse may be made with lightness and precision.

If the horse be not collected and his forces be not balanced, he will move in an awkward and uneven manner; his fore-hand dragging the croup, or the croup forcing itself upon the fore-hand. Most of the resistances and struggles of young horses in training are due to the fact that the animal is not in a position to obey the demands of his trainer, and a horse will seldom refuse compliance to any demand that

he understands if he be placed in the position that renders his obedience easy.

If the horse be deficient in the fore-hand and high and strong in the croup, we must carry back and aid the forces of the former, or the animal will be heavy in front from the preponderance of the forces of the hind-quarters, and will struggle against the hand. It is usually the horse of this make that in unskilful hands becomes a bolter and a runaway.

If the horse be strong and well made in the fore-hand, but weak and deficient in the croup, we must bring up and strengthen the latter, so that its forces may meet and balance the forces of the fore-hand. When the hand, ope-

rating through the bit upon the mouth, carries back the forces of the fore-hand until they meet and balance the forces of the croup brought up by a pressure of the rider's legs, the horse is in equilibrium at a halt, and the preponderance of either of these forces with a corresponding yielding of the other extremity will result in motion.

But this preponderance, as well as the corresponding yielding of the forces of the other extremity, must be great enough only to bring about the motion at the desired speed; and the approximate equilibrium must be kept at all times. That is, the point of union and balance must be kept, as far as is consistent with the rate of speed that the rider demands, when the forces of

one extremity are advancing, and those of the other are pressing forward to find the point of balance. To obtain this the horse must be light in hand, and the croup must readily answer to the pressure of the legs. How to teach the horse to yield to the bit will be explained in the next chapter; and although I explain at length the method of suppling the croup, I may say here that the horse may be taught to answer to the pressure of the legs by tapping him upon the croup with the whip held behind the rider's back, while he presses in both heels to the flanks of the horse. When the horse will answer to the pressure of the heels by bringing both legs in under him, the taps of the whip must be abandoned.

The approximate equilibrium must be constant, for the moment that it is lost altogether the horse becomes heavy, and one extremity or the other must drag in action. This not only applies to the forward or backward movements upon direct lines, but to all changes of direction and traverses to either side. Of course, in every movement the equilibrium is more or less disturbed; but the better it is kept, the lighter and the more graceful will be the action.

CHAPTER II.

SUPPLING THE FORE-HAND.

THE horse will first be ridden in a plain snaffle bridle, the trainer holding a rein in each hand, at such a height as he finds gives the horse the greatest freedom of action. He will induce the horse to move forward by some encouraging sound, or by a gentle pressure of the unarmed heels. Upon coming to a turn the inside rein will be drawn to bend the head of the horse in the new direction, and

the outside rein will support and steady the movement, while the outside heel may, by a slight pressure, bring up the croup of the horse. When the horse will turn readily going in one way about the school, he will be ridden in a similar manner to the other hand. He will then be ridden in the figure of eight, taking the whole length and breadth of the manége, or training-ground, in the movement, and the rider will use great care in shifting the aids at the extremities of the diagonal lines.

During these lessons, the duration of which will depend upon the aptitude of the horse in acquiring the habit of obeying the bit, he will be permitted to walk in the manner that pleases him, or rather, in the only way he knows,

usually a loose shambling gait, with very extended strides of the hind-legs.

He will then be taught to carry himself in a more collected manner, and to step in a regularly cadenced and even walk, and then in a slow measured trot, likewise cadenced.

On the outside path of the manège he will be put into the walk, and as a hind-leg is raised to step forward the rider will press in his heel on that side, and immediately after meet it with the corresponding rein, and he will do the same thing at each step of the other hind-leg. This action of the aids will shorten and equalise the strides of the horse, and by bringing back the forces of the fore-hand to meet the advancing forces of the croup, render the horse collected and light in

movement. The speed must be kept regulated, and the horse must not be permitted to hasten or to decrease his walk at the unaccustomed application of the aids. This regularity may be aided by the encouragement or the soothing of the animal by the rider's voice, as the horse hangs back or hastens forward. The horse should be brought to a halt by the rider pressing in his heels, to carry the hind-legs under the animal, and the hand quickly acting upon the mouth to check the forward motion. The hand to follow the pressure of the heels in time to prevent a second step by the hind-legs, but so gently as not to harass the horse.

In the same way the horse will be made to take and keep a slow, measured trot, the *action* of the animal, not his

speed, increased by means of the aids. But these lessons must not be carried too far, as it is not now the intention to develop the trot into the passage, but simply to give the horse light, even, and regular strides; and when this has been acquired the horse will be habitually ridden with an equal pressure on both sides of the mouth when the bit is in action, though never with a constant pull upon the reins.

After the horse has acquired the walk and the trot as described, he should be ridden in the double-reined bridle. The curb-bit being carefully fitted, but sufficiently severe to make him discover that it is for his own comfort that he yields his head and jaw at its pressure. I have found that bits with branches from four

and a half to five inches in length, from the centre of the mouth-piece, answer the purpose; and as my horses never rear or fight against the hand, I think that bits of this description may be used by those riders who do not trust to the reins for support.

When the rider first mounts the horse bitted with curb and snaffle, he will draw the curb reins up until he has a gentle feeling of the horse's mouth. Then with the direct rein, the horse being at a halt, he will make light vibratory motions to induce the horse to give his jaw upon one side, and afterwards he will, in the same manner, make the horse yield his jaw to the other rein. Then, with both reins at equal length, he will play with the bit

until the horse yields his jaw and carries in his head, giving the hand the moment the horse yields, so that the animal may understand that he has done that which was demanded, and that he is rewarded for obedience.

These results cannot be accomplished at once, and in case of resistance the trainer should, after a few trials, cease his efforts and turn his attention to some other part of the education of the horse. But when the horse has refused obedience, through ignorance or stubbornness, while he must not be punished, he should not be led by any act of kindness to think that his refusal has met with the approbation of his rider.

I wish to say here, at the outset of these instructions in training, that I am

opposed to severe punishments under any circumstances. I have seen severity tried in many cases, and for years I was under the belief that positive disobedience should meet with quick and sharp penalties, but I have never seen good results follow such treatment; while, on the other hand, I have never known patient kindness fail to conquer the most stubborn animals. Besides other advantages of the course I recommend, it reduces the dangers of training to a minimum; and the only injury I have received in schooling many horses, a very slight one I am happy to say, was the result of an angry blow given to a young horse who tried my patience beyond the bounds of my philosophy. This

lesson was not lost upon me, and I have found the same horse perfectly docile when treated with firmness and kindness. The spur and whip must be used, but the horse should not look upon them as instruments of punishment, and it is surprising how quickly a young and spirited horse will answer to the application of these aids without flinching or resentment. I find that a harsh word will answer every purpose of correction, and all horses understand and fear the angry tones of a man's voice, as they are soothed by his kind words.

We will now return to give the horse his first walking lesson in the double-bridle.

Taking the curb-reins in the left

hand, divided by the little finger and grasped by the thumb, while the snaffle reins, divided by its width, are held above them in the right hand, the rider will move the horse upon the outside path of the riding-school to go around to the right. When the horse, at a walk, arrives upon the path, the left hand will, by a series of gentle vibrations of the curb-reins, giving an equal bearing on both sides of the mouth, induce the horse to yield his jaw and to carry his face perpendicular to the plane of movement. The height of the head, which should depend upon the conformation of the horse, must be regulated by the snaffle-reins, as the curb-bit has a tendency to make the horse carry

his head too low, but the two bits must not act simultaneously; when the right hand is to play with the snaffle, the left hand must ease the tension on the curb-bit, and this rule for the independent use of the bits must be observed under all circumstances. Should the horse hang back, the hand will yield, and the closed heels will press him forward, then the rider will renew the action of the bit. When the corner of the school is reached, the tension of the curb-reins will for a moment cease, and the horse will be turned in the new direction by the snaffle-bit held in the right hand; but before the change is completed, the snaffle-reins will be eased, and the outside curb-rein will be carried against the neck of the

horse to teach him to bend at the application of the curb. At each corner of the riding-school these applications of the aids will be practised, and upon the straight lines the curb-bit will call upon the horse to yield his jaw and head, the tension upon that bit ceasing the moment the horse obeys the demand.

After a few turns about the school to the right, the reins will be changed, the left hand holding those of the snaffle above the curb-reins now in the right hand, and the horse will be walked the reversed way.

In the straight lines the horse will be kept collected between the hand and legs, and as he learns to yield to the bit and answer to the heel, he will become light.

When the horse turns readily at the corners in answer to the snaffle followed by the curb, he should be turned by the use of the curb alone, the outside rein being pressed against the neck and the corresponding heel bringing up the croup. After he makes the turns at the corners at the pressure of the curb-rein, he should be ridden in the figure of eight, taking the full length and breadth of the school, and then gradually taught to go in circles to the right and left, the equilibrium being always required.

In the same way, using precisely the same means, the horse should be taught to trot and gallop in measured speed in the equilibrium—the head carried in a perpendicular position, the jaw

yielding to every touch of the curb-rein, and the action even and regular. Should the horse lose his equilibrium in the trot or in the gallop, and become heavy in hand, he should be brought to a halt, and after the equilibrium is re-established he should be again put in the action, so that he may know his fault and correct the habit. As a rule the horse should after every mistake be brought back to the first principles of the movement he is attempting.

The reason for demanding the yielding of the jaw is obvious, for the horse then is incapable of resistance against the bit. The position of the head also is an acknowledgment of subjugation; for while the horse may freely

hold it at any height to insure ease and grace of carriage, he cannot so well oppose the demands of the bit as he could were his head held stiffly out or braced against his chest.

In this stage of his education it is excellent practice to bring the horse to a halt and to carry his head first to one side and then to the other, until he looks to the rear, by the gentle play of the direct rein; and requiring him to yield the jaw while the head is turned to the rear. After bending to either side, the neck should be straightened and the jaw made to yield before the head is bent to the other side.

The different action of the two bits must be constantly borne in mind. The snaffle-bit will be used, in short pulls

upward, to make him carry himself light in front if the horse be naturally heavy in that part ; while the curb-bit will be employed to overcome the active resistance of the horse, and to direct and rule the forces of the forehead after the snaffle has accomplished its work. But the two bits must never be used together, no matter how rapidly the effects of one must follow those of the other.

CHAPTER III.

SUPPLING THE CROUP.

To bring the horse under the control of the rider it is necessary that the forces of the croup should answer to the application of the legs as readily as the fore-hand yields to the demands of the bit.

The trainer, standing at the near shoulder of the horse, will, in his left hand, grasp the reins of the curb close to the branches of the bit, and, by drawing them towards the animal's chest in

gentle vibrations, induce him to yield the jaw and carry his head in the perpendicular position; at the same time he will tap the horse upon the rump with the whip, held in the right hand, until the hind-legs are carried under the body, and the horse is brought into equilibrium.

The taps of the whip will then be transferred to the left flank until the horse carries his croup over one step to the right. The fore-hand will be kept in place by the reins, and although the fore-legs have not been raised from the ground, the off fore-foot will, in the new position, be slightly in rear of the line it should occupy. A tap of the whip upon the under side of the right forearm will bring that leg up to its place,

and the horse will be straight in the new position.

In this way the horse will be taught that, although the fore-hand must not move away from its ground, the inside fore-leg must be raised and advanced to accommodate itself to the new position that the mass has taken.

The horse will be made to carry the croup, step by step, around the fore-hand, the near fore-leg acting as a pivot, and the off fore-leg moving enough only to bring him straight after each step made by the croup. He must not take more than one step at a time, and he should be permitted to move only when it is required of him.

In a similar manner, standing at the off shoulder, the trainer will make the

horse pass the croup about the fore-hand in the opposite direction, the off fore-leg acting as the pivot.

These exercises will be employed between other early lessons, until the horse will pass to the right or to the left without removing the pivot-leg, and without losing the equilibrium.

The power of the whip will now be transferred to the legs of the rider, in the following manner :

The mounted trainer will bring the horse into equilibrium by hand and legs. He will then pass the whip, held in his right hand, behind his back and tap the horse upon the near flank, pressing in the left heel at the same time, until the croup passes one step to the right. The right leg of the rider will be held close

to the flank to prevent the horse drawing back or making more than one step, while a play of the right curb-rein will overcome the resistance of the right shoulder of the horse, and, lightening that side, induce him to bring up his right fore-foot to the line that will put him straight in the new position.

Step by step the circle of the croup about the near fore-leg will be completed, care being taken to put the horse straight after each change of position, and the opposition of the fore-hand overcome by the play of the direct rein of the side to which the horse moves.

By similar means the horse will be made to circle the croup to the left about the off fore-leg as a pivot.

When the horse will make the reversed

pirouettes in the manner above described with lightness and precision, he will be made to pass, to the right and to the left, about the outside pivot-leg without halting at each step; the proper fore-foot being brought up with each movement of the croup to maintain the straight position.

The next practice will be to make the horse move the croup one step to the right, then one step back to the left, one step again to the right, and so on, until he obeys the pressure of the legs without hesitation.

In all movements of the croup about the fore-hand the head of the horse should be bent towards the advancing croup, and the fore-hand should be kept light by the play of the direct rein.

These lessons will render the horse

ready and quick, and he will soon obey the pressure of the leg without waiting for the prick of the spur, the more severe form of the aid being held in reserve to be used only when required.

Having obtained control of the forces of the fore-hand and of the croup, we have the horse under command, and we may perform any movement by the proper employment of our powers.

The pressure of the heels will not increase the speed beyond the liberty allowed by the hand, and the horse should be accustomed, by the restraint of the hand and the pressure of the legs, to moderate his speed, or even come to a halt, in a collected form. In bringing the horse to a halt, the heel pressure will precede the action of the hand. In

reducing the speed, circumstances will dictate how much, and when, the aids will act. This collected state gives the horse security in his movements, as he is always ready to recover from a mistake, and it is necessary for the maintenance of equilibrium.

CHAPTER IV.

TO BACK.

ALL horses should be taught to move backwards with ease and lightness; not only that the animal shall be prepared to go in every direction, but also that he may the more readily learn to collect himself and be quick and ready in his movements.

Backing is a movement not natural to the horse, and he must be made to abandon all repugnance to the unusual

action, and be taught how best to perform it.

If the horse be made to back by means of the bit only, the forces of the fore-hand will bear down and cramp the croup, and if any movement to the rear takes place it must be with difficulty and awkwardness.

It is evident, therefore, that, if the movement is to be made with ease and grace, the forces of the croup must be brought up to a point nearly in balance with those of the fore-hand, but yielding to the latter sufficiently to permit the retrogression at the desired speed.

It is not possible for the horse to back with rapidity and retain his lightness, and the school-terms of the "gallop backwards" and the "trot

backwards ” mean only that the motions of those paces are observed while the horse moves slowly to the rear.

To teach the horse how to back, he should be brought, saddled and bridled, upon the training ground. The trainer will then, by means of the left hand acting upon the reins beneath the chin and the taps of the whip upon the croup, bring him into equilibrium. Then, by continuing the taps of the whip upon his croup, the horse will be made to raise one of his hind-legs, but before the mass gets a forward impulse the hand will carry the horse back one step, and before he loses his lightness he will be made to advance a few steps.

In the next lesson he may be made to take two or three steps to the rear, and to advance several steps before the equilibrium is destroyed. By short progressive lessons of a few minutes each day, he will be practised until he will carry himself a number of paces to the rear without losing the equilibrium, which should be retained by the hand and whip acting upon the fore-hand and the croup, as either requires the stimulant of an aid. Care must be taken to keep the horse perfectly straight at all times; and to assist the trainer in this it is well to have the horse along the side of a wall.

After the horse has been taught by the trainer on foot to move backwards with lightness, the man should begin

the mounted lessons. The rider will bring the horse into equilibrium at the halt; then pressing in his heels until the horse raises one of his hind-feet, as if to advance, the rider will carry back the balanced mass one step by a light pressure upon the bit, and immediately make the horse advance by yielding the hand and closing in the heels.

Each day the horse will be made to take an additional step, or more if he still retain his lightness, until in time he is able to go any distance to the rear without becoming heavy. If the croup yields too much to the coming fore-hand, the heel of the rider will support the croup upon the side of the lifted hind-leg, and the pressure of the

bit should only be felt as each step is made, and then only sufficiently to bring about the movement. Of course, the horse must be kept perfectly straight by the ready pressure of the rider's heels. The horse should not be permitted to come to a halt after backing until he has made a few forward steps without a break in action.

CHAPTER V.

THE PASSAGE.

THE passage is a kind of trot, of very brilliant action in the highest possible equilibrium. It is usually employed in traversing, as the position in which the horse is found at each stride is favourable to his balance in moving to the right or to the left.

In the passage the weight of the horse, at each cadence of the gait, is borne by a fore-leg and its diagonally

opposed hind-leg, and from the spring given at each step he is for the moment in the air. The effect of this action is striking and graceful.

The passage is produced by putting the horse into a slow trot and restraining the forward movement, while great exertion is demanded by the spurs. The opposite spur is applied as the horse raises each fore-leg in movement, and the hand meets and opposes the spur as the hind-leg of each side is thus brought into action. That is, the spur and the rein of the same side serve to produce the action, shorten the stride and restrain the speed. If the horse is about to lead off with the *right* fore-leg, the rider will apply the *left* spur to increase the croup action and

to support the raised fore-leg, and will immediately after draw the left rein to check the forward impulse, and in that way further increase the action and produce the momentary halt that adds so greatly to the effect of this trot.

The speed must be very moderate and regular, at each stride the momentary rest must be marked, and the equilibrium must be maintained.

The exercises with hand and heels, recommended in Chapter II. for giving the horse a steady regular step, are admirably adapted for preparing the animal for his lessons in the passage. Indeed, the aids are the same in both cases; and in the passage the diagonal action, if I may use the term, is produced by the accentuated use of the

spur forcing the croup while the hand restrains the fore-hand; and another effect of the combined aids is the height and brilliancy of the step.

After the horse has been perfected in the passage, the intermittent pulls upon either side of the mouth may cease, and the hand will take an even bearing upon the reins whenever it is necessary to feel the mouth, and the slightest pressure of the rider's leg only will be required as the horse leads with the opposite fore-leg. But the application of the rider's legs should not cease while the horse is to be retained in the action of the passage; and it should be a rule that, except in the walk, the trot, and the gallop, in direct lines, the horse should never

be allowed to maintain a school movement after the indication of the aid ceases; otherwise he may volunteer an undesired performance. After circling, traversing, the changes of leg in the gallop, or the movements in place and to the rear, the horse will be put into direct lines in the same action in which these are performed before he is brought to a halt. This rule does not apply to the horse while he is learning the rudiments of the movements, because it is often necessary to bring him to a halt to correct an error, but after he can perform the various airs he should be taught to observe it.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PIAFFER.

THE piaffer is simply the passage without advancing; and the horse will be brought to perform it by giving him the action of the passage and then preventing him from gaining ground by carrying back the forces of the forehead with the bit. At first the rein and spur will act at each step, as in the passage, but after the horse has acquired the action it will only be

necessary to keep him light in front and to use a gentle pressure of the rider's leg as the animal raises the opposite fore-leg and its diagonally disposed hind-leg to sustain the movement.

The piaffer is useful in rendering the horse light, and in putting him in a position from which he can make any movement with great celerity and precision, as he will be ready to advance, to retreat, or to traverse to either hand without further preparation.

This is a movement difficult to control, and the equilibrium is of the highest importance. It should not be undertaken until the horse is quite perfect in the passage, and has been taught to back with ease and lightness.

The lessons in the piaffer should be given every day, but for only a few minutes, as the action is very fatiguing and harassing to the horse, and he is apt to become careless and heavy.

The advance in the *passage* should be gradually decreased, and when the horse has made a step or two in place, or in the *piaffer*, he should be permitted to again advance in the *passage* and be rewarded by a kind word. In a short time, increasing the number of steps in the piaffer at each lesson, the horse will perform the movement without difficulty, and can be made to begin the action from the halt. But if the first lessons are given from the halt, the horse must offer more or less resistance, and will frequently become violent in his oppo-

sition. The rider must endeavour to obtain a regular and even step, each leg having the same height of action, and the whole movement being made with that springy motion that is proof of a high state of equilibrium.

CHAPTER VII.

TO BACK AT THE PIAFFER.

THE means for producing a backward movement in the piaffer should be apparent to all who have read the preceding pages, but great tact and discretion are required, and perfect concord must exist between horse and rider.

When two legs of the horse are raised in one of the steps of the piaffer, the hand will carry the balanced mass to the rear, and they will come to the ground

a few inches to the rear of the position they would take in the piaffer in place. The increased tension upon the reins should cease the moment the impulse to the rear has been given, to be felt in the same way at the next step of the other pair of legs. The spurs will keep up the action of the piaffer, and prevent too precipitate a retreat. When it is desired to go forward the hand will yield at some cadence of the movement, and the increased pressure of the heels will carry forward the raised legs of the balanced horse.

In this, as in all other movements, the rider should sit quietly upon his horse, so carrying his hands and legs that his motions in applying the aids shall be almost imperceptible. It detracts greatly

from the appearance of a horseman to be seen making violent efforts with hands and heels, and the shifting of his weight under such circumstances disturbs and hampers the horse.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHANGES IN THE GALLOP.

THE gallop is a succession of leaps, in which the legs of one side leave the ground after, but pass beyond, the legs of the other side; and the horse is said *to lead* with the side making the more extended strides.

If the horse take the long strides with one side, and turns to the other in changing direction, he is *false* in his gallop. If he take the long strides with

a fore-leg and the diagonally opposed hind-leg he is *disconnected*. That is, to be true and connected in the gallop the horse must always lead with the side towards which he is turning or traversing, and the legs of the same side must correspond in action.

In the gallop the horse rises more upon the side with which he leads, and the croup is bent to that side to enable his hind-leg to make a stride corresponding with that of the leading fore-leg; and here we have the key for demanding its performance.

If we wish, therefore, to make the horse gallop leading with the right side, we shall lighten that side by a *play* of the direct-rein, and bend the croup by an application of the left spur. When the

horse strikes off, the hand and legs will align him upon the path he is to follow, and collect him for the desired speed. To this end the leg opposite to the spur must be carried closely to the flank, to be ready to give support, and to prevent too much yielding to the rowels. This method must not be confounded with that prescribed by military writers, for although the instructions appear to have great similarity, the effects are very different. In military riding, the rule for making the horse gallop with a snaffle-bridle is to *raise* the opposite rein, *lower* the direct-rein, and apply the opposite spur. The theory I advance would require the reverse of this, so far as regards the reins. The "double-feeling" of the *direct* curb-rein in the cavalry schools is not the

play or *vibration* that I advise to lighten the side with which the long strides are to be taken; for the soldier by the "double-feeling" of the direct-rein bends the horse's head to that side, and with the opposite spur brings about the croup, and the horse must take the gallop with the side so collected. But while the desired action has been brought about, the horse cannot have that grace and freedom of action that follows the method of lightening the side that is to lead.

All authorities, other than the one I have just referred to, follow the old rule of "the opposite rein and opposite spur," until the horse has been taught to gallop with either side, when some other and more proper method is sub-

stituted. But there can be no good reason for adopting a false method by which to teach a movement if a horse can be taught by the proper method from the beginning.

If the horse is lightened in front by a play of the bit, he may be lightened more upon one side than upon the other by the increased action of the bit upon that side ; and by this method the horse may be trained to gallop by the use of the same means that shall be used to make him perform the movement after he has been trained. I have employed the rule founded upon this theory with complete success, not only in teaching the gallop, but in schooling for all those movements requiring the lightening of one side of

the horse, as in the pirouettes and traversing.

As the horse can best maintain his balance and keep his footing when he is true and connected in his gallop, it is of the first importance that the rider should be able to demand the changes of leg while in action; but this requires long schooling and great tact.

The horse must first be taught to gallop leading with either side, at the will of the rider, in a regularly cadenced gait, in direct lines and in circles. While galloping in a direct line he will be brought to a halt, and then made to lead off in the gallop with the opposite side. When he will perform this change from the halt with

clearness and precision, he will be slowly galloped in a circle and, without the halt, changed to a circle in the opposite direction, the hand acting upon the fore-hand as it rises, and the spur of the opposite side pressing in as soon as the fore-hand bends to the bit. As the hand acts the body of the rider will be carried back, to be brought forward again as the spur is applied. This use of the aids and disposition of the weights, as the horse is about to change the lead, will give the poise, at the moment the fore-hand is in the air, which enables the horse to take the new lead with smoothness and exactness. The application of the aids must be made with celerity, but without unnecessary force or effort upon the part of the rider.

After the horse will make the changes neatly in turning from one circle to another, he will be made to change his lead in the direct line at any step without halting. But the horse must not be put forward until he perfectly performs each successive step in the lesson, and he must be brought back to the *first principles* of the movement whenever he becomes careless or awkward.

In demanding a lead of either side, or a change in the lead, the horse will be bent no further than is absolutely necessary to obtain the movement, and in making the circles the body of the horse should conform to their circumferences.

It is hardly necessary to say that the highest equilibrium is essential to the performance of the changes.

CHAPTER IX.

TO HALT IN THE GALLOP.

IN all the exercises for bringing the horse into equilibrium he has been learning to carry his hind-legs under him at the pressure of the rider's heels, and from his obedience to this indication we can readily get a finished halt from the gallop.

The horse will first be accustomed to come to a halt from the walk at the pressure of the rider's legs, closely followed by the raising of the bridle-hand.

In the same way he will be brought to a halt from the trot.

Then, being put into a measured gallop, the rider will bring him to a halt by pressing in the heels as the horse is beginning some cadence of the gait with his hind-legs, and raising the bridle-hand as the horse is beginning the succeeding cadence with the fore-legs: The result of these applications of the aids will be that the horse will come to a finished halt at the completion of the second cadence of the gait. For at the pressure of the heels the horse will bring his hind-legs well under his body, and at the drawing of the reins he will arrest his action in the fore-hand, and he will come to the halt with his powers collected. As the rider presses in his heels he should

lean well back, so that his weight may aid in fixing the croup of the horse at the finished stride. The legs and hand of the rider must be used with promptness, but without violence, and the time must be well chosen. After a few trials the rider will be able to seize the proper moment without being conscious of having noted the leaps of the horse ; and in time he will bring his horse to a finished halt from the gallop with the same ease, and with as little thought of the steps to be followed, as he would use to turn to the right or to the left. The halt in the gallop prepares the horse for the momentary rest that precedes the change of leg in the gallop, as the fore-hand rises for the new lead.

CHAPTER X.

THE GALLOP IN PLACE.

THIS movement, and that which follows, may be performed only by a collected horse in the hands of a skilful rider. Under such circumstances there should be no difficulty in producing these brilliant effects.

When we first put the young horse into the gallop, we find it difficult to keep him at a measured rate of speed in a regularly-cadenced stride. But by the restraint of

the hand, and the support and encouragement of the spurs, we teach him to take and maintain the gallop at the desired speed. By the same means that we employ to regulate his speed we may prevent his progress, or even compel retrogression in the action of the gallop.

Before it is attempted to teach the horse the gallop in place he must be taught to gallop in direct lines in such a measured and collected manner that a slight change in the tension of the reins will not discompose his action. The rider will then practise bringing him to a very slow gallop by the restraint of the hand, while the pressure of the heels will prevent him becoming heavy in the croup by demanding the action of that part. He will then be taught to begin the

gallop at this very low rate of speed, and after a few strides be brought to a halt. In time, he should be made to take several steps in place at starting, and then be allowed to go forward at the slow gallop, and be rewarded by a caress and a kind word for the few steps he has taken in place ; for this movement is very trying to the temper of the horse, and he must, by short lessons and rewards, be encouraged in his efforts to obey the demands made upon him. Each day the number of steps may be increased, but he should never be required to keep up this fatiguing and harassing action for any great length of time. The forces of the fore-hand must not too greatly over-balance those of the croup, or the hind-quarters will be fixed to the ground, and

the movement will degenerate into a series of rearings. The spurs should keep up the forces of the croup, and the hind-feet should move at each leap.

The changes of leg in the gallop in place may be made in exactly the same manner as when the horse is advancing.

CHAPTER XI.

TO BACK AT THE GALLOP.

To back the horse in the action of the gallop from the gallop in place, it is required that, as the fore-hand begins to sink in a cadence of the action, the forces should be carried back by the hand so that the fore-feet will touch the ground a few inches within the line they would have reached from the gallop in place, and the hand then giving way, the croup will be lightened

and the hind-legs will be carried back far enough to find their proper position required to keep the horse collected at each finished step. The movement of the croup to the rear will be measured by the spurs, and it must not be allowed to go so far as to make it impossible for the horse to rise at the succeeding cadence.

To move forward, and the horse should be made to advance before he comes to a rest, the hand will give liberty to the horse as he rises, and the spurs will act upon the croup, so that the horse will take a gallop in the direct line in a regular and even stride.

The gallop to the rear is a mere *tour de force*, to exhibit the skill of the rider and the training of the animal. The

movement must be made *very slowly*, and exactly the right time must be taken to increase or yield the tension of the reins, or the balance of the mass will be destroyed and a mishap may ensue.

The gallop in place is in the true action of the gallop, and the horse is in a high state of equilibrium. But in the so-called gallop to the rear, while the horse must be in perfect equilibrium to begin the movement, the forces of the fore-hand must be carried back too far, and the changes in the points of balance are made too slowly to permit the horse to be always light.

Of course, the horse must be kept collected, and the action of the fore-hand and of the croup must be kept up in the best equilibrium possible, or the

movement must come to an end. But a high state of equilibrium is not constant, though it may be regained when the horse moves forward in the gallop.

I believe that no other writer has given a description of the action of the horse in the movement, and I know that the impression derived from the methods by which it is proposed to produce it is of an action very different from that I have described. I can only say that I have explained the movement as I have seen it performed by the horse, and I know of no other way in which the horse can move with lightness to the rear in any action that resembles the gallop.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SPANISH TROT.

WHILE I do not consider this movement to be within the scope of my work, for I do not see that it answers any useful purpose, I have undertaken to give several of the many methods by which it may be produced, because it is so greatly admired for the brilliancy and elegance of its action.

By one method the trainer will, standing at either shoulder of the horse,

bring him into equilibrium with a hand operating upon the jaw by the reins held beneath the chin, and by the whip taps upon the rump. He will then walk the horse, thus collected, about the training-ground, and as the horse is about to raise each fore-leg, he will give it a tap with a stiff whip on the under part of the fore-arm, checking the advance at each step with the hand. In a short time the horse will raise and extend the fore-arm at the tap of the whip, making the exaggerated action of the Spanish march. A rider will now mount the horse, and the power of the whip will be transferred to the spur, in the following manner:—As the trainer, walking by the side of the horse, applies the whip, the rider will

press in the opposite spur and meet the impulse of the spur with a tension of the rein of the same side, to make the momentary rest, and by checking that side lighten the other. After a few lessons the horse will make the extended step with each fore-leg at the application of the spur and hand without the whip, provided that he is kept very light in front. This *march* can readily be forced into a trot by increasing the speed and continuing the use of the aids. Two or three steps only at a time should at first be demanded at the trot, and the horse must be kept collected and light in hand; and, if necessary, the play of the rein may be marked, as he raises the hind-leg of that side. After the

horse has made a few steps in the Spanish trot he should be permitted to resume his natural action, and he should be rewarded for his exertions by hand and voice. In time he should perform this movement at very slight indications from the aids, the thumb of the bridle-hand being turned, at the wrist, towards the right shoulder or towards the horse's ears as the right or left leg gives a light pressure to the flank. We must not in the Spanish trot lighten the fore-hand by the *direct* rein, as in the gallop, because there must not be a cross pull in any trot, and we content ourselves by producing the momentary rest with the rein of the moving hind-leg, and by checking that side give freedom to the moving side of the fore-

hand. The Spanish trot is simply an exaggerated passage, with the strides forced *forwards* by increased application of the aids and by throwing back the forces of the fore-hand more than in the perfectly balanced action of the passage, which takes place *under* the horse.

A second method for producing the Spanish step is very similar to the preceding, but is better adapted to nervous, excitable horses. In this second method the trainer will stand in front of the horse, facing him, and, walking backwards, will lead the horse in the best equilibrium he can procure under the circumstances. With a very slender whip he will *touch* the horse upon the *front* of the fore-arm as he raises each

fore-leg in walking. This will have the effect of making the horse strike out, often to the peril of his trainer, with the fore-leg that has received the touch of the whip. The transfer of power to the spurs and the subsequent steps in training, will be exactly the same as described in the first method.

A distinguished school-rider, who gave me my first practical lessons in this movement, made it his custom to teach the horse, while at a halt, to give or extend his fore-leg at the whip taps applied below the knee, and as the horse raised the leg the trainer would seize and bear it up as high as he could. Afterwards he had a groom to walk backwards, facing the horse, and as the trainer, walking by the side of

the moving horse, made him raise each fore-leg in turn, the groom caught it in his hands and bore it up for a moment, and then dropped it to treat the other fore-leg in the same way. Even with the horse in a trot have I seen that groom dodging away from the excited animal, but seizing and lifting the fore-legs as they were thrust forward. The result of this work was the most elevated action that I have ever seen, and the long pause between each step in the horse so trained was very effective. The power of the whip was transferred to the spurs by the usual method. I hope that my old instructor will not consider me indiscreet in explaining how he produced the wonderful action that was the envy

of continental riders a score of years ago.

This is the least difficult to teach and to ride of all the school movements, and is of the least importance.

CHAPTER XIII.

TRAVERSING IN THE PASSAGE.

WHEN the horse is directed to the right or to the left upon two parallel paths, by one of which moves the fore-hand slightly in advance of the croup which follows the other, he is said to traverse.

This is one of the most important of the movements practised in military riding, and is useful to all horsemen in rendering their mounts obedient to the

indications of the leg. It is usually performed at the *passage*, but the early lessons must be given at the walk.

If the horse be standing across the line upon which he is to move (that is with his body making right-angles to that line), he will be made to carry his croup one step to the left, which will bring him into the proper position, with regard to the line of march, to traverse towards the right.

This position to the line of march is necessary to permit his legs to pass each other as he proceeds sideways.

The rider will lighten the fore-hand with the right rein, and induce a movement to the right by a pressure of the left heel, his right leg being held close

to the flank to prevent the croup going over too far and to keep the horse up to the line of march.

The horse must be kept at the same angle to the line of march, and his head must be bent in the direction he is following, and whenever the horse loses his lightness he must be brought to a halt and collected.

In the same manner, right and left, aids being interchanged, he will be taught to traverse at a walk in the opposite direction.

When the horse will pass to the right and to the left upon straight lines without losing his lightness, he should be made to traverse in circles: care being taken to keep him, at each step, at the proper angle to the point of the

circumference upon which he happens to be.

He will then be made to perform the traverse in the action of the passage.

The rider will put the horse into the action of the passage upon a direct line, and will, upon arriving at the point where he intends to begin traversing, keep the fore-hand at the same rate of speed, while he forces the croup to take by extended strides the proper position to the line of movement. The action of the passage and the traversing will be kept up by accentuated pressures of the opposite spur given as the horse raises the fore-leg of the side to which he moves; the inside leg of the rider will be held close to the flank to

keep the croup in place and prevent the horse falling back from the line of march. The hand will lead and direct the fore-hand, and by the play of the *direct* rein will maintain the lightness of that part and carry the head of the horse in the direction he is following. It will be observed that the rein upon the same side with the acting spur is not used to bring about the temporary rest at each stride as in the passage in direct lines, because this action of that rein would interfere with the traverse movement. The effect of the momentary rest is accomplished by the action of the outside spur giving one pair of legs greater action than the other two take in the alternate strides. The *inside* spur, while keeping up, if neces-

sary, the horse to the line, is also used to prevent the croup passing over too far, but, of course, does not serve to heighten the action of the two legs it would act upon in the passage in direct lines; it rather checks them, though it is not intended that the *inside* spur should take any part in producing the *action* of the passage in the traverse.

At each step the weight of the horse is supported by a fore-leg and the hind-leg diagonally opposed, while the other two legs are carried beyond them in the direction of the movement. The manner in which the weight is thus borne permits the horse to keep his balance as he goes to the right or to the left, and avoids the danger of tripping.

The experiences of the rider in performing the traverse in circles at the walk, will teach him how to make the changes of direction at the passage. But when it is desired to change *from* traversing to the right or left *to* the left or right, the progressive movement must cease, in order that the horse may take his position and balance for the new direction. If the horse be traversing at the walk, he should be brought to a halt, and the croup should be carried over to the proper side for the change; but if the horse be traversing at the passage he should be made to do a few steps in the *piaffer* and the croup may be carried over during its action. For it must be understood that, the fore-hand being in

advance of the croup, the horse cannot traverse to the opposite side until these relative positions of forehand and croup are established for the new direction and the balance effected anew.

CHAPTER XIV.

TRAVERSING AT THE GALLOP.

ALTHOUGH the *passage* is the action in which traversing may best be performed, horses are brought to traverse at the gallop, both as a school movement and to prepare them for *voltes* and *pirouettes*. Of course, the general principles for traversing are the same in all actions, and it is only necessary in the gallop to take the greatest precautions for preserving the balance of the horse in

moving to either side, for his weight is not then so evenly supported as in the passage.

The horse should be put into the gallop with the lead on the side to which he is to traverse ; that is, if he be to traverse to the right he will be made to gallop leading with the right legs. When he arrives at the point where the traversing is to begin, the croup will be carried over by the opposite spur, and the fore-hand will be bent and conducted by the direct rein. The inside spur must be kept close to guard the movement, and between hand and legs the horse must be kept at the proper angle to the line of progress. As the croup moves into the position for traversing, the horse will probably be compelled to take a dis-

connected stride with his hind-legs, and this action will be corrected at the second stride in the new movement by bringing up the croup. In like manner, when the horse is put into the direct line a false stride in the hind-quarters must be looked for and corrected.

In turning, the speed of the croup must be retarded so that the hind-quarters will hold their relative position to the fore-hand at every point of the line ; and likewise, in traversing in circles care must be taken to keep the body of the horse at the proper angle to each point of the circumference. This retarding of the speed of the croup will be governed by the graduated pressure of the outside spur, aided by the support, when necessary, of the inner spur. If the horse

be traversing to the right, and it be desired to pass in the opposite direction, the movement to the right must end, and the horse must recover his balance and be put into position to the line of the new direction. The action of the horse does not cease, for if he comes to a rest he loses his lightness; but the movement in the old direction must be stopped, and while the horse is still light and collected the fore-hand will be carried over as far as is necessary for the new order of affairs, and the change of leg made by the change of aids, and the horse will lead off with the side towards which he is to traverse.

CHAPTER XV.

VOLTES AND PIROUETTES.

THE movement of traversing in a circle is called a *volte*, when the fore-hand follows the outer circumference, and the croup is kept towards the centre. As the circles decrease in size the distance to be passed by the croup is lessened, and when the croup becomes the pivot about which the fore-hand passes the *volte* becomes a *pirouette*.

The smaller the circles for the *volte*

the lighter must be the fore-hand of the horse; and in the pirouette the spurs must act strongly in collecting the forces of the croup, while the hand carries back upon the hind-quarters the point of balance of the weights and directs the movement. The spurs having collected the horse act only to steady the croup, and in the earlier lessons the outside spur will be used to bring up the outside hind-leg as the mass moves about the inner hind-leg as a pivot. The *voltes* are made in exactly the same manner, and by the same means, as the changes of direction in traversing. The position of the body of the horse, with reference to the angle at each point of the circumference, must be observed, and while the fore-hand must

be kept light, the croup must be allowed freedom to move upon its path, until in the pirouette it is fixed by the forces of the fore-hand.

If it be desired to make a pirouette from the gallop, the stride must be shortened and the forces collected between hand and legs. At some finished step of the hind-quarters the fore-hand will be brought back to destroy the forward impetus, and as the horse rises he will be turned to the side with which he leads in the gallop. But there must be a momentary rest, and the balance must be obtained before the pirouette is made. By a trained horse in the hands of a skilled rider all this may be done so quickly and so smoothly that the different steps may hardly be

observed, and the horse comes to a rest, is turned, and put again in the gallop, as if by an almost continuous movement in the beat of the gallop.

But before the pirouette is attempted the horse must be made quite perfect in the voltes, to the right and to the left, first at the walk, then in the passage, and finally at the gallop. In making the volte at the gallop the horse will go about to the side with which he is leading, the fore-hand in the outside circle, the croup on an inner line. In changing from the volte to one hand to the volte to the other hand, the impetus of the first must cease, and the forces of the fore-hand having been brought back, and the fore-hand carried over, the change of

leg will be effected, and the horse, balanced for the new movement, will make the volte in the new direction. As the circles of the volte decrease in size, the spurs will collect more strongly the forces of the croup, and the hand will carry back further the point of balance, so that the forehand may be lightened. As the movement approaches the pirouette the outside spur will gradually cease to aid in the turning, leaving the hand to carry the balanced mass about the pivot.

In the pirouette the horse takes his weight and turns upon the inner hind-leg, and the outer hind-leg is brought up in support. That is, if the pirouette be to the right the horse

will turn upon the right hind-leg, and the left hind-leg will be brought up to help sustain the weight.

Although traversing and the voltes prepare the horse for the pirouette, it is well to give him some lessons peculiar to the movement, in the following manner. Bringing the horse parallel to a wall, so that he may not move his hind-quarters away from his ground, the rider will, step by step, bring the fore-hand about the croup as a pivot by drawing the direct snaffle-rein, and steadying the horse with the opposite rein of the same bit. The inside heel will be kept close to the flank of the horse, and the outer heel will be used to make the outer hind-leg keep up to its

place as the moving mass changes its proper position. If the movement be around to the left, the left snaffle-rein will demand the movement, and the right snaffle-rein will steady the horse. As the fore-hand completes the change, the right heel of the rider will bring up the right hind-leg of the horse. After the horse will carry the fore-hand about the croup, to the right or left, with the snaffle-bit, without the support of the wall, the rider will bring him into equilibrium with the curb, and with the reins of that bit held in one hand will carry back the forces of the fore-hand, and turn that part, so lightened and raised, about the croup; using the outside spur, if necessary, to govern the hind-

quarters. Of course, it rests in the discretion of the rider how far the horse shall turn before he brings his fore-feet again to the ground, and the activity of the horse, as well as his balance, must be taken into consideration in performing the pirouettes. In the true pirouette the horse goes about and faces the opposite direction, before his fore-feet come to the ground.

CHAPTER XVI.

TEACHING TO LEAP.

My experience has taught me to differ from those who think that a generous horse objects to leaping in cold blood. A horse used as I recommend will take a positive pleasure in doing all that his rider requires of him, and as long as it is not carried on until he is fatigued, there is nothing he likes better than leaping. I can understand

how horses that are punished with the spurs or whip every time they approach a leap, acquire a horror of everything that reminds them of the torture, and that such will face obstacles only when the excitement of the chase has obliterated from their memory all recollection of the pains that attend leaping. So, too, a horse crippled either in fore-feet or in hind-quarters, will naturally avoid the exertion that must bring suffering. But a high-spirited horse does not object to leaping when it is unattended by the pain of spurs or of lameness.

I have had horses that would leap the bar when turned loose in the school; and this year I had a young mare in training that would leap a

closed umbrella or a stick held out before her.

I believe that every horse can be brought to leap willingly and quietly, even though through bad management it has acquired the habit of rushing at the leaps or of refusing them. After a few lessons, I have ridden a horse, that had always rushed at his leaps, over an obstacle while the reins lay knotted upon his neck; and I have reason to believe that no well-formed horse, if properly trained, will refuse a leap that he thinks he is capable of accomplishing. Setting aside all considerations of the pleasure in riding a horse that jumps with coolness and deliberation, there is much greater safety with such an animal

than with one that springs into the air with a struggle to alight he knows not how or where.

The young horse should first be taught to step over a leaping-bar as it lies upon the ground, when he is going to or returning from the spot where his daily lessons are given. If the horse refuse to cross the bar, the trainer should stand upon the opposite side at the length of the leading-rein with his back to the horse, and wait until the animal satisfies himself that there is nothing sinister intended and follows his master without being urged. The attention of the horse should not be drawn to the object, and there should be no effort to drive or to pull him over it.

When the horse will cross the bar without reluctance, it should be elevated two or three inches each day until the animal is compelled to make an effort to step over it. At this height, say eighteen inches, the bar may be taken in the lunging circles, and the horse encouraged to leap it as he approaches the bar by some word or sound that he understands. After his first leap in the lunge, he should be stopped, and by caresses be given to understand that he has done well.

In the early part of each general daily lesson, for the space of a week, he should be made to leap the bar upon the lunge line, at the same height, but not more than three or four times each day; and he should be made

to understand after each leap that his effort has met with approval.

The bar may then be raised by degrees, two or three inches each day, until it is about three feet from the ground, and the horse should be made to leap it a few times during each lesson. During these exercises pieces of horse-clothing and highly coloured rugs, with which the horse has become accustomed, should be placed near the bar; and, after the horse has passed them in his lunging circles without paying attention to them, they should be put upon the bar for him to leap. In this way he may be taught to jump anything that presents itself, no matter in how questionable a shape it comes.

But all this is simply to render the horse willing to leap. It still remains for him to be taught how to do it in the best manner.

After the horse will take the leap willingly upon the lunge-line, the trainer should lead him very quietly up to the bar, and giving him his head, let him take the leap from a slow walk. Then he should be stopped as he is led up to the bar, and made to jump from the halt.

After such a course the trainer should stand at an end of the bar, so that he may be able to detect and to correct the faults the horse may have in his style of leaping.

If the horse does not bend his fore-legs closely enough, some light taps

with the whip upon the shins as he rises will cure the habit; and a few touches of the whip upon the outside of the hind-legs below the hocks will induce him to gather his hind-legs well under him. The leading-rein should hold him well under control as he approaches the bar at a walk, or stands ready to leap; but he should have full liberty of his head as he rises, and until he has regained his footing on the other side. In this way he not only learns how to gather himself for his leap, but he must alight properly, and not on all four feet at once, as he might do if hurried over the bar. If the horse will not rise for the standing leap, he may at first be assisted by the hand which holds the leading

rein, carrying back the forces of the fore-hand, and so lightening that part. But when no longer necessary, this assistance should be withdrawn, as the horse should learn to depend upon himself for calculating height and distance.

The horse should not be ridden over the bar until he has received these lessons, and has been taught to carry himself in equilibrium. The introductory course of instruction, as described above, having been followed, and the horse having been taught to collect himself under the hand and legs, the horse should be ridden to the bar at a brisk walk, and encouraged to take a leap by a pressure of the legs, and, if necessary, a play of the bit to lighten the fore-hand. When he will take the

leap freely, without requiring assistance from the hand, he may be ridden at the bar in a slow, collected gallop. In the leap at the gallop the hand should do nothing more than direct the horse and maintain the equilibrium, while the legs should be used to collect the forces of the croup for the spring, but there should be no prick from the spur. If the horse be accustomed to depend upon assistance from the bit in rising for the take-off, he will become negligent, and will throw all the responsibility upon the rider. This must result in a disaster, for the horse only can judge of his own capabilities, and he should decide where to take off and with what exertion. If the horse be in fit condition

to leap, and has been properly schooled, he will not require the spur to urge him to his work, and its use may give him a distaste for jumping.

When the fore-feet of the leaping horse have touched the ground, the hand should act sufficiently to gather the horse for exactly the same speed and equilibrium as that in which he approached the leap, great care being taken not to harass or check him in his movements.

A great deal that is misleading has been written in the endeavour to establish a rule to be observed when the horse falls in leaping—some would-be authorities advocating the use of the reins to raise the horse, while others assert that any movement upon the

part of the rider will hamper the efforts of the animal. A horseman of experience should know that neither rule will apply to all cases. If, after a fall, the horse raises his head from the ground and shows a determination to get upon his feet, any action upon the part of the rider might interfere with his intelligently directed efforts. But if the horse lies with his head upon the ground and makes no effort, or if he struggles violently in his panic he should receive assistance from or be steadied by the rider's hand. A word of encouragement will often rouse him to a deliberate effort if the fall has cowed him.

After the horse will take his leap in the gallop neatly and evenly, he

should be taught to take the standing jump. I have put this the last in the mounted lessons because it is the greatest test and trial of the horse's willingness and temper. I have recommended that the leaps of the mounted horse should first be made from a walk because the impetus of even that action will induce him to go on and jump. If the first leaps were taken in the gallop, the horse would be tempted to rush at the bar; but by following the course I have here laid down the leaping with deliberation becomes a habit not to be broken in upon even in the excitement of rapid movements.

In the leap from the halt the horse should be ridden quietly up to the bar

and stopped. He will then be induced to rise by the play of the bit, and, after he has risen as high as is necessary, the legs of the rider should be pressed in to the flanks to force the action of the hind-quarters. The head of the horse should be released as soon as he begins to rise, and as the fore-feet touch the ground the hand should gently take such tension of the reins as shall be necessary to re-establish the equilibrium.

The horse should be accustomed to take the standing leaps without other aid from the hand than the slight play of the rein that carries back the forces of the fore-hand. But in the leaps from rapid motion the hand should establish the equilibrium before the horse ap-

proaches the leap, and should do nothing more until it aids in collecting the horse after the fore-feet have reached the ground upon the far side of the obstacle.

In riding a horse at a broad leap the speed must be great enough to give him the advantage of the impetus of his motion, but the speed must not be so great as to prevent him deciding upon where he should take off and with what exertion. If driven hard at a broad leap the horse will often become disheartened or confused, and unable to control his powers.

A horse should never be ridden at a high leap in a speed that prohibits him being collected; and the horse is

capable of his greatest effort in this direction in a very slow collected gallop.

CHAPTER XVII.

GENERAL NOTES.

A HORSE with any of the following defects is unsuitable for use under the saddle:—A straight shoulder; a ewe neck; turned-in toes; corns, or any injury or disease of the feet; defective vision; round joints, bent knees, or other evidences of weakness in the legs; action that wears away the shoe at the toe. This list might be greatly increased, but I have named the faults.

that are common and most likely to render the animal dangerous to ride. If the horse have a straight shoulder, turned-in toes, or action that wears away the toe of the shoe, he will not be sure upon his feet. If he have round joints, bent knees, or other signs of weakness in the legs, he will fall at very slight provocation. Should he suffer from corns or other disease of the feet, he may be apparently sound and safe in his action, and yet liable to drop to the ground as if shot, to the peril of his rider's neck. With defective vision he will be shy of passing unusual objects; and with a ewe neck he will carry his nose in the air regardless of treacherous paths. Some of these faults may, to a certain ex-

tent, be remedied in training, but natural defects cannot be wholly overcome, and all horses that have any of those mentioned may safely be shunned.

A nervous man cannot hope to have any success with horses. I do not, by this, make reference to the well-known fact that a horse will assume the mastery of a timid rider, but I mean to say that if the trainer is lacking in the composure necessary to establish a confidence in the horse, his labour will be vain, and the horse will become shy and suspicious. The reason for this effect upon the horse is that in any unusual position he depends upon the man for encouragement, but if he finds that the rider

is disturbed the animal will think that there is something wrong, and will be ready to take alarm at anything that his quick imagination clothes with danger.

It is a common case for a rogue of a horse to play the tyrant with a timid rider, by making a pretence of being frightened at everything that can attract his attention, until he sometime or other over-does his acted part and finds that he is running away in earnest, when he becomes terror-stricken, and the farce becomes a tragedy.

Undoubtedly, much of the vice in horses has been cultivated by the severity and cruelty of their masters, and it is true that vice may often be cured by

care and kindness. But there is not in the heart of the horse that true love for man that the dog, even when neglected and ill-treated, always bears for the one he acknowledges as master. The horse, therefore, may not be governed by love; he must be made to feel and to acknowledge the superior power of man. This superior power must be asserted through kindness and firmness; either extreme of harshness or of indulgence will render the horse vicious and destroy the influence of the man over the animal.

It is astonishing how much courage a horse will receive from a cool and determined rider, but the boldest horses become timorous at unusual sights and sounds when they do not feel the sup-

port of a steady hand. In time the horse may be brought to face the most appalling objects, and his confidence in man grows with each escape from suspected danger.

But it is when this nervous, excitable animal is roused by the stir and clang of battle that he banishes all fear, and even takes a delight in the perilous game of war. With a spirit that seems heroic, he will eagerly plunge into the thickest of the fray, and, unmindful of the horrid hail of missiles, bear his rider to death or glory.

The next day, perhaps, he trembles as he is made, unwillingly, to pass the harmless body of some poor beast lying in the battery he so gallantly charged in the fight.

All horses should be taught to bear the spur without finching. This will prove a great safe-guard to the rider, as the horse will not bolt at the prick of the rowel, and will be rendered quick to obey the will of his master.

It is not necessary to use a sharp spur upon a schooled horse, as his training will render him so quick and ready that he will answer to the pressure of the leg without waiting for the severer form of the aid, and a blunt spur will be all that is required should he hang back a little at times. But it is first necessary that he should submit to the application of the sharp rowel without either bolting or showing resentment. Horses of even the

most nervous temperament may be taught to submit to the spur after a few lessons given in the following manner:—

While at the walking pace the rider will gently press his unarmed heels against the sides of the horse, and restrain increased speed or restlessness by a light hand and soothing words. When the horse will suffer the pressure of the heels without making an effort to go beyond the limits placed by the hand, the rider will, in the same way, accustom the animal to the application of the spur. This use of the spur renders the horse very docile and steady, and the sharp spur may be superseded by the blunt rowel, so that the aid shall not have even the appearance of cruelty.

Many horses are dangerous to a spurred rider until they have been trained to the sharp rowel in* this or in some similar way. And no horse is under proper control until he will bear the spur without trying to force the hand.

The spur should never be delivered by a *thrust* or *kick*, but by carrying back the leg until the rowel touches the flank of the horse, and applied with such force as is necessary by lowering the toe.

The spur may in this way be given with all required celerity, and without throwing the horse out of his balance, rousing his resentment or discomposing him by the rudeness of the attack.

A perfect seat may only be obtained

by riding without reins or stirrups. Otherwise, the rider will acquire the habit of depending, more or less, upon the aid of bit and irons. If he cannot ride without their support he will be unable to use his hands and legs in the management of his steed; and he will be a clog rather than a help to the horse; for his hand will check and harass the fore-hand, while his seat, forced by the weight he bears in the stirrups, will not permit the body to keep the poise required for the balance of the mass.

I do not think that too much importance can be given to lunging upon the *caresson*. I know of nothing that will so effectually quiet an unruly or a nervous animal, and it

greatly improves the action and movements of the horse. After the horse has passed about the trainer several times at the length of the rein he should be induced to come up to the man to be caressed and encouraged, and then made to pass about in the opposite direction, to be again brought up to the man. A few lessons given in this way will give the most timid horse a confidence in his trainer that can be produced by no other means with which I am acquainted, and to obtain the confidence of the horse is the first and longest step in his subjugation.

As the rules I have laid down for obtaining control over the horse should prepare the reader for every emergency,

I have not thought it necessary to cite particular cases, or to draw the attention from more important matters to the narration of anecdotes or the relation of personal adventure.

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