



On the vices of horses

<https://hdl.handle.net/1874/33830>

W.D. qu. 38²¹
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**ON THE VICES OF
HORSES.**

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LONDON. 1839.

ON THE VICES OF
THE following Essays on Vice in horses, are thrown together as an endeavour,
at a rough foundation, for a more consistent consideration of this necessary de-
partment of horse knowledge. *Regent's Park, 6th mo. 1839.*

ESSAY No. 2.— **VICES OF HORSES.** CRIB BITING.

THE name in common use for this disorder is no doubt very ancient and of purely English origin, which is not very usual with horse complaints in general, which are derived for the most part from the Norman-French, or base Latin.

The term used indeed at this period would appear not strictly true, as the horse usually has no crib to bite at in this day in the stable, the manger occupying its place for his operations. It would seem indeed, that the use of oats for horses was much more rare formerly than at present, and that they were usually, in common with the other cattle, fed from the crib provided for their general provender. On oats becoming more used, the necessity for a more solid receptacle for them became urgent, and the wooden trough thus afforded them was called *the manger*, no doubt from the French, *manger*, to eat, and the crib, which was a sort of rude square basket, formed of wide spars of wood, and often still to be seen in farm yards for the cattle, was now changed in its form, and hoisted high up over the heads of the animals, and fixed to the wall of the stable, obtaining the name of *rack*; but as a rack so elevated cannot be conveniently got at, he expends his uneasiness upon the wooden manger, although the old name of crib is still retained. The term Rack would also appear to have been of French extraction, from their verb, *racler*, to rattle, in allusion perhaps to the noise the staves would make if struck upon in rapid succession with a stick.

The crib-biting horse has generally a lean constricted appearance, the skin being drawn tight about the ribs, the hair staring, and thready, and devoid of gloss, a sunken watery eye, or else too dry, the muscles of the face also, as well as the skin, drawn up with rigidness, and when unemployed in eating, his almost constant amusement is, to grasp with extended mouth the rail of the manger with his front teeth, then to draw himself up to it, as to a fixed point, by a general contraction of all the muscles of the head, neck, and trunk, at the same time this effort is attended with a grunting sound, apparently from air expelled by the mouth; a relaxation succeeds, and then a new effort, slaving the manger very much with the tongue, for as the mouth is held wide open, and the jaws distended, the saliva naturally takes this direction.

The horse that has contracted this unsightly habit grows lean, his digestion after a time becomes impaired, and it is generally conceived that he draws air into his stomach, which is the cause of this; his temper becomes soured, and more or less weakness and unfitness for service, ensue, according to his natural strength, for some do not appear materially in this respect to be injured by it, while others are obviously rendered much weaker by it, and more incapable of a proper day's work; it appears indeed that horses of a fiery, hot, and unkind temper get the most easily into this vice.

How this extraordinary propensity becomes first created, has not been, we believe, much attended to; and with some it appears to arise naturally, as though the sucking of air gave them pleasure, or a relief from some sort of suffering; and at first we imagined that pains of the stomach from acidity, or other causes might create it, as we see horses eat dirt, or gnaw the walls, to alleviate unpleasant feelings of this organ. But bad digestion and foul feeding are probably more

often a consequence than a cause of this malady. And we observed that horses at all disposed to it may be easily led into it by the practices of the grooms in cleaning them, of which we can have no doubt; for if they clean them before the manger, and irritate them with too severe a comb, and in parts where they cannot endure it, they seize upon the manger for a counter-action to their sufferings, and in doing this they first get a habit of it, and which may afterwards extend to the removing of other pains or distressful feelings. By this means, and especially if the grooms, and some have a happy knack of this, after every bite, put in a blow or stroke of the comb, when following each other in regular succession, they thus create a vice which may or may not continue afterwards, according to the situation or circumstances attending the individual. Some are said also to get it by imitation of other horses; whether or not the same practices of the groom applied to several horses in the same stable, should not be rather apprehended to be the true cause, we are not assured; but in one instance, we think, we observed this satisfactorily enough to be the cause, though it passed for imitation.

To prevent the habit, it appears but reasonable with regard to such horses as are inclined to it, always to turn them from the manger before they are cleaned, with their heads to the heel-posts, or indeed to clean them in the open air, and above all, to avoid as much as possible irritating those that have preternaturally thin and irritable skins, by too rough an iron comb, and also to break through any regular habit already induced of biting after each stroke of the comb, for they learn to do this at first only in the most sensible parts, as with the flanks, the inside of the thighs, the belly, &c. but afterwards in every part on the slightest touch of the comb, or even at the sight of it. Some horses, it must be admitted, are truly difficult to clean; and many also are rendered more so than they need be, by inconsiderate rashness, and ill applied severity. To prevent these associated actions and mischief, proper precautions cannot be taken too early, for a habit of this kind once formed, is not easily afterwards to be subdued, even by great patience and by well-judged measures.

To cure or break horses of this vice is difficult; cutting off the end of the tongue has been recurred to by some as a cure for it; the soreness created by this means destroying the inclination to the trick for a time, when the habit once being interrupted, might or might not again return.

Another and more usual way with these horses is to buckle a strap tight about the neck, so tight as to prevent, by the constriction of the throat, the power of doing it, or at any rate, to create sufficient uneasiness to disincline them to it. Great care should be taken however, in doing it, not to damage the trachea or larynx.

In concluding these remarks we may observe, that in the purchase and sale of horses this vice is not unfrequently a subject of litigation: should we venture to interpose an opinion on the question usually agitated on those occasions, whether a horse be unsound or not, or, in other words, returnable or not, with this defect, we should say, if the warranty extended to soundness only, the horse is not returnable, as horses are often sound with it as to their going; but if vice is stated in the warranty, the horse is unquestionably returnable, as it may be ranked amongst the worst of them.

The jurisprudence of horse-buying and selling, or security from deception, has never yet attained

to anything like consistency in this, or any other country probably, and very contradictory decisions are often arrived at in these cases. A settling of this ticklish question is more than I can at present hope to accomplish; however, the following is what at the present moment appears to me equitable, and we leave it for future examination. A horse that is being curried with that abomination and scourge of the race, the sharp iron curry-comb, made without rule, and used without discretion, if a horse having this weapon aimed at his loins, or his flank, or inside of his thighs, expresses his aversion by seizing the manger, the wall, or the rope he is tied up with, between his teeth, such is not necessarily to be esteemed a crib-biter, as very many horses will do this, and without ever becoming crib-biters. But if such horse, on going into the stable, shall practice this habit when no comb is touching him, or is in sight even, then such horse shall be deemed *returnable*, or is a deficient horse, having a vice which the warranty should not fail to include in it, and especially so if he throws his mouth very wide open, and sucks his wind, as he is then not only with a *vice*, but also in a fair way, by weakening his stomach, to become diseased, from a bad digestion of his food, and all its natural consequences.

The Arabians, whose horses have the finest and most glossy coats of any in the world, use only a little camel's or horse's dung grasped in the hand, or of straw, to clean them with, and all nearly may be done that is really necessary by a judicious use of it, or by hay-bands still more soft, and, we are assured, it would be much better often to let it go undone, rather than to irritate the animal to such a degree, as to excite his violence, or create a miserable vice of this sort; for dirt even will fall off of itself if left, without much injury or inconvenience to the animal; that to be too tenacious about it in all cases is little less than a folly.

Where however, the vice of crib-biting has taken place and has become a confirmed habit, there is no better way of breaking them of it, that we at present know of, than Yare's muzzle, formed of light thin plates of iron crossing each other at right angles nearly, and at the bottom of it, or next the lips, with two thin iron bars, parallel and nearly flat, and a little projecting. Now these will admit the lips through to take up hay or corn, but will not allow the teeth to come in contact with the manger. Having experienced the great utility of this apparatus, I assisted in procuring for him the silver medal of the Society of Arts about ten years since, in whose volumes a more particular account of it may be seen.

In Yare's apparatus, the above muzzle is sustained about the mouth of the animal, by the usual stable headstal; we should propose however, a great improvement in its effects and office, by carrying the transverse, or occipital strap, to some distance from the base of the ears, and so not irritating them, and also, and which is worse, from the pithing place of the neck also, or the open space of the *Atlantal hiatus*, the tenderest and most fatal part of the whole horse, laying it rather upon the chine of the neck, or *Encolure*, as the French would call it, instead. A system first observed upon by us, and more fully explained, in the essay, *On the Bits of Horses*, and which we there showed was also well understood in the more enlightened periods of the Greek and Roman empires.

VICES OF HORSES. ON SWERVING.

It so happened that the early part of my life passed away without my encountering any cases of this sort, and the later part of it has been altogether as much annoyed by the frequency of its occurrence. That I should have been ready to have smiled at the mention of it then, as now I hear of it with feelings of as much aversion, almost bordering on apprehension. Such very different views of things does a little actual practice make with us.

A case will perhaps best explain the nature of this vice. Going one day in my chair, or gig, into Friday Street, Cheapside, on business, I drew up to the side of the kirb to converse with the gentleman who sent for me, a hackney coach at the distance of forty yards had drawn up on the same side at the kirb also, and was waiting there upon his fare. After some time thus spent in conversation with the gentleman who had sent for me, I quitted him and crossed over to the other side of the street, in order to pass clear of the hackney coach, and so return into Cheapside; but what was my surprise, knowing myself to be clear of all obstacles, and thinking perhaps of other things at the time, to find myself immediately almost drawn into collision with the above hackney coach, my horse at the same time laying down his ears, and seeming gratified at hearing the grating of the two vehicles, mending his pace however a little at the same time, as though conscious of what he might expect, and that he had been about no good; supposing however, it possibly to have been my own fault, from not attending enough to the reins, I gave him a cut or two and we passed on home; after this, collisions became so frequent as to be almost of daily occurrence. But so new was this species of vice to me that I still doubted of my own carelessness in driving (though using all proper attention as I believed), till at last I determined to make experiments with him to ascertain it more satisfactorily. One of these I well remember was made in going out of Hounslow town, towards the heath, my late worthy friend James Kidd of Brentford was with me in the gig, and we were then in the very middle of the road in a trot, and I bid him direct his attention to the mile-stone, about a hundred and fifty yards before us, and fairly, as usual, placed on the right side of the road, just beyond the terminating wall of the town; now, said I, I'll hold these reins perfectly even just where they are, and see if this horse does not go off from his course, so as to bring us in contact with the stone; something also immediately after engaged our attention and conversation, and forgetting the former object for a moment, we were not called to our first object again but when in instant danger of being wrecked on the mile-stone. This, as he must have departed from the middle of the road, where he had been moving before, exhibited so clearly design and malice, or whim, that I gave him an allowance that passed him at a quicker pace in the middle-road over the rest of the heath. But I acknowledge I did not discover that this beating, though it made him more cautious and shy of doing it, was any cure for this strange propensity, since afterwards, on all fair opportunities, he, if not most carefully watched, did not forget to have the gratification of a collision, that a constant unceasing vigilance in the use of the reins became highly necessary. A worthy friend of mine not having a proper share of this vigilance, found himself and his whole family fairly upset into a peasant's potatoe garden, among his potatoe plants, to the astonishment of the natives, as much as my worthy friend himself, who till then had not duly considered this business of swerving.

The above may suffice to afford some notion of the vice itself, and although a constant watchfulness will cause the danger to be less imminent, yet truly wearisome is this alternative, and I am sorry to confess also that, although my experience has not been inconsiderable in contending with this species of vice, it has not afforded much useful advice on which I can satisfactorily rely, or recommend to my reader. I have thought that at its first appearance the not noticing it too much, or falling into severities, or seeming too much to feel or resent it, is best, and not to pursue it with too solicitous a care, which seemed rather to augment the evil than diminish it, and called up attention to it on both sides, carrying on an unceasing fretfulness and apprehension, and the exhibiting ill temper and a continual desire of severely punishing it, ended in nothing that was satisfactory. People generally, after these sort of combats, terminate the contest by selling the object, often at a loss, which is but an indirect admission of being beaten.

A continual using of the reins on every small occasion, or almost without any, is tiresome to horses, and altering their course frequently is tiring and perplexing, and a perpetual apprehension by this minute directing is soon recognised by the horse, and only incites to the disorder. I have therefore endeavoured to do as little as possible with the reins, but to keep the horse vigorously and industriously at his work, and to the very end of it, and where the road was wide, and room plenty, and such I would chuse, if possible, in the use of him, let him have the free use of his liberty without showing any apprehension that he should be sensible of at least, keeping a good look out however, that he carried me into no real danger, treating him in this midway with apparent confidence and liberty, and not hauling continually upon his mouth, as in fearful, timid apprehension, he would in time be so managed as to lose much of his tricks, or entirely perhaps, whilst a too sedulous care and appearance of continual fears and apprehensions, would only increase them, and although using an apparent indifference and carelessness even, if any real obstacle or cause of alarm occurred in the way, creating a real danger, then the reins should be resorted to with force and decision, but only for a moment, for when the object was passed their relaxation would please the animal, and remove that disagreeable impression which a constant care and solicitude is sure to create. Fits of passion, and attempts at severe punishment, seldom answered much purpose, I have thought, and certainly rendered the danger greater under particular, or difficult circumstances. For there is such a thing as using too much guidance, and of being too busy with the reins; an easy, apparent carelessness, is better in the use of horses than this. The main thing is, if possible, to let the vice die away and be forgotten, by not exciting it, and even if the horse challenge to the combat by exhibiting it, not to accept his challenge, and especially in his own way and time. In overacting our parts with the reins, the animal discovers our timidity, and especially if he has aforesaid succeeded with a timid, ill-managing, uninstructed rider, for he then will play upon us, or endeavour so to do, for horses are cunning in this respect. Strong, ill-tempered horses especially, will often challenge and provoke the contest, which if engaged in, in mere brute force on both sides, will generally terminate to the advantage of the beast; it is therefore best avoided, and this by rendering things easy, free, and unembarrassing as possible, the vice not being practised, as we have said, or called up, may die away and be forgotten. Firmness however, when requisite, with no hesitating or doubtful conduct, and that pursued but for a moment, is the way to gain the admitted and acceptable ascendancy, mixing if possible, gentleness and good humour with it.

Perhaps in a thoroughly confirmed case of this vice, the taking the horse off from single harness altogether, would be a prudent step, only working him in double harness with a horse, or horses, having no such propensity, which would perhaps, with the other measures we have proposed, enable him to render his services without much annoyance, and if judiciously used, to forget it altogether, and he might continue such service to the end of his days; or if used in single harness again, he must be used with all the necessary precautions, so as not to create a renewal of it, by a free and not too sedulous driver, and one who perhaps did not loiter much upon the road, to give him time for engendering evil thoughts, which also is another way of preventing, if not curing, many vices.

VICES OF HORSES. REARING UP BEFORE.

THERE may be several causes or ways of this vice being created, one only I shall give here, which as it occurred under my own eye, I can describe with the more truth and certainty; and it would vastly tend to the sure increase of this kind of knowledge, without those heavy drawbacks upon its progress which are made by the removing one half, aye, often more, of mere assumption, before we can come at anything like a permanent foundation to work upon, it being much more easy in writers to invent than to experiment, or cautiously to observe.

I once bought, at a sale at Tattersal's, a beautiful young stallion, a son of *Wary*, a famous racer, one of the stud belonging to the late Lord Heathfield. I therefore called him Heathfield, and as he was but three years old, I bought him to watch (as he had never been shod) the natural developement of his foot, which I think is represented in my fourth Plate of the Hippodonomia.

With this young horse I used to go my rounds among my patients, and as he was a high spirited little fellow, though perfectly tractable, and broke in by myself, I was surprised after a while to find how touchy he got about being mounted, offering to rear up as soon as ever my hand seized the reins, and my foot entered the stirrup. Being pretty active, and supposing it was a humour that would not last, I passed it over, and got on with him as well as I could, though exceedingly troublesome and disagreeable; at last however, it got to such a pitch, that my toe was no sooner in the stirrup than up he was, and to such a height that it was impossible to take my seat—in short, he became perfectly useless to me, nor did I see what I could do with him to break him of it, as scolding and beating only made him worse.

As I lay in bed one morning early meditating on my young horse, and my miserable situation, I resolved to try an experiment with him to see if I could not cure him of it; I ought however previously to say, that accident put me into possession of the true cause and origin of this wretched vice he had acquired, and which I will briefly relate. It often happened that in order to go my rounds, the little horse was led to the countinghouse-door in the yard, where I usually mounted, but often called upon by strangers on business, and being detained some time perhaps, he was held by the groom till I was disengaged, and could find time to mount him. One

morning, hearing a bustle in the yard, my eye was directed that way, and I saw in an instant the key to the whole mystery. The little fellow growing impatient to be gone, and of standing in one position so long, had dared to toss his head about, as his betters sometimes would have done, to express his indignation and unwillingness of the delay, his mouth perhaps held coerced by the closing of the bits. This movement of the head displeasing the booby groom, he to punish him for his restlessness, gives him a jag in the mouth with the reins; the jerk and impression having strong effect on his lower bars, and he further irritated by this treatment, and not at all subdued into quietness by it, only tossed his head up the more, first however pushing his head down as low as he could get it, and then the bits being applied with a harder tug and more severity, set him upon defending himself by further proceedings, and he found by lifting his head aloft he parried in some degree the stroke, the bits then running back along the bars, lodged against the front grinders, and taking advantage of this discovery and mode of defence, he next lifted up all his fore-parts, and at last carried them aloft into the air, in spite of this pulling of the groom, standing only on his hind legs. Just going out at this moment, and seeing the man in the act of jaggng him, and he with his fore-parts in the air, I saw at once all the affair, and how the thing had gone on, *fin pour fin*, step by step, till he became a rearer. I offered to mount, but the moment he felt the restraint of the reins and my toe in the stirrup, up he was completely on end, and to try to mount was of no manner of use. What to do I did not know, for severity or coaxing had precisely the same effect, that is, none at all; and my horse was to me as perfectly useless as if I had none.

Meditating one morning, shortly after, on my miserable situation, as I have said, I bethought myself of a stratagem that might possibly reclaim him, and as it succeeded perfectly to my great joy, I will briefly relate it, and this without employing any cruelty, or even what might be called severity of any kind.

My experiment began at six in the morning, and did not end before three in the afternoon, by my looking out of my chamber window and calling to my stableman to saddle my young nag, and bring him out before he fed him, and when saddled and bridled, to hitch the rein to a hook in the yard. This being accordingly done, I went down only dressed in my morning-gown, and ordered him to be unhooked, and led to the usual mounting-place opposite my countinghouse-door, where also I soon appeared, and patting him on the neck, offered to mount by handling the reins in my left-hand, and putting my foot in the stirrup; this I no sooner did than my gentleman began to lift his fore-parts in the air, and I patting him on the shoulder, dropt the reins from my hand and my foot from the stirrup, and ordered the groom to lead him back to the hook in the wall, and there leave him. I went up to bed again, rose at eight, and ordered him again to be led to the mounting-place at the countinghouse-door, where I again offered to mount, but he reared and bounced so violently that I ordered him back to his hook at the wall. He could hear the other horses being fed and having their breakfast, which seemed to annoy him much, and made him fly about and become very fidgetty. Having breakfasted about nine o'clock, I had him loosed from his hook and brought to the countinghouse-door, and offered to mount, but he would not let me, so ordered him back to his old place at the end of the yard. About ten o'clock I had occasion to go out for a couple of hours on business, and at my return I caressed him, and at the

same place again offered to mount, but he raved and jumped about, and reared most violently, so I used soothing language to him, and ordered him back to his hook, he however flew about considerably, and his eyes shot fire, and he seemed exceedingly exasperated and indignant indeed. At twelve and at one o'clock I tried him again, but he was more impetuous than ever, almost threatening to kick us all. I dined about two o'clock, and shortly after had him led to the upping place, but he resented it, if possible, with more violence than before. I said 'very well, very well my friend, you shall once more go back to the hook,' and at three I again had him brought down, and presented myself in good humour, and patted him, and he seemed more composed; and that the experiment might not be eschewed under these favourable appearances, I lost no time in getting into my seat, patted him, rode him off to a rich brewer's stables in Shoreditch, whose horses I attended, and where I knew he would find plenty of good corn and chaff, and clover-hay, in the mangers of the stable of the dray-horses, to reward him for his compliance; and after a stay of about a quarter of an hour, during which time he did not forget to make good use of the opportunity afforded him, I drew him out of the stable by the reins, and bringing him into the open yard, mounted him with as quick a movement as I could, and then patted and encouraged him; this speed I used to give him no time for reflection on his old trick. He carried me well on my rounds, and I then returned home, where he found his breakfast still in the manger, and from that day he never reared on my mounting. I however took the precaution of never having him brought out till I was at liberty immediately to mount him. Indeed on recurring to my notes made at the time, I find that on the next occasion of mounting on the following morning, in order to destroy and keep out of sight old reminiscences and associations, I would not let the groom touch him, but went into the stable alone and mounted him there, and from this time forth I had no further trouble with him as to his being mounted. More may be done, I am well assured, by well-concerted stratagem in vicious cases, than by beating and violence.

VICES OF HORSES. RUNNING AWAY.

As this terrible vice resolves itself at last into a question of education, and of Bits and Reins, we shall refer the reader to our ample treatise on that department, under the head, *Bits*.

VICES OF HORSES. YERKING OUT BEHIND, OR KICKING.

Nor having anything that we believe to be new, or interesting at least, to communicate on this particular branch of the subject, we merely add it in form to the other vices, which have not, we apprehend, ever before appeared in juxtaposition for view and consideration, and nearly in alphabetic order.

VICES OF HORSES. ANOMALOUS, OR APPREHENDED VICES.

IN treating of the vices of horses we begin with those which, although apprehended as such, are not strictly so, for it is most true that horses often get miserably scourged, and punished for offences, and apprehended vices, which are none of theirs', but are proceeding from causes which they are not in any way to blame for; the gross injustice of such treatment must therefore be the more poignantly felt by them. The following cases may perhaps serve to illustrate this kind of vice as it is called, the only way we at present know of, of rendering plain and intelligible this class of offences.

A riding mare of my own once took to going very carelessly on the road, with her fore legs and feet, so much so, that she seemed as though determined not to sustain herself upon them, and as though perfectly regardless whether she fell down, or not; if whipped, or spurred, she only mended her pace for a few moments, and then relapsed again into her former perilous mode of going. Such feebleness and misery did she exhibit that I began to be apprehensive whether or not she would not have lain down with me in the road, occasioning feelings and apprehensions of the most painful kind, and such as I shall never forget. It being hot weather, it was first attributed very naturally to laziness, and the usual remedy applied for it. Her temper also became so soured that she would take any pace but the one you wanted her to go. Now all this happened to me, and is happening to thousands daily, and the idea of riding, to those much acquainted with these things, becomes almost terrific.

The unpleasantness and apprehension of danger becoming extreme, I determined upon investigating a little into the cause of it, and on removing the cramping irons, (for I can hardly use the delusion of calling them shoes) we discovered that the inflexions or heels as they are called, had been so terribly squeezed by the iron being nailed upon them too strongly, and the iron itself perhaps also bearing partially and hard upon the part, that the blood had been actually forced by rupture from the vessels of the circulating foot into the horn covering it, which was discoloured and red, and then the smiths, in order to reconcile this anomaly, and to mystify the matter, called this miserable smashing and bruising of the foot, a *Corn*—amusingly enough, as though a corn or *cornu, horn*, could possibly invade a part already by nature densely covered with it.

The cause, viz. the iron, having been extensively removed, the effect soon after ceased, and the mare resumed after a while, her usual cheerful mode of going, and an habit apparently vicious, and for which she had severely suffered in a double sense, was done away.

It is unfortunately the fact, that in the nailing on of these irons to horse's feet, it can be done with any degree of force that the hammer can inflict, and what cannot the force of a hammer do? And not only can the force of the hammer draw the blood from the vascular into the horny sole, but also it can give any other degree of pressure short of the absolute bursting and extravasation of the blood, but quite enough to be extremely annoying and painful to the animal, yet deniable, since there are no appearances of blood to confirm the evidence of such pressure existing. Also the lateral compression of the nails is always acting with more or less force, in incommoding the foot, enough we see in a very short space of time to change the form, and disorganise the entire structure of it. The proofs and details of which fact will be more fully understood by consulting the *Podophthora*, where also the supposed vice of the *Tumble-down Horse* is fully laid open.

Other causes too of suffering and creating apprehended vices, may be often found in their furniture of various kinds, as bits of most unaccountable makes and shapes; of collars, bearing unequally; of traces, of unequal length and badly adjusted; and especially annoying is but too often, the head-gear; all of which, though tormenting and irritating to the animal, and creating resentment in the rider also, yet would pass unnoticed as being the cause of offence, by a very large share indeed, of riders and drivers.

The following also is a sort of vice of somewhat anomalous character, and that it behoves us to guard against, which may be noticed in the following case. A horse is tied up with an old, and it may possibly be, a somewhat decayed, halter; in moving about in the stall, or leaning back, he accidentally breaks it, and gaining his liberty, ranges the stable at his pleasure, and gets what he can from every manger. Encouraged by this piece of unexpected success, it is ten to one if he does not try the amount of strength of the next halter that he is fastened up with, and if he perchance again succeeds in breaking it, there is great reason to fear it will become with him a confirmed vice, and some day whilst at liberty, in getting kicked by other horses, may greatly endanger his life. That it behoves us to use great care in looking well after our apparatus, and if possible to prevent a horse from knowing his own powers. The same may also be observed of slipping the halter off the head. Again, another case may serve to illustrate a different species of vicious susceptibility, an improvement also upon the above chapter of casual accidents.

My young horse in going over the London stones, as they are called, driven probably by some cart, or coach, near to the declivity of a kennel, made a long slip, and was nearly down with me, on one side, finding cunningly that this gave him a momentary liberty, and advantage, by the embarrassment the rider is necessarily thrown into, he, for months after, would be trying at the same feat on every at all favourable opportunity, till it became quite a tiresome and vicious habit, and till at length I broke him of it by having sharp calkins made to the heels of his shoes, which holding him firm on all occasions upon the ground, prevented his sliding about, and I further remarked, that these calkins much improved his going in most other respects. Such hints may be thought by some almost superfluous, but there are others of my less experienced riders who may not perhaps be unthankful for them.

Also, horses at times are found to possess strong antipathies well worth our noticing, and they are sometimes astonishingly tenacious of them, which it may perhaps be best policy at times rather to give way to, than at too great sacrifice to be obstinate about conquering them, as they call it, and some grooms are very fond of this "conquering a horse," as they term it, but they too often however without achieving any good, worth speaking of, do the horse, or themselves perhaps, a grievous mischief, and repented of but too late. My own little stallion had a most prodigious aversion, to have his fore-top meddled with, or even combed, (from tight, ill-fitted halters perhaps, being put about his head whilst bringing up) and if any man attempted it, though ever so severely twitched, he would never cease to paw and kick with his fore-feet, so that the legs and thighs of his adversary were brought into eminent peril, so desperately so, that I never would suffer it to be done or attempted, but contented myself with a wet cloth gradually brought over this part from the mane, which he would quietly submit to, and vices and antipathies of this sort when unsuccessfully combated, are generally much increased—therefore, unless there be a tolerable certainty of success, they are for the most part best let alone.
