

"You will never get accustomed to our English climate, Mr. Romaine. Now I thought the arrangement of the rooms charming."

"Our host would be, I am convinced, delighted to hear you say so; he appears to attach great importance to your opinion."

It was an injudicious observation to make, as Lex felt the moment the words fell from his lips. For a second, Celia's eyes met his with a look of astonishment and reproach; then she said coldly, "You are entirely mistaken."

"I hope so," said Lex, hurriedly. "Forgive me if I am; I had no right to make such a remark."

"None whatever. I quite agree with you; besides which, there is—I mean, you can have no shadow of foundation for your most uncalled for suspicion."

"On that point I must, however, reluctantly reserve my own opinion," said Lex, who was fast becoming reckless.

"You will do as you please."

A pause. Then Celia said, looking straight in front of her—

"I think I will ask you to take me upstairs. Janie is still in the drawing-room."

"Miss Lake, you are angry with me still. What can I say to make you believe that I am sorry for my rash speech?"

"I am not. I have no right to be angry. It cannot matter to me what you think on such a subject."

"But it matters to me so very much that I am distressed beyond measure to have vexed you. Miss Lake, why will you not be friends, as the children say? Why do you always treat me like an outsider? You do, don't you? At first I thought it might be chance or my fancy; but it is not, is it?"

"No."

"Why is it? At least you can tell me that."

"I cannot tell you."

"Then I am more unfortunate than I supposed," said Lex, bitterly; "but I will only persecute you with one more request. Just say, once for all, 'I don't like you,' and I shall understand that you do not intend to look upon me as a friend."

"That is easily done," thought Celia, remembering her legacy. She raised her eyes. Mr. Romaine was standing by her side with his back to the door and the refreshment table. By this time several groups of people were talking and drinking coffee; at the door she could see Mr. Hewing, with his glasses up, evidently looking for her.

Then she glanced at Mr. Romaine. He was provokingly in earnest about this trifle. "Mr. Romaine," she began, half in joke, hesitating, and almost against her will, "I am sorry to say that I do not think—well, if you insist upon it, I do not see how we are ever to be friends."

"Cold, Miss Celia, eh? Are you chilly, that I find you so close to the fire?"

Mr. Hewing was bearing down upon her, charmed to have escaped from his duties upstairs. "If I had known it, we would not have converted the fire-places into conservatories. Shall I fetch you a shawl? Would you like any refreshment?"

"No, thank you; she was not at all cold; she fancied she heard a violin. Were they going to have some more music?"

"Well, yes. Maria had wished it, and the young ladies always got their own way."

"If you will take my arm, Miss Celia, I have something to show you in the dining-room before we join the others. Romaine, my daughter will be pleased to find you a seat in the front room."

Mr. Romaine did not immediately accept this invitation, and Celia said hurriedly—

"Mr. Romaine has not seen the Vandyck. Shall we take a candle and look at it, Mr. Hewing?"

"Your will is law, Miss Celia," said Mr. Hewing, pompously. "If Mr. Romaine is a connoisseur he will recognise a fine work of art in the Vandyck, and I bought it at a mere bargain—a mere bargain."

The picture hung in a corner of the room; it formed a pendant to a portrait of Mr. Hewing taken shortly after his marriage. Before many minutes had passed, Mr. Hewing began to regret that the artistic knowledge of his intelligent young friend was so extensive and so varied. Romaine had a dozen questions to ask concerning the picture; he had a dozen suggestions to make as to its exact date, undoubted authenticity, &c. Then, candle in hand, he asked permission to examine a fine china vase on a bracket, and casually displayed so much information on the subject of the different collections of china in Europe (being positive, quite positive, that this vase was a replica of one that he had admired at the Hague), that Mr. Hewing was forced to pay unwilling attention, and could not conveniently a second time propose an adjournment to the dining-room.

"Your beautiful curiosities should be exhibited at a museum, Mr. Hewing," said Lex in conclusion; "but I hear the music now. If you are ready, Miss Lake, we will obey the summons."

"Was I right this time in presuming to anticipate your wishes?" he asked.

Celia fumbled with the button of her glove, that would not keep fastened.

"Will you pardon me for interfering a second time?"

"Yes," said Celia, as they passed up the stone staircase into the drawing-room.

(To be continued.)

HORSES: WHAT ALL GIRLS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THEM.

"Their mouths are mute, but most acute

The woes whereby we wear them;

Then come with me and only see

How easy 'tis to spare them.

"Wait, wait awhile, those axles grease

And shift this buckle's fretting.

And give that galling collar ease;—

How grateful he is getting!"

TUPPER.

FRED JOHNSTONE was born, lived, and went to school for many years in a certain parish, in what is termed the Highlands of Dumfriesshire. But this was many years ago, and Fred is now a man, and a bold, energetic one too, and though by no means old, he has succeeded by his own untiring exertions in amassing a considerable fortune, and is at present living in a kind of feudal castle, in one of the wildest and most beautiful parts of the Pampas.

Now, from the very day Fred could make use of his round, blue, baby eyes, he seemed to wear a considering cap, and, as soon as he could lisp, he began to ask questions about everything he saw around him.

It seemed to people who listened to his pertinent—sometimes even impertinent—questions, as if Fred had lived in some other world before he came to this—in one of the planets, for instance, where everything was very different from what it is in our globe; but that having arrived here, he had determined to make the best of things, and set about at once learning the outs and ins of whatever his eyes happened to light upon. When he could toddle, and got toys of all kinds brought him

by his lady visitors, he made short work of many of them; dolls he laid open, then consigned to the nursery fire; musical instruments he dissected, then threw out of the window. But boxes of bricks and architectural toys of all kinds he laid carefully aside for future consideration. When he had quite a store of these, he commenced the construction of toy forts and ramparts, bridges, houses, and castles. But when he grew older and could read, the toys were exchanged for the things he studied in books. He had a piece of waste scrubby land given him, and gradually he converted it into a small estate with a stream running through it, and bridges, and aqueducts, and weirs, and waterfalls, and everything as natural as reality itself.

Then he commenced building a fortified castle on his estate. This took him a whole year, and it was probably the most complete thing ever yet made by a boy.

Now, his father was only a farmer, so he said to Fred one day—

"In the name of mystery, Fred, why don't you build stables and cow-sheds, and barns and things—what use will learning castle-building ever be to you?"

"There is no knowing," replied Fred, quietly mounting a little brass gun on the top corner of a tall escarpment.

There was no knowing, indeed. Fred left home at nineteen with a bundle on the end of a hazel stick. But this hazel stick and he found their way to the far West, beyond the Rocky Mountains. He was successful enough there, then he went to the Pampas, and as a cattle farmer amassed wealth, while he fought with the savages about one battle a month, and the very knowledge of fortification, etc., that he had acquired at home enabled him to construct ramparts that defied all the force and the treachery of the Indians. The castle in which he now lives is almost a facsimile of the one he built in boyhood.

Now, gentle reader mine, the above is a true tale, and it has a kind of a corollary or moral to it, which is this: In the days of our youth we should never despise useful knowledge of any kind, as we never know when in after life it may become of service to us.

I am going to tell you, for instance, something about horses in this paper, for, next to dogs, they are the truest four-footed friends that mankind possesses.

Thousands of my young readers may never be rich enough to own a horse, a pony, or even a humble donkey. Ah! but there is no saying what may be in store for anyone of our Girls when the blue mist of distance that now envelopes the future shall roll aside and reveal—what? perhaps all and more than you have ever dreamt of.

Now, I know a great many ladies who keep horses, some of which are favourite hunters, creatures that have carried them safely and well in many a hard day's run, creatures that they are really fond of; but concerning whom, all things necessary to keep them happy and in health, they are profoundly ignorant. They are therefore obliged, on returning home, to entrust their pets, wholly and solely, to the tender mercies of servants who are often both ignorant and careless.

I know girls who ride and drive ponies, and pretend to coax and care a deal about them, and who know no more about their natural wants than the aforesaid lady hunters do. Now, this is not as it ought to be.

Unless a horse is well fed—not over-fed, but judiciously fed—and properly groomed and cared for, he will not work or run comfortably or happily. Perhaps when your favourite pony is brought to the door in the forenoon, and you, dressed for the road, run out to pat him and give him that tiny morsel of biscuit of which he is so fond, he nickers low and fondly, and you naturally believe he

is all right and happy; but do you know how he has been treated since last you and he met, how he has been stalled and bedded, and fed, how he has been groomed, and how his feet are? If you do not, you ought to learn, and it is by no means a difficult thing to do so. Let me say a word or two then—

I. About the *Stable* itself.—This should be constructed on principles of sound common-sense and science. There is no need for the place being a lofty or lordly domain; its fittings need be neither expensive nor *recherché*; but, for all that, it should have plenty of space in it, it should be well lighted, free from running dampness, and perfectly free from the contaminating influence of bad drain-air or effluvia. It should also be well ventilated.

It ought to be roomy for this reason: all animals exhale carbonic acid gas, which is a deadly poison. This gas or breath should not only have free exit by a properly arranged set of ventilators, but the stable should be big enough to contain plenty of fresh air besides. Again, in a cramped stable, a man has not room to carry on the grooming operation properly.

Fresh air to breathe is a necessity of life, and horses whose stables are small and badly ventilated, and who, therefore, have to inhale the same obnoxious air over and over again, cannot have pure blood, the appetite is blunted, and the brain is irritated. Kept in stables like these for four-and-twenty hours or more, it is no wonder that the poor animals are what is called "fresh" when they come out. It is not freshness in reality, but an irritable condition of brain, in which they are apt to be full of either fun or mischief, as the whim takes them.

Now you cannot keep your horse's blood pure and sweet in a small, filthy, badly-ventilated stable; if the blood is not pure, the constitution becomes weakened, and this predisposes the animal to attacks of sickness to which he would not under other conditions be liable. Sunlight possesses the power of purifying and sweetening the blood of all animals, mankind included. None can be healthy without it. Stables, therefore, should always be fitted with windows, and the more these are left wide open when the weather is not too inclement the better.

The stable is usually paved with bricks, the stall slanting slightly towards the gutter that leads to the drain; and this latter should be protected by a trap which can effectually prevent the surging in of foul air from anywhere. Bricks, if used at all, should be the best procurable and well grouted together; because if they are porous they get foul, and are apt to become extremely unwholesome. Stable doors should be as high as possible, and it is all the better to have a window over them to be opened occasionally.

The stable should be kept comfortably warm, but never hot; and all the woodwork should be well cleansed periodically, and the walls themselves well lime-washed.

All sloppiness should be washed away and the floor mopped, and, if you like, sanded when dry, or covered with wholesome sawdust.

II. *The Horse's Bedding*.—This should be composed of wheaten or oat straw, as dry as can be got, and plenty of it. The bedding should be nicely shaken up, and spread very evenly. Every morning the bed should be made. The man should fork off the dry straw, removing the wet, soiled portion and sweeping the place and cleansing it thoroughly, returning the dry straw mixed with a little more, and making up the bed as soon as the floor is dry. Once a week the whole should be cleaned away and a new bed entirely given.

Some careless stablemen, if not looked after, will pitch the dry straw on top of the

wet. By this means, a foul poultice is constructed, and disease gets a hotbed to lie in.

III. *Grooming*.—Once a day, at least, a horse should be thoroughly groomed. The horse's mistress ought to know that the stableman can groom and does groom properly. The horse is usually first turned round with his face to the light, some litter being placed under the hind legs; then the whole of the fore quarters and head are curry-combed and brushed, the head being most carefully dealt with. The hind quarters are next attended to, and the grooming finished with small wisps of dry straw. No roughness should be used, no blows given, no harsh words spoken.

Judicious grooming tends to healthfulness and purity of blood in the horse, by freeing the coat from its natural dust or its acquired, and by keeping the pores of the skin from getting clogged, and the skin itself soft and pliable.

You can easily tell if your horse or pony has been well groomed, if you pat his skin; there should not be dust enough to soil your glove in the slightest, however light in colour it be.

When a horse returns wet, have him walked about a little if it be not raining, then rubbed carefully down with dry straw.

If he be wet from perspiring, he must be walked and rubbed down before being staked; and even then it will be as well to throw a light rug over him, for sudden transitions from a state of heat to cold are very productive of disease.

IV. *Feeding*.—The staple of a horse's diet consists of hay, oats, and straw, with a portion of peas or beans, grass, and roots, such as carrots and mangolds, &c. An excellent mixture of chaff, bruised oats and beans is sold at the shops of most corn merchants in towns and villages. Supposing you happen to become the possessor of a pony, well, the quantity of the food you give him and the times of feeding will depend a good deal on the amount of work you give him. If this be not hard, three feeds a day will be sufficient, morning and evening and at noon. Give no more at a time than he can eat, and never leave what is over to be breathed and blown upon, and so rendered distasteful for the next meal. If you use beans in the feed, or barley, deduct the same quantity by weight of oats. The beans or grains are better bruised. Roots in winter and grass in summer should be allowed with discretion.

When doing extra work, the pony must, of course, have extra food. When going a long journey take a neat little nosebag with you, and about every two hours, if convenient, let the pony have a small feed. Or, instead of this, use horse biscuits.

V. *Water*.—Give soft water rather than hard. He should have a little in the morning, but not cold chilly water; it should stand indoors or in the sun for some time. Let him have a little water some time before he starts on a journey, and again shortly after (not immediately after) he returns. A mouthful or two of water now and then when a horse is on a journey, or a pluck of cool green grass from the wayside, does a deal of good.

If your pony or horse has been a long way, and seems rather jaded and tired after, then, as soon as his coat and bedding, &c., have been attended to, a nice lukewarm mash with oatmeal in it will do him a great deal of good, and he will be as lively and fresh as ever next day.

VI. *Horse's Feet and Shoeing*.—The feet want seeing to once a month, whether the shoes do or not; so the animal ought to be taken for a little tidying to the forge.

Shoes should be made of the best material; they ought not to be over-heavy, and they ought to fit the size of the hoof well. The

frog or V-shaped hard sole that you see under the foot should not be cut away, but careless or ignorant smiths often do this.

The feet should be most carefully cleaned every night, all gravel, dirt, and grit being removed from the soles and from everywhere around the hoof. The feet should then be dried and, if it be thought necessary, anointed.

VII. *Exercise*.—No one should keep either a horse or pony who cannot afford the time to give him plenty of exercise. This is most essential to the health and well-being of the animal, more especially if he be young. If he does not get it he will become nervous, his blood will not be purified, his feet may suffer, and illness of any kind supervene.

VIII. *Sickness*.—Whenever a horse seems to be ailing—and a kind-hearted master or mistress will not be slow in noting any deviation from his usual health and spirits—let a skilful veterinary surgeon see him at once. This will be the cheapest plan in the end.

But pray bear in mind that the prevention of disease is better than its cure, and that the predisposing causes of sickness are, among others, insufficient or unwholesome food, over-feeding, bad water, want of exercise, foul stables, wet litter, bad grooming, exposure to draughts and damp, and over-driving. Avoid all these, and your horse will be healthy.

IX. *Blinkers and Bearing-reins*.—These, like dog muzzles, are cruel in the extreme; and I never see either without a wish to pull them off, and throw them into the fire.

X. *Some Hints about Driving*.—Experience alone can make a good driver, learning the rules of the road, or how to hold the reins and whip, and how to sit, are but a fragmentary portion of the mere rudiments of the art. Driving cannot be taught on paper; one must have a few lessons at least, personally. But still a girl may do well to bear the following hints in mind, in mercy to the animal she drives.

1. Never jerk the reins or "saw" the horse's mouth with the bit. This bit cannot be a pleasant thing for the beast at the best, but to have it roughly rasped against his teeth, especially if he has a tender mouth, must be very painful indeed.

2. Before leaving home have a look at the harness; a glance will suffice to show whether it is all right and easy, and every strap and buckle in its proper place.

3. See that the carriage wheels are kept well greased.

4. Never lose your temper when driving.

5. Do not use the whip as an instrument of punishment.

6. On rough roads, or on going down-hill, keep your horse pretty well in hand. You must feel you have him lest he stumbles.

7. When it is necessary to back in or off anywhere, do so slowly and gently.

8. Always pull up carefully.

9. In driving up-hill go slowly; if a steep hill, let men folks get out and walk, and the pony also must walk.

10. Whenever in driving you have to stop anywhere for a short time, do not neglect throwing a rug over your pony.

11. If stopping for any length of time, put the animal up, having him rubbed down if damp, put the rug on, and let him have the nosebag.

12. At no time, and under no consideration, be induced to over-hurry or race your horse; remember the true old and saying—"it is the pace that kills."

