

THE UNBALANCED FOOT.*

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PROBABLY the most common cause of lameness is a foot that is without normal balance. In order to perform its function efficiently and with comfort to its owner the foot should come fully under the superimposed weight of the body and should have sufficient strength to maintain its proper balance when the weight of the body and the force of propulsion fall upon it.

The foot normally presents three arches. The longitudinal one has a single pier behind and a pier in front consisting of five divisions, the first and fifth of which receive the most of the down-



FIG. 1.

ward pressure. The second arch is a transverse one beneath these five divisions, and, therefore, supported at the inner and outer borders of the foot. In an ideal condition the heads of the intermediate metatarsal bones ought not to press upon the ground. The third arch is in many respects the most important one, and is incomplete, when considered in its relation to either foot alone. It is a half arch, having its outer support at the outer border of the foot, while the inner termination of this half arch is found at the inner border; hence the arch is complete only when the two feet are brought together, and the arch passes, therefore, from the outer border of one foot to the corresponding part of the other. The inner portion of each half arch being unsupported, it will be seen that when standing upon one foot the body weight will tend to lower the inner or unsupported portion of this half arch. In other words, there is a tendency even in the normal foot to roll

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