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FORD COUNTY HORSE NOTES.

AT THE BREEDERS' MONTHLY SATS
ABOUT "HITCHING."—ITS CAUSE AND
ITS REMEDY.

"HITCHING."

Expressive, if not euphonious, is the
word, though to a reader who has
had something to do with trotters it
may be more obscure than realistic. A
hitch in the gait is understood, whether
it refers to man or horse, but hitching
in sense which horse folk give the word
implies a serious trouble in the education
of trotters. Not long ago we received a
communication from a subscriber desiring
remedy, and in order to treat the ques-
tion properly have deferred it until now.

Understanding the word in common use has a technical significance. Webster uses the verb *bitch* in a way that *es* has an intuitive and perhaps a *er* knowledge of what was the cause of bitching than some trainers. His first definition is, "To move by jerks or starts." (2) To become entangled; to be caught or hooked. (3) To hit the legs together in going, as horses (*not American usage*). (4) To hop; to spring on the leg. We regret somewhat that the verb the legs together he had to cite as American usage, for although that is

feet, inasmuch as it should be to
 the legs with the feet, we are con-
 sidered that in nearly all cases hitching
 comes from the fore feet injuring the
 hind limbs, especially the coronet and
 fettern. Before the science of "booting"
 was so well understood it was held that
 a heavy weight was the chief cause
 of horses breaking the square trotting
 and resorting to a jerky motion.
 It was a plausible explanation that in
 an effort to pull a load at a fast rate
 the horse would be something like spasmodic
 on of the hind legs, and many years
 ago the horse was considered as being

It was generally accepted as a rule, in at least a majority of instances. In those days heavy vehicles were not used, and hence it was not an uncommon occurrence for trotters to be ridden. But as the trouble is still present, and that in horses which have been ridden with light vehicles during the period of training, there must be some reason. When the trotting action is studied, it will be learned that the gait is somewhat complex. The fast depends on the body being thrown through the air when the feet are all off the ground. When the trot is absolutely

ground. The hind feet strike the ground early together that the ear falls to early together. In the air the hind leg is passing the front one the right fore leg is bent the right one is brought forward, sometimes out of the fore, sometimes under the fore and occasionally between the fore.

In either case there is a liability to them coming together. When the foot is carried under the action has appropriately termed open-gaited, a few horses go so wide behind that it is a little danger of injury. In the

ings of tracing this sort of action valued, but as a greater degree of was required it was found to be inferior to that which was closer and rapid. When the feet follow in a straight line it is manifest that they must be together unless the fore foot is at a higher elevation than the hind. Thus, in a horse "forgets," strikes the toe of the hind shoe against the web of the front, the fore foot is just turned far enough to admit the blow to be given, and it may be that the toe still rests on the ground. On the point of contact is the toe or

of the front shoe and the hoof, or pattern of the hind, it is at a lower elevation, and when the ankle or is struck still higher has the fore been raised. Now when a hitherto grey-aited colt commences to hitch, it ingoode that the marks of contact be visible. Frequently the hind hoof be marked from near the ground ace to the coronet, and it may be that re are abrasions of the skin as well. re may be such markings without the impeding mixing of gait, and that low show that the animal is insensible to

tain, or that it had not yet discovered a method of avoiding the blow. It is sufficient for our present purpose, however, to assume that the cause of hitch-hiking is what we claim, and then look for a remedy. There will be few to question the wisdom of endeavoring to change the cause in order that the cause be removed; but that is more easily suggested than carried into execution. There are so many appliances for that purpose now-a-days, that it seems as though some of them might prove effective, and that all that is necessary will be to try one after another.

ther until a specific is discovered. We understand is the practice with homeopathic practitioners, and yet patients are lost by them as well as those who adhere to different formulas. There are so many things which have been said and efficacious that to notice them all require several articles, and the substance of so much importance to those who breed and those who handle trotters it will be time well spent. The matter of remedies prove how troublesome it is to overcome the propensity, and may as well state at the outset that

is one cardinal point that must not be omitted to find any of them successful. It is patience. Just so sure as the editor loses his temper there will be disappointment. Bear in mind that the only action is caused by pain, and an increase of suffering will add to the trouble, and when the animal finds that addition to the self inflicted blow there will be no improvement. The only remedy is to commence with the feet. If shoes are worn, see that those in front are set in the horn, and that the edges of the shoes are rounded. The shoe of the hind

make the parts which do the injury innocuous as possible, and though we are not able to overcome the contact, the force will not be so great, and by reducing the cutting edge with a rounded surface there is less danger of wounding softer parts from the coronet up, and the hoof will not receive so sharp a stroke. Reduce the hind feet and legs with boots. Tighten boots, speedy-cure and shin splints should be worn, and these of the pattern which are usually the best. We say usually the best in a thousand cases, but in some cases the

and sense. If the bootmaker is a quack, there would be little use in diluting the expression, for if worthy of the use of expert, or master of the art, he endeavors to improve in every pair, if not satisfied that there has been an advance, will go back to the old pattern. A scalping boot is the great dependence, and that can be constructed as a floor sample protection to foot, covers lower portion of the pattern.—*Maine Horse Breeders' Monthly*.

"I doubt that it was yours alone kept me killing him."

