

THE HORSE AND APPLIANCES FOR HIS USE.

So far as is known, the earliest employment of the horse was for the purposes of war. The ancient Egyptian chariot was drawn by two horses, attached to the chariot by a yoke suitably supported by straps, to which the pole of the vehicle was secured. To this harness were appended a breast strap and girth fastened to an ornamented saddle, a head stall with frontal, cheek straps, a noseband, a bit with a cheek piece, the reins for the guidance of the animal. The whip consisted of a wooden handle and a double thong, with a loop hole whereby it might be suspended from the wrist while the warrior was using his bow, the reins being often tied around the body.

It is impossible to determine when the horse was first used for riding. There is reason, however, to believe that it was at a very early period in the world's history. It is referred to in some of the most ancient books extant. Xenophon mentions a double bridle and bit in his work upon horsemanship. One bit was smooth and flexible, the other was armed with sharp points.

The original method of guiding horses was, however, by means of a cord passed through the mouth around the lower jaw—a method still practiced to some extent under circumstances where bits of iron cannot well be obtained. Horses were anciently ridden bare-backed, or supplied with a cloth thrown over the back.

The invention of the saddle for riding purposes has been ascribed to the Persians, but there is probably room for some doubt as to its true origin. It is not certain that it was used before the fourth century of the Christian era. The first accounts of stirrups date from the fifth century. Spurs were early used among the Romans, but their precise origin has not been ascertained. The ordinary stable equipments, including the currycomb, brush, scraper, rake, sieve, and shovel, are also of ancient origin, although they, like other things, have been much improved in their form and materials in modern times.

It will be seen from these facts that appliances for the management and use of the horse are mostly of ancient origin. We believe there is still room for improvement in means for the more efficient use of this noble and often ill-treated animal.—Scientific American.

THE MELANCHOLY OF GREAT MEN.

Aristotle has said that all great men are melancholy, and it is interesting to trace the part which melancholy plays as an almost inseparable feature of magnanimity. The ancients, when they ascribed a slow gait and the absence of eagerness to men of great minds, touched, unconsciously perhaps, upon the side of magnanimity. Zeal may, indeed, at certain critical moments, be essential to greatness of mind, but as a rule it is of the essence of a large mind to be impressed with the comparative triviality of things rather than with their overwhelming importance. Hence we come upon the true explanation of the notorious fact that zealous of all denominations are, invariably and without exception, men of little minds. It is true that zealous often do great things and bring down men infinitely their superiors, just as some vainly fasten undaunted on the neck of the eagle and wingless themselves, bring the imperial bird down from the skies. But the secret of their audacity is the blindness and contraction, not the largeness, of their vision. The melancholy and the magnanimity of Hamlet go hand in hand, and a zealot is incapable of either. And largeness of vision is inseparable from a special melancholy, due not to the peevishness and grumbling of discontent, but partly to a truer estimate of things, and partly to the perception of the infinitesimally small weight of the greatest man in the general scale of the universe. It is curious to observe also that, as a rule, beasts and birds of prey—that is to say, animals accustomed to look down upon a portion of the world from a higher point of view—are usually, except at particular moments of extraordinary activity, melancholy and of a brooding disposition. The sparrows that are forever chirping, the rabbits that are forever hopping about, the doves that are forever cooing, and, generally speaking, the more mobile part of creation, are illustrations on the opposite side of the great principles which Aristotle expressed in reference to mankind when he said that great men are melancholy. It does not in the least follow that the fish and melancholy people are therefore great. Peevishness and melancholy are, unluckily, as common as true magnanimity is rare. Still, in spite of this, it remains true that a certain sadness, and melancholy, far removed, indeed, from the affliction of it, are the most invariable concomitants of the greatest of human qualities. But if this be considered a drawback, what shall we say of the indefinable charm, the magnetic influence of true magnanimity? Magnanimity lends a mellowness, an ease, a grace, a boundless sense of liberty to human intercourse, which are its highest and rarest fruits. Magnanimity heightens all enjoyments, smooths all asperities, exaggerates nothing, knows no revenge, nor selfishness, nor egotism, nor pettiness, nor spite—is not a time-server, nor a tuff-hunter, nor a fortune-hunter. The pleasures of vanity may grow cold, and even those of sober and well-gotten fame may grow pale; but magnanimity never palls, for it depends alone upon itself, and is the halo of its own existence.—Craofoft.

COUNT SPONNECK, the confidential adviser of the King of Greece, is a gentleman of fifty, possessed of extraordinary presence of mind. When he first went to Greece he had with him on board the steamer a powerful Newfoundland dog to which he was much attached. The dog one day fell overboard, and Count Sponneck asked the Captain of the vessel to have the engine stopped that the dog might be saved. "Your instructions are to stop only when a man has fallen overboard," "Very well," said the Count, who is an excellent swimmer, and jumped overboard. The steamer stopped and both the Count and his dog were in five minutes afterward again on board.

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