

was gone, another loose so it had to be knocked off and used as a pattern for the new one.

The blacksmith caught the cold iron with his pincers and held it for a few minutes in the red-hot flame till it came out molten red, placed it on the anvil, and with a few ringing blows which made the sparks fly, beat it into shape, lighting up the dim interior and his own seamed and rugged face. While still hot he threw the horseshoe into a tub of clear spring water, where it sizzled and spat and fell to the bottom.

It was no joke holding the big mare's hoof steady on the three-legged stand made for the purpose while the old horn was pared off and the new shoe fitted and nailed on. The owner of the horse, a big, muscular Frenchman in a blue shirt, short trousers tucked into his "*bottes sauvage*," and a quid of tobacco in his mouth, squirted the juice in every direction while the sweat poured off his face, and vociferously shouted to the nervous animal, "Woa donc ! Arrière, Arrête !" much to the amusement of an impudent little rascal, with a torn straw hat and dirty face, who straddled a big brown horse, patiently awaiting his turn to be shod.

Two white chickens strutted inquisitively about, pecking at the "droppings" on the floor, shook their feathers delicately and walked out again into the sunshine.