

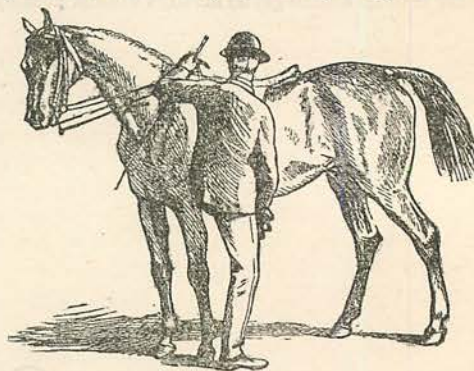
Your head and your heart keep boldly up;
Your hands and your heels keep down;
Your legs keep close to your horse's side;
And your elbows keep close to your own.

CHEFNEY'S SECRET OF RIDING.

ALL boys, and most men, are ambitious of the triumphs of horsemanship; and, with many, a knowledge of horses and dogs stands in the place of a polite education. The child escaped from leading-strings, bestrides his father's walking-stick, and, with a pack-thread rein, toddles over the carpet on his mimic steed, with as much glee as a fox-hunter gallops after the hounds. From riding a cane, the same spirit and feeling makes a gate with string stirrups an acceptable means for a few first lessons in equitation, and renders a rocking-horse a perfect idol. The trim saddle of the painted steed, the *reai* reins (made fast by tin tacks), the horse-hair mane and tail supported by a wooden crupper—all these are sources of as great a triumph as Alexander felt when he subdued Bucephalus; a deed that history seems proud to tell of, and which painters love to depict, as our artist has. From the rocking-horse the young rider takes another step upwards in the scale of equitation, by mounting a real live donkey, who kicks and shies, and stands stock-still, and rubs against a post or backs into a pond, and by these various tricks gives another morsel of experience to the youthful horseman. The day of gladness comes to him at last, when the grand creature, which has long been his admiration, stands before him ready to be mounted.

Mounting.—When about to mount, stand before the left shoulder of the horse, hold the whip in the left hand with the lash downwards, leave the curb-rein loose on the neck, and take the snaffle-reins at their center, between the thumb and forefinger of the right hand, with which draw them up evenly between the fore and third fingers of the left hand (the middle or longest finger dividing them), until they are sufficiently tightened for you to feel the bearing of the horse's mouth. Throw the loose ends over the middle joint of the forefinger, so as to drop down on the off-side of the horse's neck. Then take the center of the curb-reins between the thumb and forefinger of the right hand, as already described, and allowing them to hang more slackened than the snaffle-reins, separate

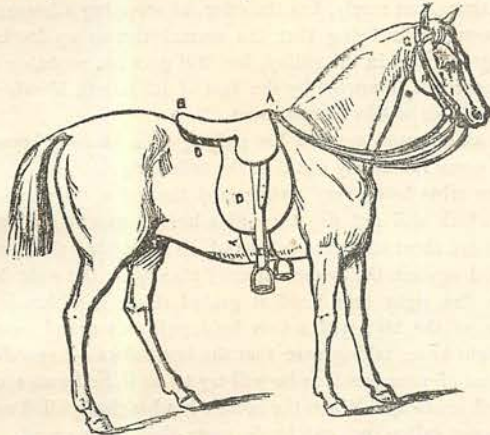
them with the little finger of the left hand, passing the loose ends up the palm, and casting them to the off-side over the ends of the snaffle-reins. Take with the right hand a lock of the mane, and wind it once or twice round the left thumb, closing the hand so as firmly to grasp the reins and mane. The left hand may now be rested on the neck of the horse near to the withers, and within about six or eight inches of the pommel of the saddle. With the right hand, hold the stirrup until the left foot is placed in it; the right hand should



now be put on the cantle, the body raised until the feet are side by side, and both knees press the saddle; move the right hand from the cantle to the pommel, and throw the right leg quickly, but not hastily, or with a jerk, across the horse, and sink easily (no jerking or bumping) into the saddle. By turning the toe of the boot slightly inwards, so as to strike the right stirrup gently, the movement will cause it to swing partly round; by this means the foot obtains possession of it without the aid of the hand, which should never be employed when the stirrups are lost; after a little practice the stirrups may be dropped even when galloping, and quickly regained by striking both toes simultaneously inwards.

Get into the habit of making your horse stand steady during and immediately after mounting. When an animal has been in careless hands, he not unfrequently tries to move off immediately he feels your weight on the stirrup. This is not only an unpleasant but also a dangerous proceeding, especially when a lady is mounting. It may be checked by keeping the

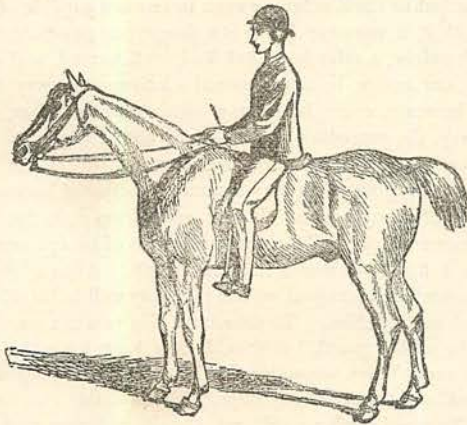
reins tight, and, if necessary, using the curb-rein. The horse is so docile an animal, though a creature of habit, that it can easily be taught what is required, or cured of its defects, provided only that its master is patient and intelligent. Thus,



A. Pommel. C. D's on Saddle. E. Stirrup leathers.
B. Hind Arch. D. Saddle-flaps. F. Girths.

when mounted, instead of immediately starting off at a trot or walk, wait a few seconds, and thus teach your horse that he is not to rush away immediately he feels your weight in the saddle.

In order to discover the proper length for your stirrups, sit comfortably down on your saddle, keep the body upright, let the legs hang loosely at first, then clasp the horse slightly with them, turn the toe in and rather up; then the stirrup ought just to support the foot. Then stand up in the stirrups with the legs straight, and see whether the fork will clear the pommel of the saddle: it ought just to do so if the stirrups are the correct length. Having once ascertained what is the correct length for the stirrups, you should measure from the finger-tip to armpit the length from the buckle to the end of



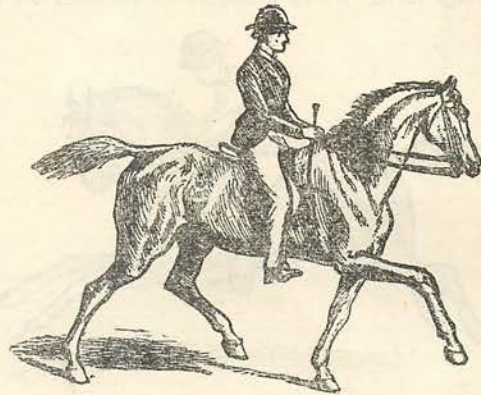
the stirrups, and thus you can always on future occasions tell whether any alterations are required before mounting.

Being now seated on the horse, which we will suppose is a quiet, well-trained animal, it would be advisable that a groom

or some friend should lead the horse for a time, in order that we may get accustomed to the motion of the horse and to sitting in the saddle.

The seat in the saddle should be obtained by sitting *well down*, leaning rather backwards than forwards, and grasping the horse with a tolerably firm grip of both legs. There are two seats to be avoided, but which nearly all beginners at first practice: one is leaning forward as if in readiness to go over the horse's head; the other is sitting on the saddle as though it were red hot. The very best method of getting "shaken down in the saddle," as the term is, is to quit the stirrups—that is, take the feet out of them—and trot round and round a circle. This can be easily done by having a rope attached to a head-collar on the horse, and getting this rope held by an attendant. After a few days of this kind of bumping, we learn how to grasp with the legs so that we scarcely move from the saddle, and we do not then adopt the dangerous and unsightly practice of depending mainly on the stirrups for our equilibrium.

During the time that we are "jogging" in the trot, the reins should be held one in each hand, and so that we "feel"



gently the horse's mouth: at no time should the reins become slack, but an uniform "feel" should be maintained. A horse soon becomes accustomed to the hand of its rider, and learns to obey the slightest change. Many horses, especially those gifted with tender mouths, will become restive, or will rear, attempt to run away, etc., when their riders either suddenly slacken, then tighten the reins, or in other ways alter their hold upon them.

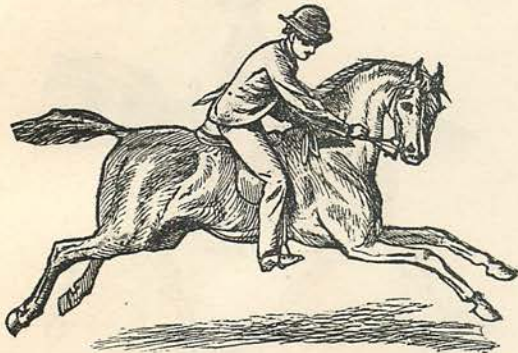
The Trot.—Having passed through the process of being shaken down in the saddle, we may then take our stirrups and learn how to sit down in the saddle, keep our stirrups, and yet not to rise in them when the horse trots; after which we may practice rising to the trot. There is scarcely a more ridiculous exhibition than that of a rider working laboriously to rise to his horse's trot, using much more exertion than the animal he bestrides, whilst he works his arms and body as though riding were a very painful matter. The very slightest movement of the instep and a spring from the knee is sufficient to prevent the bumping produced by a horse's trot; and the skill or awkwardness of a rider is never more prominent than when his horse is indulged in a long slashing trot.

The Canter.—To “raise a horse into a canter” from a trot, we should slightly pull the left rein, at the same time closing the legs. By a steady hand on the reins we may increase or decrease the speed of the horse, or again reduce his pace to a trot.

Nothing but practice and instruction will ever give a rider a good firm seat on a horse; but at the same time, practice alone may produce a strong seat but a very awkward one, unless the defects of the seat are pointed out early.

Vices and their Treatment.—Having attained a certain amount of skill in sitting on a horse and in handling the reins, the horseman may devote his attention to certain matters which are not unlikely to happen to every equestrian performer. These may be classed under the head of the vices of the horse, and are principally as follows: running away, shying, rearing, bucking, and refusing to move; kicking, biting, and stumbling.

Running Away.—A runaway horse is a most dangerous animal, and for an unskilled rider to keep such a creature is not advisable. Many so-called runaway horses, however, are merely high-spirited animals whose former riders were unable to manage them. As an example: we possessed for three



years a horse which we regularly hunted, and on which we placed a lady, and which had been sold because he was a determined runaway. Only once did this horse run away with us, and that was in consequence of the reins breaking. That horses do run away, however, is a fact; and we will now consider the best means of dealing with this vice.

A runaway horse is usually one with a very hard mouth, which is unaffected by any amount of pulling applied merely as a dead pull. A horse is stronger than a man, and therefore to pull against him is useless.

A particular kind of “bit” is requisite for a runaway horse; the best that we have found being a powerful “Pelham.” The reins should be very stout, so as to afford a firm grasp, with no fear of breaking. Stout strong reins also do not slip through the fingers as do those which are thin.

We will now suppose that a rider is seated on a horse, and starts for a canter on a nice bit of turf. His horse, probably fresh, bounds off, and the rider soon finds the animal pays no attention to his “Woa, woa!” or to the pull at the reins. A bad rider has at this point come to the end of his expedients, and usually does nothing more than give a dead pull at the

reins until he gets cramp in his arms and fingers, and is unable to use them effectively, when he is at the mercy of his horse. Some riders vary the “dead pull” by sawing their horses’ mouths by alternately pulling the right and left rein. This sometimes, but rarely, has the effect of stopping a horse; the common result being that the animal throws up its head, changes its feet in the gallop, but still goes on, probably with a temper not improved by the fact of its mouth bleeding in consequence of this ill treatment.

As an effectual method for pulling up a runaway horse we have never found any equal to the following:

The reins being very strong, and the bit a “Pelham,” or one which will not slip through a horse’s mouth, we gather the reins short up in the left hand, so short that the hand is pressed against the horse’s mane; then pass the right hand down the right rein until it grasps this rein within a few inches of the bit; with a firm hold pull this round towards the right knee, taking care that the horse does not snatch the rein out of your hand, as he will try to do if he be an accomplished runaway. When the horse’s head is thus pulled round he cannot gallop, nor can he do more than twist round. We have by this method the advantage of a lever pulling round the horse’s head with enormous power.

Against this plan it has been urged that we are very likely to throw a horse down. Grant this; and it is perhaps the less of the two evils that we throw a horse down where we like, selecting a soft piece of turf, than that we get dashed to pieces by coming in collision with a carriage or cart, a lamp-post or railing, or slip up on stone pavement, etc. But in answer to this objection we can say that, on an average, once a week the horse we before mentioned *tried* to run away with us, but we invariably stopped him by this plan, and never, during three years, did we ever throw him down. Two other horses that we rode also on one or two occasions tried to run away, and were instantly stopped by this method; thus we have practical proof of its efficacy, against the theoretical objection urged against it.

To a bad or timid rider, or even to one not capable of dealing with it, a runaway horse is a dangerous possession; unless, therefore, a rider is well skilled, well nerved, and strong armed, our advice is, never mount a known runaway horse.

As, however, every horse may, some time or other, try to run away, the preceding advice should not be neglected, as it may save a fall, a broken arm, leg, or neck.

Shying.—Shying is a very common practice of horses, particularly of young horses. It may arise from defective sight, or from mere frolic. To a good rider it is of no consequence, but to a bad horseman a fall may result. After a brief acquaintance with an animal, we can tolerably well tell at what objects he usually shies. To overcome this practice we should never be off our guard, but should ever keep a watch on our horse’s ears. When we notice that he suddenly raises his ears, and looks attentively at any object, it is probable that he may shy. To avoid such a result, we should endeavor to distract the animal’s attention by patting his neck and speaking to him, a slight movement of the reins to arouse him, or by letting the whip rest on his neck, his attention may be withdrawn from the object that alarms him. A brutal and igno-

rant horseman usually commences thrashing his horse when it shies, and thus only adds to its fear, and causes it to repeat its vice with double effect.

The late Mr. Rarey used to say that a horse never could surprise him, because its ears always told him what it was thinking of doing. There is much truth in this remark, as every one accustomed to horses must know, and those unaccustomed to them may learn.

Rearing.—Rearing is one of the most dangerous and incur-



able of vices ; it may, however, arise from a harsh use of the curb ; but a rearing horse may at any time cause his rider's death by falling back on him. When a horse rears we should sit quietly on him, and well forward. A rider without a firm seat may lean back, holding on to the reins, and will thus pull the horse over on him. A sharp pair of spurs may be used with advantage on a rearing horse, but the reins must be very delicately handled—the cause of rearing being in many cases due to that abominable habit of bad riders of continually jerking their horse's mouth, for no other reason, apparently, than that they *are* themselves bad riders.

Buck-jumping.—Bucking is an endeavor to unseat a rider, and consists in a series of bucks in the air, or a sort of rocking motion produced by a succession of jumps. The horse tries to get its head down between its legs, arches its back, and springs several times from the ground. There is no other means left than to sit the horse through its performance, which generally takes place when first mounted, after which it not unusually will travel quietly all day.

Refusing to Move.—This is not a very common vice, except with a horse which has been cruelly ill-used. We once found a horse belonging to a friend which possessed this vice, and we cured it by getting two leather straps, like handcuffs ; by these we fastened the horse's fore legs together so that it could not move, and then sat patiently on its back. In about ten minutes the animal got tired of standing still ; but we determined on giving it a lesson, so we kept it hobbled for fully an hour, after which it at once moved on. On every occasion afterwards, either the exhibition of these handcuffs or the at-

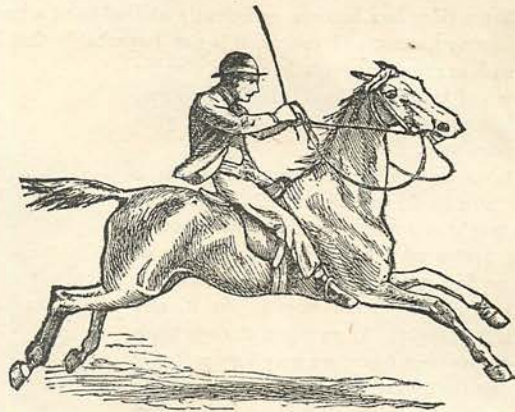
tempt to put them on, at once was received as a hint, and the horse was ready to start off.

Kicking.—A kicking horse is always dangerous ; when, however, we are on his back, it is well to remember that he cannot kick with both hind legs whilst his head is held up. We should, however, be very careful how we allow any one to approach him ; also when in the stable great caution is requisite. The same remarks apply to a biting horse ; it is better at once to get rid of such a brute, for we are never safe from his vicious habit.

Stumbling.—Stumbling may arise from careless riding or from the imperfect form of a horse. An animal which in its walk or trot does not raise its feet much will usually be a stumbler ; and if its fore feet, when they come to the ground, are not placed in advance of the shoulder, the horse is likely to be a dangerous stumbler.

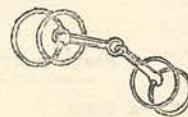
Those who wish to become adepts in regard to horses should, when the opportunity offers, study the form and action of a well-known good horse ; the shape of his shoulders, set on of the head, and, in fact, every peculiarity should be noticed.

There is no indicator equal to the eyes and the ears for telling the character of a horse ; the eye of a vicious horse never will look good-tempered, nor can he conceal its vicious look. The ears of a playful horse may, to the inexperienced, seem to indicate vice ; for a horse that is playful, well bred, and fond of its master or groom, will often put back its ears and bite at its manger when its master approaches it ; but this is not vice, and should not be misunderstood for such. Experience in this respect is needed to prevent mistakes.



The bits in most general use are the *Plain Snaffle*, the *Curb*, the *Pelham*, and the *Hanoverian Bit*.

The Snaffle is used for horses with good mouths, and may, in the hands of a skillful rider, be used even for hard-mouthed, pulling animals.

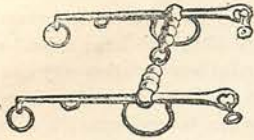


THE SNAFFLE.

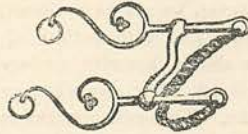
The Curb is often used with the snaffle. It is more powerful, and will pull up most horses ; it also makes a horse carry his head well, and is a favorite bit with military riders.

The Pelham bit is very powerful, and is that which we recommend for a run-

away horse. It can be used either as a snaffle or curb, and is a very serviceable bit.

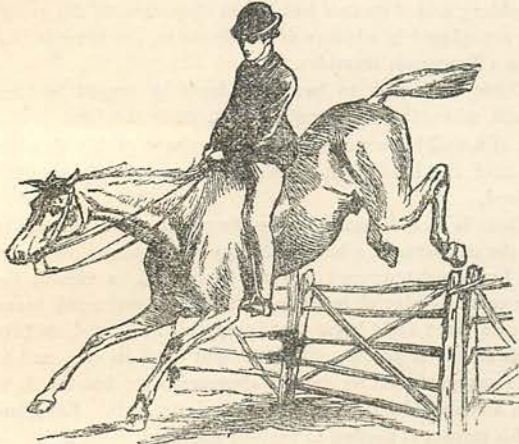


THE PELHAM.



THE HANOVERIAN.

The Hanoverian bit is more powerful even than the Pelham, but cannot be used as freely or like a snaffle. It is very similar to the curb, the mouth-piece being bigger.



When a rider has become sufficiently skilled to sit a horse well during its trot and canter, it is not improbable that he will wish to try a leap with it, or he may be desirous of hunting. Should this be the case, the first precaution is to find whether your horse *can* leap.

It is not to be expected that a horse is to know how to do anything which he has not been taught any more than that a man should. Some horses may have reached the age of four or five years, and have never taken a leap; they don't know how to do it, and should be taught. If we ride a strange horse at a stile or stout fence, we may very probably find that the animal has been called upon to perform a feat as difficult to him as for a boy to leap with a pole, when he has never before attempted to do so.

Remarking upon the number of accidents that annually occur in consequence of foolhardy conduct with firearms, when some boy points a gun at his friend, and says, "I'll shoot you!" and straightway does so, whilst the boy shrieks, "Oh dear! I didn't know it was loaded!" a veteran sportsman once recommended us "*always to treat a gun as if it were loaded and on full cock*, then we shall never have an accident;" so we would

recommend a young horseman always to treat a horse as though he were likely to run away, likely to shy, and were unable to leap a stile safely, until we *have personally proved the contrary*. We can easily test our horse's leaping power by trying him at small safe fences; but we must bear in mind that many good horses will often refuse a leap at which they are not ridden in a determined manner. A horse is very quick at finding out whether his rider really means to ride at a leap, or is "just a little nervous" about it; and as few animals care to exert themselves unnecessarily, the horse is not likely to take a leap unless he believes his rider means it.

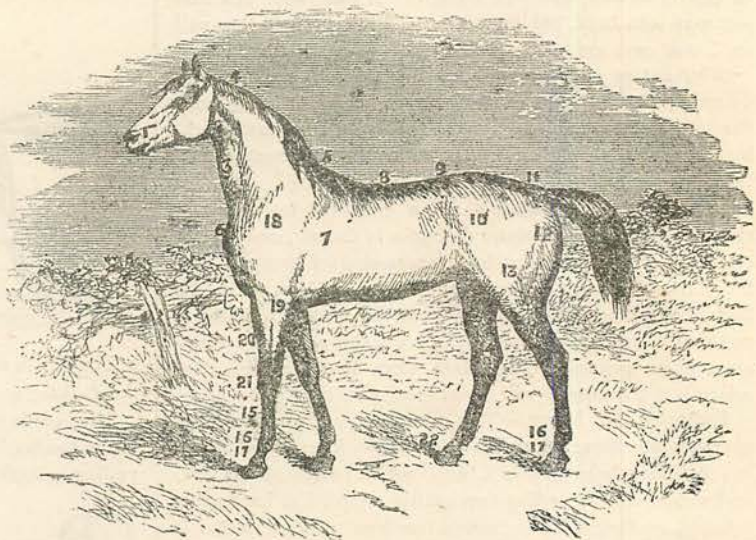
Many horses which have been badly ridden, or bullied by bad riders, have bad tempers, which show themselves by refusing leaps, or refusing other things. A good rider, or even an observant person, will soon discover what irritates his horse, and will avoid any acts which produce this effect.

Horses that are usually ridden, vary in age from about four years to seven or eight. Whenever your horse commits any fault, bear in mind that he is not so old as you are, and, in fact, is a mere child in years; treat him accordingly, try to assist his weaker mental powers by your skill, and you will always find him a good and faithful servant; bully and ill treat him, and he is partially your enemy. When once, by ill treatment, you have produced any particular vice in a horse, it is almost impossible to eradicate it.

The age of a horse may be known by his teeth, and the following will aid the tyro in learning how to discover a horse's age.

When a colt is two years old, its teeth are called "milch teeth," the center of which is whitish.

At three years old the two center milch teeth are displaced



1. Muzzle and parts about the muzzle.
2. Gullet.
3. Windpipe.
4. Crest.
5. Withers.

6. Chest.
7. Girth.
8. Back.
9. Loins.
10. Ilium or Hip.
11. Croup.

12. Haunch or Quarters.
13. Thigh.
14. Hock.
15. Shank or Cannon.
16. Fetlock.
17. Pastern.

18. Shoulder-bone or Scapula.
19. Elbow.
20. Fore-arm.
21. Knee.
22. Coronet.

by two which are called "permanent teeth," and are distinguished by being broader, larger, and in the center upper surface having dark cavities.

When a horse is four years old there will be four instead of two permanent teeth in the lower jaw, and between four and five years old the tusks begin to appear in males. Up to four years old a male is called "a colt," after this age "a horse."

At five years of age the horse's permanent teeth are complete, and the age after this is known by the wearing down of the cavities of the permanent teeth.

At six years old the dark oval mark on the center teeth is worn down, whilst the cavities in the other teeth are more filled up. The tusks of the horse are longer than when five years old, but are still sharp, and not much worn.

At seven years old the cavities of the second pair of nippers are filled up; the tusks are blunted by wear, and are longer than formerly.

At eight years the horse is sometimes said "not to have a good tooth in its head," that is, the corner nippers are filled up, and the age teeth are nearly all alike, the tusks exhibit greater signs of wear and tear, and are very blunt.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Be kind and conciliatory to the noble beast that bears you, and never show the spirit of the coward by acting cruelly or with unnecessary severity, towards a creature so docile, so intelligent, and so useful as the horse. Let the young horseman remember that this creature is endowed not only with strength for our service, and beauty for our admiration, but with nerves sensitive to pain, and a nature keenly alive to ill-usage. To a kind master, a good-tempered horse will by many signs show his attachment, which will increase as he becomes better acquainted with him.

