

**HOW TO RIDE AND  
SCHOOL A HORSE:  
WITH A SYSTEM OF  
HORSE GYMNASTICS**

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How to Ride and School a Horse: With a System of Horse Gymnastics by Edward L. Anderson

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**EDWARD L. ANDERSON**

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## INTRODUCTION.

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It is to be regretted that, in this nation of horsemen, riding, as practised in the schools, should have fallen into disuse; for the *manège* is the foundation of horsemanship. This neglect is owing, in a great measure, to the prejudice that once prevailed against the formal seat and the unnecessary airs of *la haute-école*. But, in most countries of Europe, school-riding has advanced with the age, and it is now recognised, by the professors of the art, that each man has a seat peculiar to him-

self, and those movements only are practised that are necessary to give the rider control over his horse under all circumstances.

When we see that school-riding, in one form or another, is used in all armies, and indeed wherever the horse must be under command, it is hardly necessary to argue the importance of a knowledge of its laws by all who desire to ride well. And although in the extended gallop of the hunting-field, it is impossible to retain the equilibrium of the *manège*, the horse will be the more amenable for his schooling, and the rider will always have the resources of his art.

I think it is a mistake to place children of tender age upon horseback, for there is nothing to be gained in such a course that



will compensate for the risk of injuries they may receive. An active man may learn to ride well at any age ; and a bold boy of fourteen, who comprehends the system upon which he is taught, will in six months become a better horseman than the lad who has been riding six years according to his own ideas. It is not given to all men to excel in riding : courage, activity, a perfect temper, and aptitude for the exercise, are requisite for the acquirement of the highest skill. But a knowledge of a proper method will give to every one comparative immunity from the dangers that attend horsemanship. A schooled horse, confiding in his master and obedient to the spur, is not apt to try his powers in rebellion ; and when in hand and properly gathered he will

recover from a mistake that might otherwise prove disastrous.

In these papers I have endeavoured to present a system of riding and training by which the pupil may become his own master.

For many years I have been schooling horses for my recreation, and I have had advice and instruction from some of the most accomplished horsemen of our day. In particular, I owe my acknowledgments to Mr. Joseph Merklen, formerly one of the French Cavalry Service. From him I learned the method of horse gymnastics, which, together with much that will, I hope, be new to my readers, I now offer for their consideration.

*HOW TO USE A HORSE.*

The whip and the spur are necessary aids in the education of the horse, and in compelling his obedience after he has been trained. The first should be seldom used, the latter never, to inflict punishment. For instance, if a horse rears, the spurs must be employed to force the action of the hind-quarters, and so to drive him forward ; but having brought about that result, they must not be thrust into him to punish him for rearing. The horse is to be taught that the spur is applied to make him bring certain forces into action, and when used with discretion he will respond to it ; but unnecessary strokes with the spur will rouse his resentment, and he will stubbornly refuse to obey its