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## THE TRICKS OF HORSE TRADERS EXPOSED\*—No. 4

Dr. J. Hugo Reed, Guelph, Ont.

**How Dealers Conceal some of the Minor Unsoundnesses of Horses such as Quarter Crack, Bony Enlargements, Sweeney, etc. How Vicious Habits may be Overcome with Drugs. A Trick in B-Jing.**

**E**ITHER quarter crack or sand crack, while practically constituting permanent unsoundness, can be treated and the lameness allayed. When the cracks are filled with gutta-percha or other material which is made thoroughly smooth and even with the hoof, then colored to match the hoof and the whole dressed with hoof dressing, it requires a careful examination in some cases to detect this fraud.

Enlargements or diseases of the hocks, when acute lameness is not present, give the trader opportunities for plying his art. When there is an enlargement, as bone spavin, curb or a thickening of any part of one hock and not on its fellow, a hypodermic injection of a small quantity of some irritant into the sound hock will cause a swelling, which to any person except a careful observer may appear normal. Most horsemen are aware that the hocks may be of many different conformations and still be sound; that is, a fullness or roughness of mostly any part of the joint is not necessarily indicative of disease and while undesirable is not liable to cause trouble. He is also aware that if the hocks are alike in conformation, even though the conformation be undesirable and there be no symptoms of lameness it does not indicate unsoundness. Hence if one hock be diseased and the other can be made like it in appearance the disease is not nearly so liable to be detected.

### SHRUNKEN MUSCLES FILLED WITH AIR

Then again in case of sweeney or other disease that has caused an atrophy or shrinking of muscles the trader is aware that by forcing air underneath the skin covering the shrunken muscles he is able to fill the hollow. Just underneath the skin is a mesh-like tissue called areolar tissue. If a hollow needle be forced through the skin into this tissue and air forced through the needle the meshes of this tissue become filled with air, this of course forces the skin outwards and fills the hollow.

In some cases irritant liquids are used instead of air. These liquids cause a swelling which is more permanent than the air as it becomes absorbed in a short time. The filling of the parts with air is not so permanent and is more easily detected if the parts be handled. If the hand be passed over the parts filled with air the touch is found to be abnormal and a crackling sound like passing the hand over paper is produced. Air, however, is preferred to the irritant sub-

\*This is the last of a series of four articles written by Dr. Reed for Farm and Dairy. In the series all of the common unsoundnesses of horses and the ways in which these unsoundnesses may be concealed to defraud the prospective buyer have been dealt with. These articles should prove of great value to all who buy or from dealers. Other articles of the series will be found in Farm and Dairy for Feb. 13, March 13 and March 27 of this year.

stances as it causes no irritation or after effects. While irritant substances are liable to cause extreme swelling and soreness and in many cases the formation of an abscess; hence if a deal be not effected with a horse so treated the probability of being able to dispose of the horse for some considerable time afterwards is very slight.

Means of temporarily checking undesirable or vicious habits are many. The use of an iron extension to the crupper so hidden in the hair of the tail that it cannot be noticed is often successfully used in disposing of a switcher; and probably one that will kick if he gets the line



**A Result of Using the Split Log Drag**

In Farm and Dairy last week W. J. Cox, Peterboro Co., using a split log drag. Here is the lane on which the drag is used, as photographed by an editor of Farm and Dairy.

under his tail. The introduction into the rectum of a small piece of ginger root will cause a tail hagger to elevate his tail. Horses that are kickers, shyers, too high lired and generally hard to handle can be doped by administering proper doses of opiates or narcotics. This of course renders the animal somewhat dull and stupid but usually checks his vices for the time. Successful doping of this kind requires a knowledge of the action of the drug used and the proper amount to administer, as while the proper dose causes the effect noted, smaller doses cause stimulation and probably an increased tendency to vice, while over doses cause excitement and delirium and probably make the animal practically unmanageable.

### HARNESS MAY COVER DEFECTS

Local abnormalities such as warts, small tumors, fistula, ulcers, etc., may be hidden by heavy harness or a saddle. The actions of the trader are often sufficient to cause suspicion. If he is anxious to keep the horse in motion all the time it indicates that he probably is lame from bone spavin, which lameness is often not shown except after standing at rest for a variable length of time, or

he may be sore in the fore feet, but a little exercise removes the symptoms and so long as he is kept moving they are not apparent.

Spring halt is often very hard, and in slight cases, impossible to detect except by allowing the horse to stand for a few minutes and then backing him or turning him short to one side or the other. The lameness caused by corne can usually be removed for a time by poulticing for a few days and then getting the wall of the quarter rasped down so that there is no pressure upon the shoe of that part.

### WHEN LAME IN FRONT

A horse only slightly lame in front will often go sound if the head be checked high and he be driven smartly on a tight line; but if the check be let down and he be driven at a jog with a slack line and on a hard road the lameness becomes apparent.

Ridlings (animals with one or both testicles not apparent in the scrotum) are often disposed of as geldings. The only means of detecting this fraud is by the general appearance and actions of the animals. They have a masculine appearance, which reasonably well marked, is readily detected by a horseman but cannot be well described, and the actions are those of a stallion when in company of other horses.

Some traders have such knowledge of the actions of certain drugs, that if they can gain access to a horse that they want to own, they will administer a dose that will cause sickness or partial inability with the hope of discouraging the owner and making him willing to part with him easily. We will not discuss this at any length as the practice is seldom possible.

### Ideas Briefly Expressed

The side-delivery rake is one of the finest implements ever invented. It affords the quickest way of drying the hay we have ever tried. We have done away with the tedder altogether.—J. H. Grisdale.

Some of the advantages that we have seen in our tile drainage system are that our soil is now warmer, clover grows better than it did before, all crops show more vigorous growth, fertilizers seems to yield greater returns and the greatest benefit of all is that our heavy clay does not bake and crack the way it did at one time.—L. K. Shaw, Welland Co., Ont.

We should be very careful about cutting down all bad weeds every year. If these are attended to and cut at the right time, the farm should soon be cleared of all weeds. Burs are one of the worst weeds around, but if they were cut when they start to blossom and kept cut every year we should soon be done with them. The trouble very often is that one farmer cuts the weeds on his farm but his neighbor is careless and lets them grow. I have seen some farmers even on rented farms much more particular about cutting weeds and keeping their farm clean than farmers who live on their own farms.—R. P. Hill, Victoria Co., Ont.