

liquid caustic. This operation is by no means novel, as the old farriers similarly operated years ago, and in our opinions is a practice much to be deprecated, since it produces in all cases, severe inflammation, and in some, extensive sloughing.

The division of the posterior tibial nerve—that one situated midway between the leg-bone (tibia) and point of the hock (os calcis)—of course removes all sensation below the part operated upon, and consequently, as far as external observation goes, cures spavin; but although the sensation is removed, the vital action still remains intact, and any injury may occur to the foot of this neurotomed leg without the subject of it manifesting its existence, and yet all the baneful workings of inflammation may be set up, and in a short time the hoof horn will, as it often has, slough off.

The treatment we are wont to prescribe is, during the early period of spavin to introduce a seton, and to allow it to remain in for five weeks, and afterwards blister twice, and at an interval of three weeks between each application. These remedial means have succeeded in many instances, and therefore are recommended to the readers of *THE FIELD*.—*The Field, London.*

Examination for Soundness.

“Will you warrant him sound?” is one of the first and most important questions we ask regarding the horse we are about to purchase.—And a puzzling and difficult question it often is to the conscientious seller; for there are few horses which have been at full work for a year or two that, in the strict acceptance of the term, are really sound. They may be competent for the duties required of them, useful, lasting, and most valuable, but, nevertheless, they very commonly have some screw loose, some defect, some disease, something which the well-skilled and educated practitioner detects as a departure from health, and accordingly pronounces as unsoundness. It may be serious or slight, of long standing or of yesterday, permanent or temporary. In some fortunate instances it is so trifling that rest and judicious treatment may speedily remove it. Such are slight corns, caused by bad shoeing, lameness from a prick, thrushes from careless management of the feet, or simple thrombus from bleeding. These being deviations from natural structure, or from health, constitute for the time unsoundness, just as much as incurable spavin or broken wind. The sensible veterinarian consulted, however, respecting such cases, whilst stating the existence of the particular form of unsoundness, is also justified in explaining to his clients the temporary and curable nature of the unsoundness. This is to the advantage of both buyer and seller.

With some people a veterinary opinion is regarded in a very extended point of view, and innocently considered as a sort of general guar-

antee that the animal is all that is represented and equal to all that is expected of it. Thus out of the question; the purchaser must obviously exercise his own judgment as to the general suitability of the animal, must determine himself the all important points of style, actual colour, and the like. To the veterinarian it only belongs to declare whether, to the best of his judgment, the projected purchase is sound. To decide this question aright is sometimes, however, extremely difficult, and the wonder is at the mistakes, which occasionally occur, of wrongly rejecting sound, and erroneously passing unsound horses, are not greatly more common. In the stir and bustle of a fair, there is brought before the busy veterinarian horse after horse, none of them, in all probability, having ever been seen by him before. Time is pressing, sellers press for a favourable verdict, using off many expedients—innocent and the reverse—show off their animals to the best advantage whilst purchasers expect the veterinarian to protect them from imposition and secure them sound beast. Circumstances such as these require the best skill, adroitness, and knowledge of the veterinarian. Assuredly, here he has need of Argus's hundred eyes, of skill, education and experience, and without of imperturbable coolness and readiness. Amongst a certain class of dealers he is regarded as fair game, and every dodge, artifice, and device is occasionally evoked for his deception. Woe to the inexperienced, unpractical sprig of a veterinary who falls in with some of the Yorkshire or Lincolnshire dealers! Unless to his competent theoretic education he adds a sound practical knowledge, with some nerve and sharpness, the chances are that he is cajoled or dragged into placing his name, with the usual appended flourish of professional capitals, to a certificate which enables an unsound horse to be profitably passed on.

The author of the excellent and entertaining article on “horse-keeping and horse-dealing,” the May number of *Cornhill*, very properly advises that, before closing the bargain, the horse should be examined by a competent and experienced veterinarian. This is most essential with the lighter breeds, and especially if purchased from strangers, or those on whose opinion or word implicit reliance cannot be safely placed. Farmers purchasing horses for agricultural purposes frequently dispense with the professional opinion, and take from the seller warranty, either in writing, or distinctly expressed in presence of witnesses. In examining horses it is best and most convenient to pursue a regular and methodical plan. Having a horse brought up to you, examine first his mouth to satisfy yourself as to age. Notice that his eyes be clear, and that the iris contracts and expands according to the amount of light. Pressing the hand under the lower jaw, assure yourself that there are no lumps or swellings indicative of bastard strangles or other glandular