

FARM AND DAIRY

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Vol. XXXII.

FOR WEEK ENDING FEBRUARY 13, 1913.

No. 7

THE TRICKS OF HORSE TRADERS EXPOSED

Dr. J. Hugo Reed, Guelph, Ont.

Something about the Nature and Methods of Operation of those Slippery Gentlemen, who Live by "Dealing" in Horses. The First Trick Exposed.—"Plugging a Roarer"

MOST sections of the country are supplied with men whose principal business is "trading" horses. This has probably been the case since the use of horses became general. One of the writer's earliest recollections is a character of this kind who always had a few horses on hand, but had no work for them to do. Neither did he do any work himself. If asked what his business was, the answer always was, "Be darn, I'm a dealer." He was always ready for "a deal." He preferred to exchange a horse for a horse, but would in a pinch "deal for anything." It was his business, and he made his living out of it. Men of this kind have been "making a living" in this way ever since, doubtless for centuries before and are still in the business.

We, of course, do not refer to men who do a legitimate business in buying and selling horses, or to those who occasionally trade horses. An honest exchange of horses can occasionally be made by which both parties are benefited, each getting a horse more suitable for the duties required of him and in general a fair exchange of value being made. We refer to the professional trader, the man who makes it a business; he is not only always ready to trade, but is constantly on the lookout for a victim.

NEITHER FAIR NOR FREE TRADE

He does not want to trade because his horse does not suit him and he wants one of another class or type. His idea is to make money out of the transaction, and in order to do that he must "do the other fellow." Unless he can do this his business is a failure, and he has wasted his time and energies, and if unprofitable trading continued the trader would soon have nothing to trade. Hence in order that he may continue his business he must average a fair profit out of each "deal." In other words, this dealer is making a living for himself and horses by getting money or value from those with whom he is dealing without giving equal value in return.

He must get the "best of the deal" or he is a failure. In order to get this "best of the deal" he must resort to methods which tend to deceive "the other fellow." He must be a good talker, an affable fellow, a cheerful liar, and the more "tricks of the trade" he is handy at the more profitable his business will be. On general principles he must never "deal" unless he is getting some "boot." (In explanation to the non-initiated we may say that the "boot" is not the kind that it should be, nor is it applied in the orthodox manner; it is a word used to express the cash that "the other fellow" gives to the dealer in addition to the horse that he is exchanging.) In this way the

dealer receives another horse and some cash in mostly all "deals."

WHERE WE MUST BEWARE

He occasionally comes into possession of a horse of considerable value, which he will trade for one that is unsound or of bad manners, and of little value. In this case, of course, the "boot" will be considerable, and probably the "other fellow" has also made a good trade. Now the skill and tricky knowledge of the dealer

A Pertinent Question

The Hon. Martin Burrell, Minister of Agriculture for Canada, has asked Parliament to set aside \$10,000,000 for the "promotion of agricultural education in Canada." I must congratulate Mr. Burrell on his sincere effort and desire to advance the cause of agriculture. But I would like to know if Mr. Burrell is making provision for the expenditure of this great sum? Is this \$10,000,000 to be all spent in teaching us farmers how "to grow two blades of grass where one grew before?" Is Mr. Burrell aware that in the United States in 1912 their crops exceeded those of the year previous by many millions of bushels, but that, owing to poor marketing facilities, the farmers of that country will receive several million dollars less for their crops than in 1911. We have confined agricultural education too long to the producing end. I would like to ask Mr. Burrell how much of that \$10,000,000 is to be spent on marketing instruction? Farming, I fear, will profit but little from this expenditure if all is spent promoting production.—A. MCB., Clengary Co., Ont.

has an opportunity for application. His function is to patch up this "skate" to make him appear sound and valuable in order that he may be able to "do" his next victim.

The knowledge these experts acquire in this line is remarkable, and in some cases almost incredible. We can readily understand that the success and profit of his business will to a great extent depend upon his knowledge and skill in these matters, added, of course, to his affability and good fellowship in general, and ability to make his probable victim think that he is very anxious to do him a good turn. He (the trader) must be unscrupulous in his methods, regardless of the truth, ready to say and do anything in order to deceive, and regardless of the legal liability his representations may incur. He is out to get the best of the deal and will not stop at any methods, honourable or otherwise, that will aid him in doing so. As a matter of fact these dealers should not be allowed to operate and they all would be confined in prison if those whom they deceive had recourse to the courts, but the

victims are usually willing to "take their medicine" rather than make public the fact that they have been green enough to be taken in by a professional horse trader.

WHERE DECEPTION IS COMMON

Probably the most common diseases or unsoundnesses that the dealers are able to temporarily disguise are diseases of the respiratory organs; especially roaring and heaves. A horse is said to be a "roarer" or to "make a noise" when upon more or less severe exercise he emits an unnatural and loud whistling or roaring sound during expiration. When at rest nothing abnormal can be noticed, but upon exercise the sounds are easily heard. There are degrees of this trouble. In some horses even walking exercise will be sufficient to produce the symptoms, while in others faster exercise is necessary, and in some it is necessary to give violent exercise or excitement. There is also a great difference in the nature and volume of the sound. The condition is due to a lessening of the calibre of the larynx (the cartilaginous box leading to the windpipe), due to an acute disease of the throat from which the horse has previously suffered. The noise is caused by a large volume of air being forced through a constricted passage.

The air enters the windpipe without causing the noise, but during its expulsion the sound is audible. When the horse is at rest a sufficient volume of air to oxidize the blood can pass without trouble, but upon exercise, when larger quantities of air are required, the sound is produced. Now any means that will prevent too large volumes of air entering the nostrils will prevent the noise. If the finger be passed up at the superior portion of the nostril it will enter a blind cul-de-sac, which is called "the false nostril." The walls of this false nostril are detectable, and when necessary they expand to admit large volumes of air.

PLUGGING THE NOSTRILS

The faker or trader is aware of these facts, and when he expects to "deal" a horse off he plugs the false nostrils with absorbent cotton or some other material in order to prevent sufficient air entering the nostrils to cause the sound. After the deal has been made the dealer usually has an opportunity of removing these plugs, and if not it is probable the horse will have coughed or sneezed them out before the next day, when the new owner discovers when he commences to work or drive the horse, that he has come into possession of a musician. This is a trick that is easily detected by any person who has any suspicion. All that is necessary being the insertion of the finger into the false nostril, when the presence of the plugs can easily be detected.

Fifty good hens, well fed and cared for, and all the egg money placed at interest, will at the end of 50 years be a sum sufficient so that the interest on it will yield a living for a family