

A
PLAIN TREATISE
ON
HORSE-SHOING

W. MILES.

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PLAIN TREATISE



ON

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HORSE-SHOEING,

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS,

BY

WILLIAM MILES, ESQ..


AUTHOR OF "THE HORSE'S FOOT, ETC."

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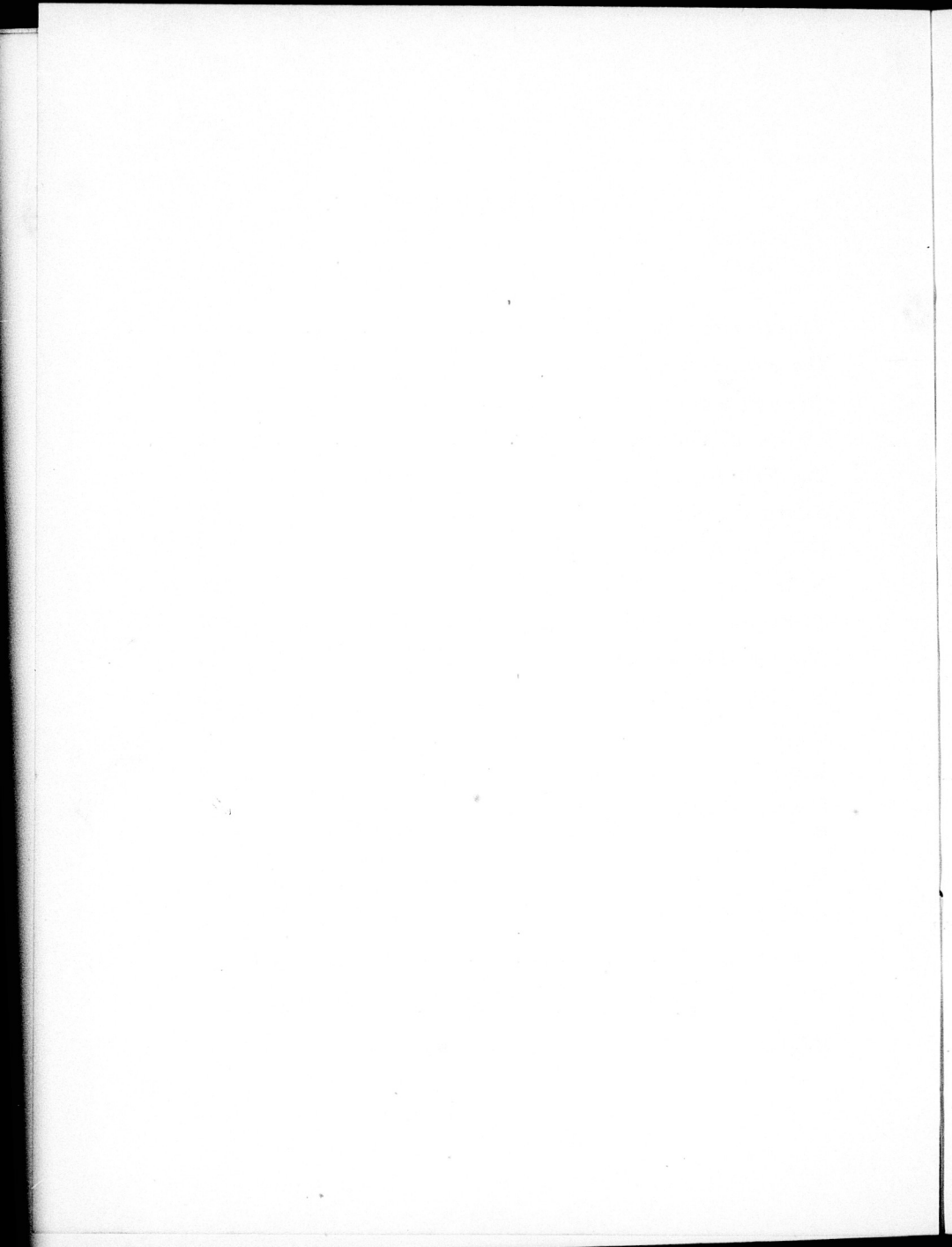
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HORSE-SHOEING.

It has been suggested to me by several correspondents, that a plain, practical treatise on Horse-Shoeing, divested of all other matters, connected with the soundness of the horse's foot, would be very acceptable to many working smiths, who have neither the time, nor the inclination to wade through a work, where, what they want to find, is mixed up with other matters, which do not bear upon their vocation. To the production of such a treatise I now set myself, in the hope that, however much I may fall short of my wishes, I may still in some degree supply a want, which has long been felt by

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many. The books, at present in use, are written in a style, that most smiths find it difficult to follow; my aim therefore shall be to convey the information, I have to offer, in the simplest language, I can command, and such, as the least informed among them are familiar with. But, before I enter upon the subject of shoeing, I must notice two things, which we must not only believe, but act upon, if we ever hope to arrive at really good shoeing; the first is, that nature has given, to what horsemen call a good shaped foot, the form, best suited to the horse's wants; and the second is, that the hoof expands, when the horse's weight is thrown upon it, and contracts, when it is taken off again: but the mere belief in these things will be of no use, unless we make the shoe to fit the foot, and nail it on in such a manner, as will allow the hoof to expand and contract; for we might as well not believe at all, as believe a thing to be right, and not do it.

Nailing an iron shoe to a living horse's foot is a very unnatural thing to do, but, as it must be done, it is our duty to see, how we can do it with the least injury to the horse.—To shew this, I will suppose myself addressing a young smith, who is about to shoe his first horse.

PREPARING THE FOOT.

You must begin by taking off one of the old shoes, and I say one, because the other should always be left on, for the horse to stand upon; he is sure to stand quieter upon a shod foot, than he can upon a bare one; and it will prevent his breaking the crust. Raise every one of the clenches with the buffer, and, if the shoe will not then come off easily, loosen some of the nails with the punch; but never tear the shoe off by main force; it splits the crust, and widens the nail holes. The shoe being off, you should rasp the edge of the hoof all round, and take out any stubs, that may

be left in the crust. Then you must pare out the foot; and this requires both care and thought. If the horse has a strong, upright foot with plenty of horn, you should shorten the toe, lower the heels and crust, and cut out the dead horn from the sole, and also from the corners between the heels and the bars; the best way of doing this is to pare the bars down nearly even with the sole, and then you can get at the dead horn in the corners more easily. The part of the bar, which stands up above the sole, would have been worn away, or broken down, if the shoe had not kept the hoof off the ground; therefore you had better always pare it down, but on no account ever cut anything away from the sides of the bars, or, what is called, "open out the heels"; and be sure, that you never touch the frog with a knife. Now remember, that there are three things, which you must never do in paring out a foot; you must never cut the sides of the bars, or open

out the heels, or pare the frog; and, I will tell you, why you must never do them.

The bars are placed, where they are, to keep the heels from closing in upon the frog, and, if you trim them by cutting their sides, you weaken them, and they can no longer do it, and the foot begins to contract.

Opening out the heels does exactly the same thing by weakening the very parts, which nature placed there, to keep the heels apart. Now it takes some time to contract a horse's foot so, as to lame him, and, because the contraction comes on by slow degrees, no one notices it, until the horse falls lame, and then every one wonders, what can have done it; but very few hit upon the right cause.

The frog is a thick, springy cushion, whose chief use is to protect a very important joint, called the navicular joint, and it is covered by a thin layer of horn, to keep in the moisture; and every time

you slice off any of the frog, you lay bare a part, that was never meant to be exposed to the air, and it dries, and cracks, and forms rags, which are cut off at every fresh shoeing, until the whole frog becomes as dry and hard, as a board; and the horse gets an incurable disease, called "navicular disease"; therefore I say, leave the frog alone; it will never grow too large, for, long before that would happen, the outer covering will shell off, and a new horny covering will be found underneath; and as to the rags, leave them alone also, and they will fall off of themselves.

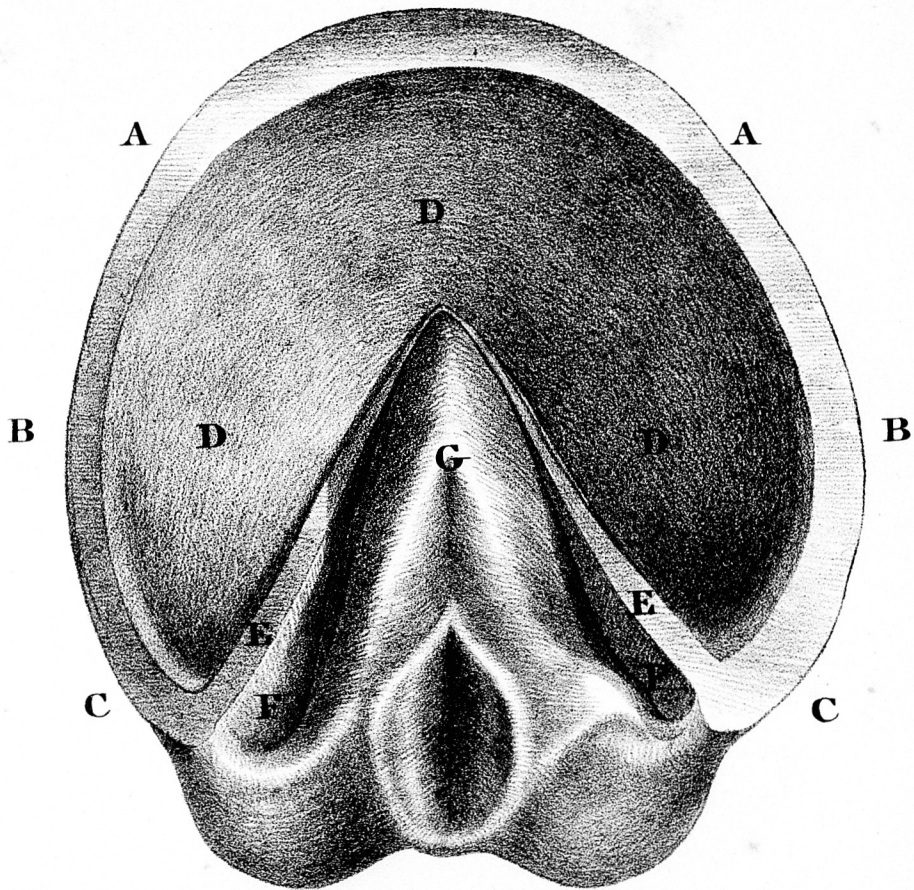
A weak, flat foot will bear very little paring, or rasping; the crust of such a foot is sure to be thin at the toe, low at the heels, and the sole thin and weak; therefore the less you do to it the better, beyond getting rid of the little dead horn, there may be, and making the crust level, where it is to bear upon the shoe; this must be done to all feet, and, as the inner quarter where,

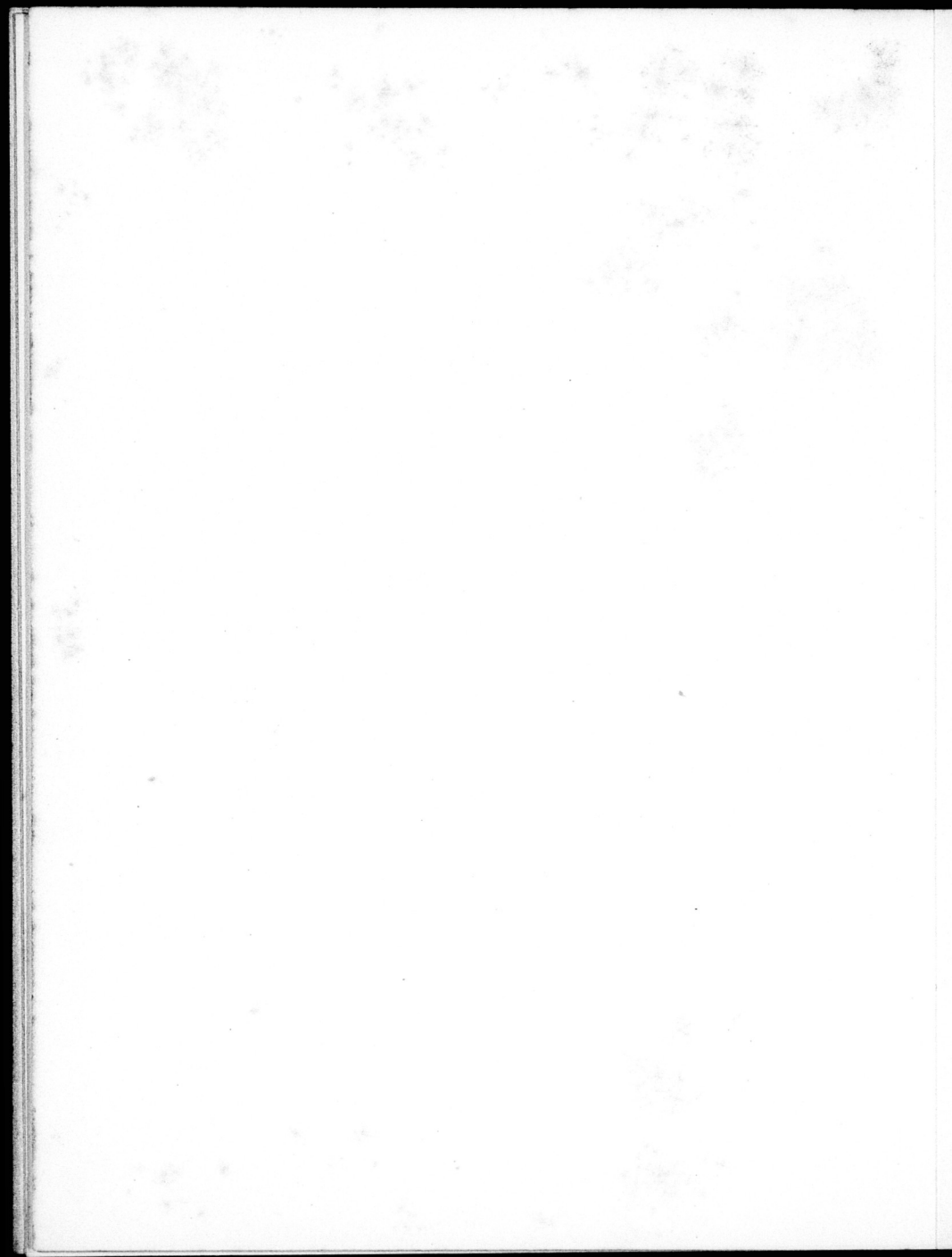
there should be no nails, does not wear away as fast, as the outer quarter, where the nails are driven, you should always place a rasp upon its edge across the foot, to be quite sure, that the two sides are level. I have known shoes lost from the inside quarter being higher, than the outside, and causing the foot to bear unevenly on the shoe.

Before you pare out a foot, you should always think of the state of the roads, and, if they are dry, and covered with loose stones, or have been lately repaired, you should take very little off the sole of any foot, because, if you thin it, the stones will bruise it, but, when the season is wet, and the stones worn in, you may pare out the sole of a strong foot, until it will yield to hard pressure from your thumbs; but you must never pare it thin enough to yield to light pressure.

Plate I. shews a good shaped near fore foot, pared out ready for shoeing. I have placed letters

against the different parts. The toe reaches from A to A, the letter B shews the middle of each quarter, and C marks the heels. You will observe, that the crust is thicker on the outer quarter, where the nails should be, than it is on the inner quarter, where a nail must never be driven; and you will also see, that the hoof is not a circle, as some suppose, but is straighter on the inside, than it is on the outside. D marks the sole, E shews the upper part of the bars, pared down nearly level with the sole. F shews that part of the bars, which must never be touched by a knife, G marks the frog, and is placed just over the situation of the navicular joint. I would advise you to examine this frog well, because it is, what every horse's frog should look like, plump, and full, and even, with a broad, shallow cleft, not split through at the back part; and, if you shoe your horses properly, and never pare the frog, it is, what their frogs will come to in time.

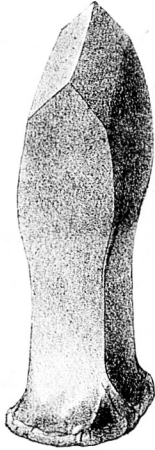




THE SHOE.

Before I talk about the shoe, I must settle names for the upper and under surfaces; because I fear, I should mislead those, who are not smiths, if I call the part, that rests upon the ground "the upper surface," as smiths do; I shall therefore call that part of the shoe "the ground surface"; and the part, which goes next the foot, I shall call "the foot surface"; and then there can be no mistake, as to which surface I mean.

In turning your store shoes "in the rough," you should leave them longer at the heels, than smiths generally do; we shall see the reason for it, when we come to "fitting the shoe": and you should make the web as wide at the heels, as it is at the toe, and of the same thickness throughout from the toe back to the heels. The "fuller" should be carried quite round the shoe to the heels, and the fullering iron should have



both sides alike. It is a far better tool, than the one-sided iron, in common use, which is generally so narrow and sharp, that it not only makes the groove too small for the heads of the nails to sink into, but it often splits the shoe. A narrow groove may look neater, than a wide one; but you will find a wide one much more useful.

CHOOSING A SHOE.

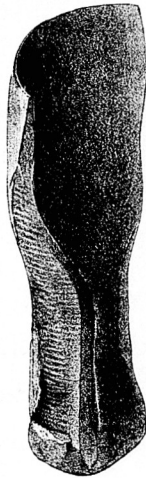
The first thing to look to in choosing a shoe is the kind of foot, you have to deal with. If the foot is a strong, good shaped one, it will be an easy matter to find a shoe for it; only take care, that the web is not too narrow, and that

the shoe is not too light. A light shoe is apt to bend, before it is half worn out; and the pain, caused by the pressure of the bent nails against the tender lining of the hoof, throws the horse down, and most likely breaks his knees. If the foot should be flat with a weak, brittle crust, you must still choose a stout shoe; for a horse with such a foot could not go at all upon a bent shoe; and the shoe must have a wide web, because the sole is sure to be thin, and will need plenty of cover, to protect it.

You must also look to the seating; for, if the foot is weak and flat, the shoe must be well seated out, to prevent its pressing upon and bruising the sole; but, if the foot is strong, and the sole arched, there need not be more seating, than will allow the point of a picker to pass freely round between the sole and the shoe; otherwise dirt and small stones will get in, and bruise the sole as much, as the shoe would do, if it pressed upon it.

CUTTING OFF THE HEELS.

Having fixed upon a shoe to your mind, begin by cutting off the heels: and you will find, a half round chisel a better tool for the purpose, than a



straight one, because you should never cut them off square; if you do, you will find it impossible to fit the shoe properly to the heels, and at the same time keep the web as wide at the heels, as it is at the toe; for one of the corners of the shoe will be sticking into the frog, while the other stands out beyond

the crust, but, if you cut them off, as shewn in Plate II., Fig. 1, you will have no difficulty in bringing every part of the shoe into its proper

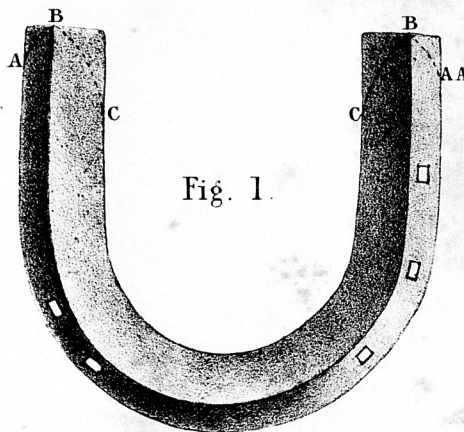


Fig. 1.

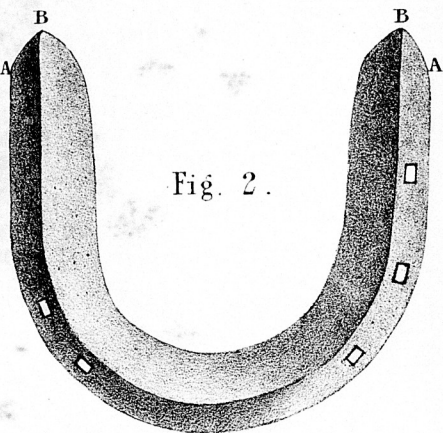


Fig. 2.

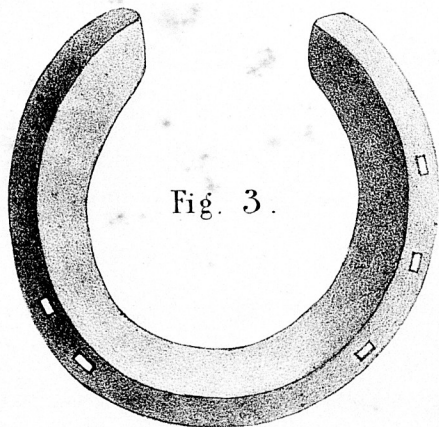
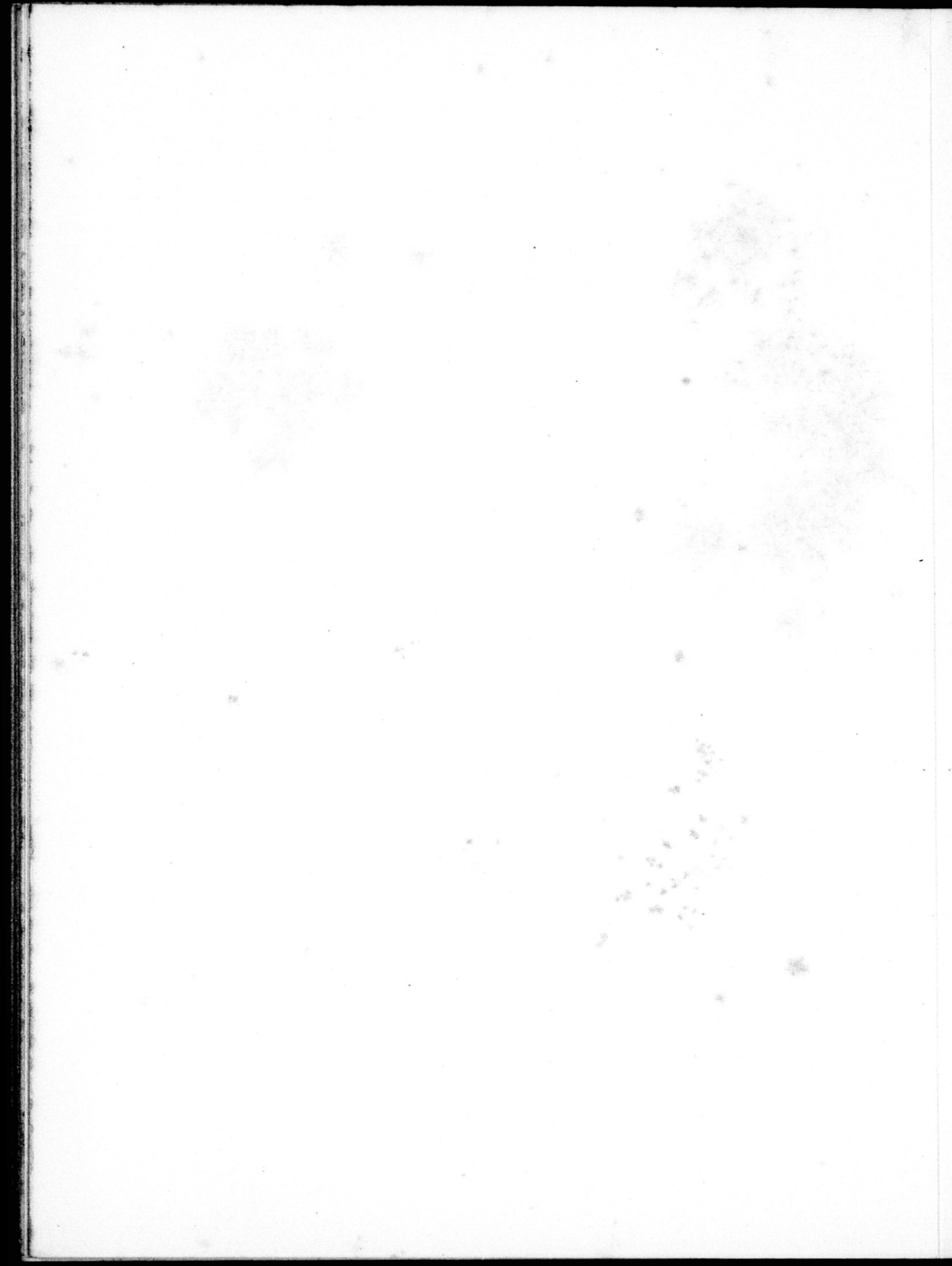


Fig. 3.



place upon the foot. Fig. 1, is a shoe turned in the rough; and the dotted lines shew the direction, in which the heels should be cut off. The side next the frog should be cut off from C to B, and the outer corner from A to B, and then the shoe will look like Fig. 2, which with a little hammering over the beak of the anvil will soon come like Fig. 3: you will see, that the points, marked A in Fig. 2, have disappeared in Fig. 3, and that the parts between A and B on each side have become a portion of the outer rim of the shoe; whereby the outer rim is lengthened, and the inner rim shortened; and there are no corners left to interfere with your following the sweep of the heels, and you are enabled to keep the web as wide at the heels, as it is at the toe. I have introduced Fig. 3 in this place, because it gave me the opportunity of explaining the reason for cutting off the heels, as I have directed; but at this stage of the business it is

a good plan always to leave the quarters and heels rather straight, and wide apart, until you have fitted the toe; because it is less trouble to bring them in, than it is to open them out, after the front has been fitted.

THE NAIL HOLES.

You must next open the nail holes; but be sure, that they have been stamped so, as to pass straight through the shoe, and come out in the flat part of the web, and not partly in the flat, and partly in the seating. It is a very bad plan to make them slant inwards, as most smiths do; for in driving a nail, they have first to pitch the point inwards, then turn it outwards, driving it all the time *with* the grain of the crust, and at last they bring it out high up in the thinnest part of the hoof, and have the weakest part of the nail for a clench. Now instead of all this if you make the holes straight through the shoe, you

have only to drive the nail straight, and it will go through the shoe, *across* the grain of the crust, and come out low down in the thickest part of the hoof, and give you a strong clench, made out of the shank of the nail, instead of a weak one made out of the point. The advantage of strait holing is, that you are sure never to prick the foot in driving a nail, and you get a firmer hold for the shoe : every body knows, that a short purchase *across* the line of the strain is stronger, than a *longer* one in the direction of the strain.

The soundness of the horse's foot as far, as shoeing is concerned, depends more upon the number of nails, and where they are placed, than upon any thing else ; for, if the shoe is ever so badly formed, and the nail holes are rightly placed, very little harm will happen to the foot beyond the loss of a shoe ; but, if the shoe is of the best possible shape, and fitted to the foot in the most perfect manner, unless the nail holes are

placed so, that the foot can expand, it must in the end become unsound.

The portion of hoof, that expands the most, is the inner quarter and heel; you must therefore leave those parts free from nails; and the way to do it is never to stamp more, than two holes on the inside of the shoe, one about an inch and a quarter from the *centre* of the toe, and the other about three quarters of an inch behind it. It is quite clear, that, if you nail both sides of a horse's hoof to an iron shoe, the hoof will be held fast, and cannot expand; and, when the horse's weight forces the bones of the foot down into the hoof, the tender lining of the hoof will be squeezed against the shanks of the nails, and cause pain to the horse at every step, he takes. The whole number of nail holes should never exceed five; three on the outside, and two on the inside. I have proved over and over again, that five nails will hold on a fore shoe at any kind of work, in

any country, and at any pace. If a shoe is properly fitted to the foot, and fastened by five nails, nothing but the smith's pincers can get it off.

Having cut off the heels, and opened the nail holes; you must next turn up a clip at the toe; every shoe should have one at the toe, it keeps the shoe steady, and prevents its being forced back; but you never should put one at the side, for if it is put on the inside, it prevents the hoof expanding, and on the outside it is worse, than useless, for the nails there are quite sufficient to keep the shoe from working across the foot, and the clip will interfere with the placing of one of the nails, and destroy more of the crust, than two nails would do.

FITTING THE SHOE.

You must never forget, that "fitting the shoe" means making the shoe fit the foot, and not making the foot fit the shoe, as I have often seen done.

It is a bad plan to try to fit the whole of the shoe at once ; it is much better, and saves a great deal of trouble, to fit the toe first, then the quarters, and lastly the heels : but, before you begin to fit the toe, take a look at the old shoe, and see, how much of the toe of it is worn away, because just so much of the new shoe should be turned up away from the ground out of the line of wear.

We all know, that horses go better and stumble less in old shoes, than they do in new ones, and the reason, why they do so, is, because they have worn away the toe, and no longer jar the foot by striking the toe against hard substances in the road. A new shoe, turned up at the toe, is the same thing to the horse, as an old one worn down, but with this great difference to his comfort, that he is easy upon the new one, from the time it is first put on, whereas he was never easy upon the old one, until he had worn the toe away.

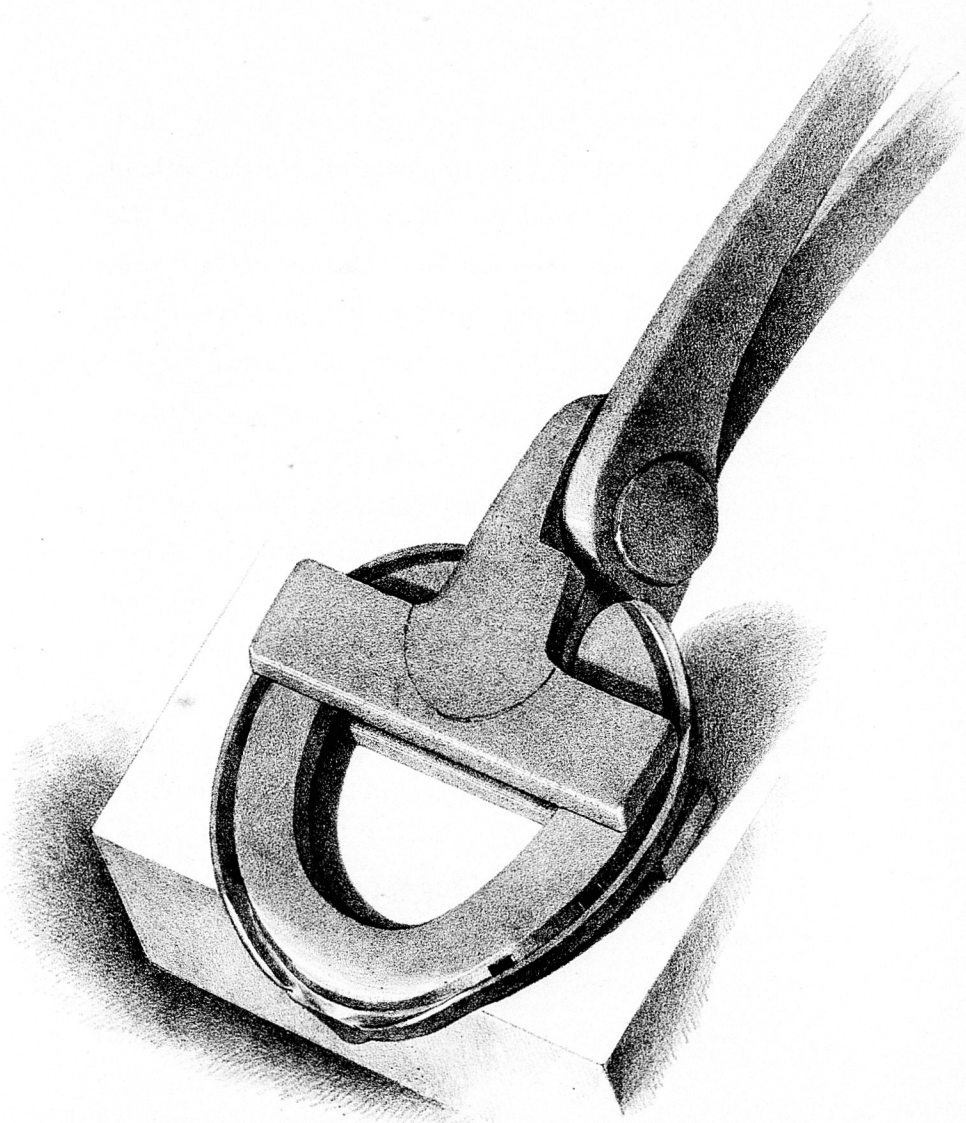
When a horse wears his shoe hard at the toe, it is the custom of most smiths to weld a lump of steel on to it, to make him longer in wearing it away; but this only increases the jar to his foot, for turning up the toe makes the shoe last quite as long, and saves the horse from a great deal of unnecessary suffering. A strong foot will bear the toe to be turned up a good deal; but a flat foot is always weak at the toe, and will not bear much, still the shoe should be turned up a little, so as to clear the ground; the horse will travel safer and better for it.

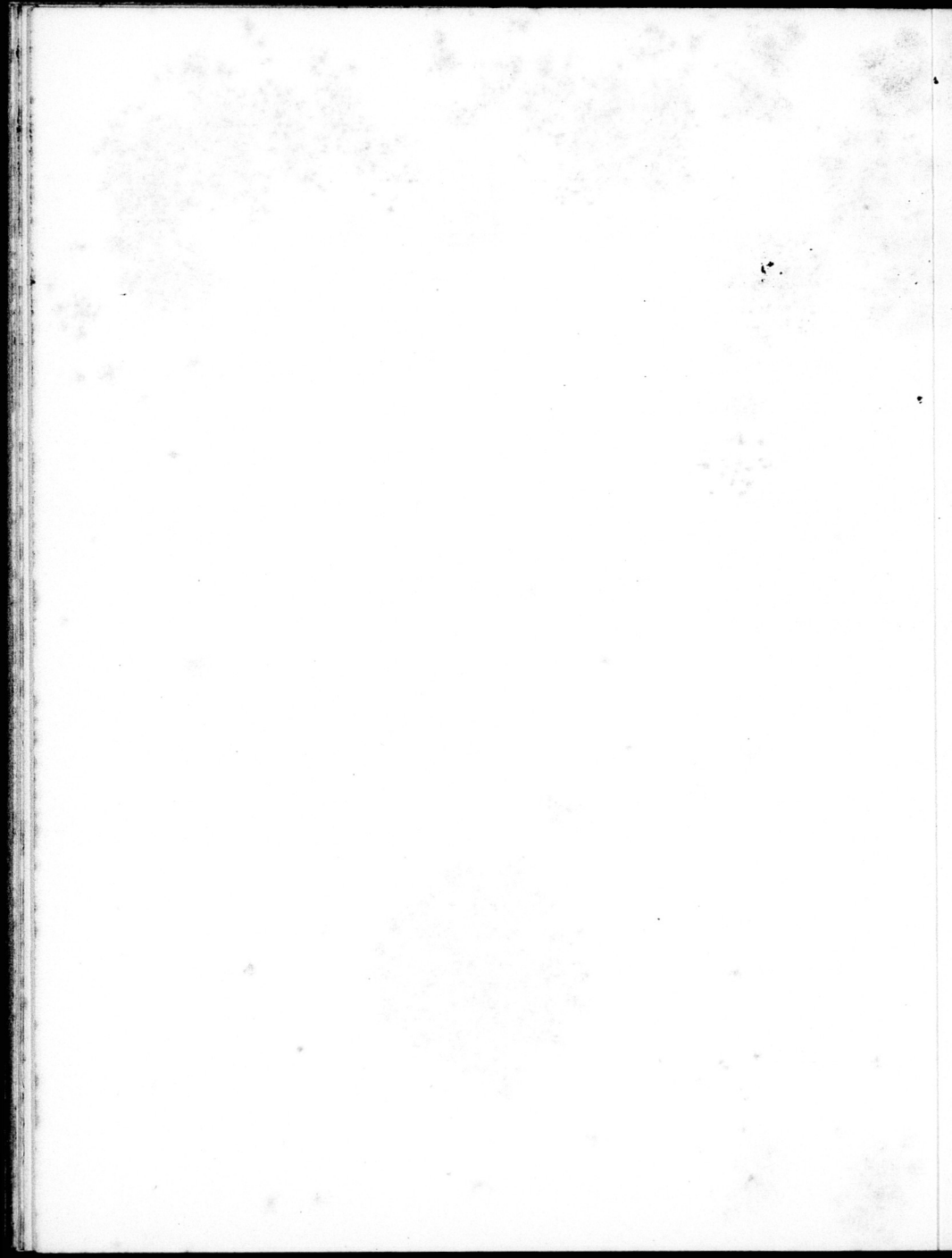
You can make a very handy tool for turning up the toe of a shoe by shutting a piece of iron, five inches long and one inch broad, crosswise on to each blade of a pair of smith's tongs; with this tool you will be able to grasp both limbs of the shoe at once, and not only turn up the toe over the end of the anvil, but restore the seating at the toe without bending the shoe, or putting

it out of shape, which you could not do, by holding one limb at a time in common tongs, without a great deal of trouble. Plate III shews you this tool in use with the ground surface of the shoe uppermost for turning up the toe, and you have only to reverse it, keeping the same grasp of the shoe, and the foot surface will come uppermost ready to have the seating made good.

I will now suppose, that you have shortened the toe of the hoof, rasped away the crust, to receive the turned up shoe, cut a notch for the clip, and turned up the toe of the shoe: you had better next sprung the heels, to prevent their burning the back part of the crust, while you are fitting the shoe to the fore part; but you must bring them down again, before you fit the quarters and heels, and never leave them sprung, when the shoe is nailed on.

You must now put the toe of the shoe in the fire, and make it hot enough to mark the uneven





portions of horn, which should be rasped away, until an even bed is left for the shoe to rest upon. You need not fear to burn the toe of a strong foot; it can do no harm; but a weak foot with a thin crust of course will not bear much burning, still the shoe should be made hot enough to scorch the horn, and shew, where it fails to fit close.

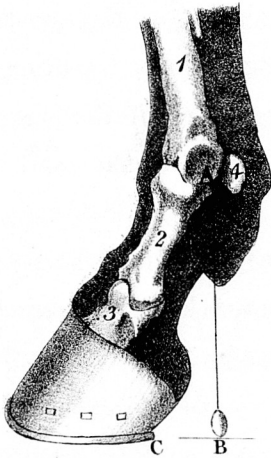
When the toe is once properly fitted, there will be very little trouble in fitting the quarters and heels; you have only to bring them in over the beak of the anvil, until the edge of the shoe ranges with the edge of the hoof back to the furthest point of the heel on each side, and continue the same sweep, until it nearly touches the frog: there must be none of the shoe left sticking out beyond the hoof either behind, or at the sides of the heels.

I know, that a great many smiths are very fond of, what are called "open heeled shoes," which means shoes with straight heels, wide apart, and

projecting beyond the hoof both behind, and at the sides, and the only reason, I have ever heard in favour of such shoes, is a very bad one, viz: that the horse requires more support at the heels, than he gets from the hoof; but you may depend upon it, that nature has made no mistake about it; and, if the horse really wanted more support, than he gets from the heels of the hoof, he would have had it: but I think, I shall prove to you, that this kind of shoe instead of being a benefit to the horse is a positive evil to him; it interferes with his action, and exposes his sole and frog to serious injury from stones in the road, and the projecting portions of the shoe become ledges, for stiff ground to cling to, and pull the shoe off. More shoes are lost through these mischievous projections at the heels, than from all other causes put together.

Let us see, how it is, that these projecting heels interfere with the horse's action. It is not necessary for this purpose to trouble you with the

anatomy of the foot, but merely to state, that all its parts are joined to each other in such a manner, as to form one great spring, and that the foot is joined to the leg by the pastern and coronet bones in a direction slanting forward, which brings the foot a little in advance of the leg, and places the heels in front of a line, dropped from the centre of the fetlock joint to the ground.



1. The shank or canon bone.
 2. The pastern bone.
 3. The coronet bone.
 4. The sessamoid bone.
- A. The point where the weight of the horse would fall upon the upper end of the pastern bone.
- B. The point where a line dropped from A would meet the ground.
- C. The heel of the hoof.

Now it is clear, that the weight of the horse will fall upon the upper end of this slanting pastern bone at every step, and the bone, having a joint at each end of it, will sink to the weight, thus thrown upon it, and break the force of the shock both to the leg and foot ; but, if the heels of the shoe are longer, than the heels of the hoof, the projecting pieces of iron will meet the ground further back, than the natural heels would have done, and will check the sinking of the pastern bone, just as an upright pastern does, by bringing the heels too much under the centre of the weight, which causes the horse to step short, and go stumpy.

If you wish to avoid these evils, and keep the horse's shoes on his feet, you must bring in the heels, and let the shoe strictly follow the form of the foot, whatever that form may be.

The part of the foot, that needs protection from injury more, than any other, is the " navicular joint,"

which rests upon the frog about an inch or an inch and a quarter behind its point, and the only way, to protect it, is to keep the web of the shoe as wide at the heels, as it is at the toe, and to bring in the heels, until they nearly touch the frog; by so doing, you lessen the opening of the shoe, and the web of one side or the other will strike upon the stones in the road, and save the frog from coming with full force upon them. But open heeled shoes leave the frog entirely exposed to very large stones, and cause many a bruise to the navicular joint, which lays the foundation of future, incurable lameness.

I have often seen shoes so wide at the heels, that I have placed my clenched hand within the opening of the shoe without touching either side of it; and where my fist could go, a stone, as large, could go.

Another great advantage of bringing in the heels and fitting the shoe close is the certainty, that the horse will not cast his shoe: you leave nothing for stiff ground to lay hold of, and, if you slightly

bevel the inside quarter and heel of the shoe from the foot downwards, no ground in the world can pull it off, for the foot, expanding to the weight of the horse, enlarges the hole, made by the shoe, and leaves more space for the shoe to come out of, than it made for itself to go in at; but, if the shoe projects beyond the hoof at any part, and more particularly at the heels, the foot cannot fill the hole, made by the shoe, and stiff clay will cling round the projection, and pull the shoe off.

Having so far finished the shoe; place it on the face of the anvil with the toe hanging over the side, and see, that the foot surface of the quarters and heels are quite level; then make it hot enough to scorch the hoof all round, and form a bed for itself; without this it would be next to impossible to ensure close fitting, for, after you have made the foot as level, as you can with the rasp, and the shoe as level, as you can on the anvil, the chances are very much against their fitting like two

planed boards, as they ought to do; and the quantity of horn to be thus removed is so small, as not to be worth thinking about. It is a mistake to suppose, that a hot shoe injures the hoof, it does nothing of the kind, and you cannot possibly fit a shoe properly without making it hot. I would not have you burn a shoe into its place on the foot, before you had taken care to make both the foot and the shoe as level, as you could, but, when you have done that, the small quantity of burning, that is necessary to make them come close together, can do no harm. I have said before, that a weak, thin crust will not bear as much heat, as a strong one, and that the shoe should be applied less hot to it; nevertheless it must be scorched, that you may be sure, the shoe fits properly.

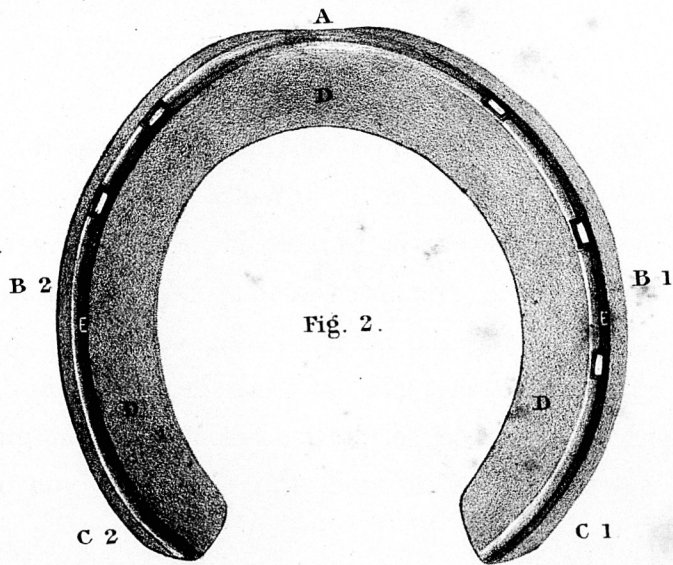
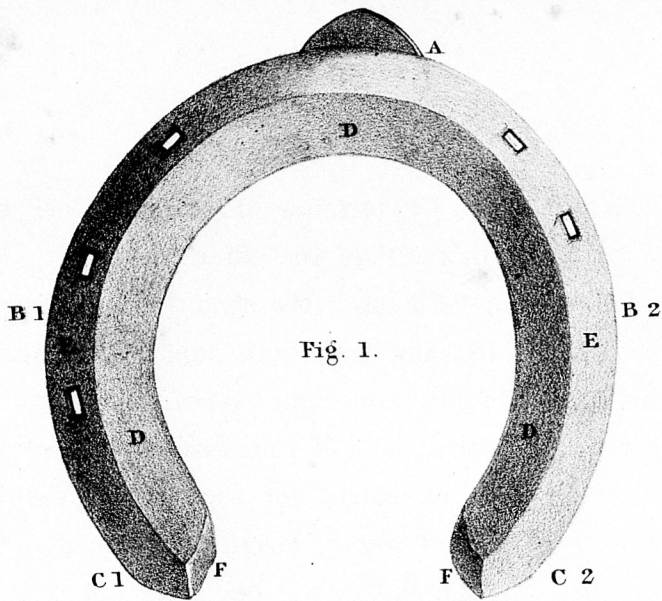
When you have cooled the shoe, you should "back hole" it, that is, make a free opening on the foot surface for the nails to pass through; but mind, that in doing so, you do not make the holes

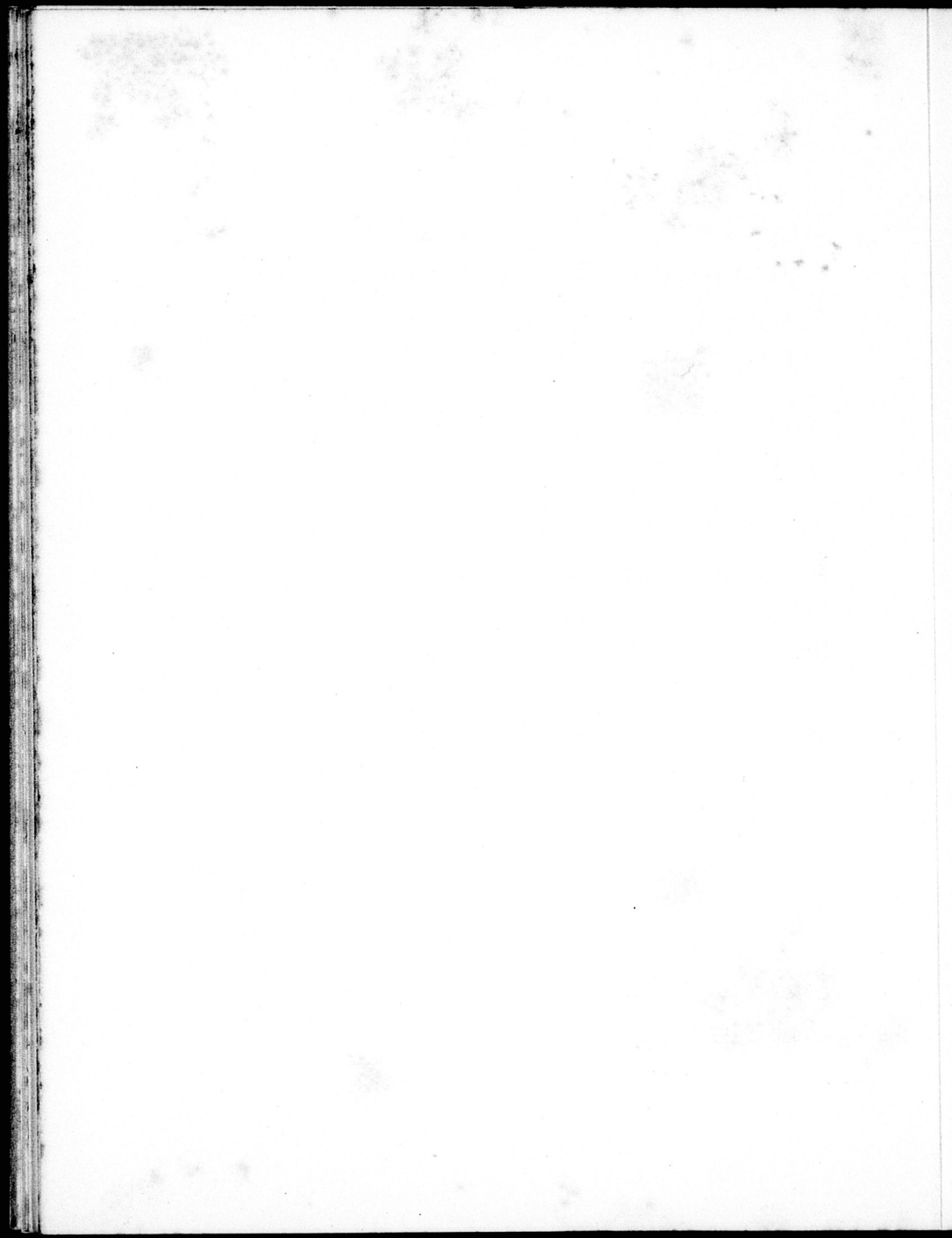
incline inwards by breaking down the inner edge of the holes more, than the outer edge.

Before you "file up" the shoe, hold it firmly in its place on the foot with both hands, and examine carefully, whether any light appears between the foot and the shoe, and if you should perceive any, alter the shoe at once; for the crust must bear upon the shoe all round, before you can say, that the shoe fits the foot, as it ought to do.

FILING UP THE SHOE.

Much time is often wasted in polishing the shoe with the file, before it is nailed on; but all, that is really needed, is to get rid of the burs about the nail holes, remove the sharp edges of the shoe, and round off the heels; taking care to apply the file hard to that part of both heels, which comes next to the frog so, as to slant it from the ground upward, and away from the frog; but you must





not narrow the *ground* surface of the web at the heels in doing so. Plate 4 represents both surfaces of a near fore shoe; Fig. 1 shews the foot surface, and Fig. 2 the ground surface.

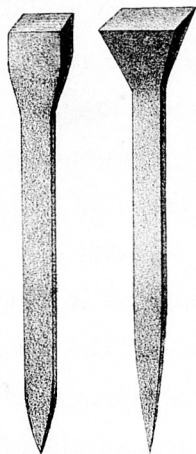
In Fig. 1 A is the clip at the toe, B 1 the outer quarter, B 2 the inner quarter, C 1 the outer heel, C 2 the inner heel, D the seating, E the flat surface for the crust to bear upon, F the heels, bevelled off, away from the frog.

In Fig. 2 A is the toe, turned up out of the line of wear, B 1 the outer, and B 2 the inner quarter, C 1 the outer, and C 2 the inner heel, D the ground surface of the web, as wide at the heels, as it is at the toe, E the fullering, carried all round the shoe.

NAILS.

I must say a few words about the nails, before we come to nailing on the shoe; because the nails, in

common use, are as badly formed, as they well can be; their short wedge-shaped heads, wide at the top and narrow at the bottom with shanks springing suddenly from the head without any shoulder and ending in a long, narrow point, are most unsafe to trust a shoe to. The head of such a nail can never perfectly fill the hole in the shoe, for the wide top gets tied either in the fullering, or the upper part of the hole, before the lower part has reached the bottom, and, when the head is about half worn away, the lower part is left loose in the hole, and the shoe comes off. Now the nails, I advise you to use, and you had better always make them for yourself, should have heads, which are straight sided at the upper part, and gradually die away into the shank at the lower part so, as to form a shoulder, which will block the opening, made in "back-holing" the shoe, and keep the shoe firmly in its place, until it is quite worn out.



If you compare the two nails, I have drawn, you will at once see, which promises the firmer hold.

Your nails should be made of the very best nail rods, you can get, and they should not be cooled too quickly, but be left spread about to cool by degrees ; the longer in reason they are cooling, the tougher they will become ; they should not however be allowed to lie in a heap to cool ; the mass keeps in the heat too long, and makes them almost as brittle, as if they had been cooled too suddenly.

NAILING ON THE SHOE.

If the nails are of a proper shape, the holes straight through the shoe, and the shoe fits the

foot, it requires very little skill, to nail it on ; only put the point of the nail in the middle of the hole, keep the nail upright, and drive it straight, it must come out in the right place, low down in the crust, without the possibility of wounding the sensitive parts of the foot. The shank of the nail will pass straight through the substance of the crust, and gain a good, firm hold of it, leaving you the strongest part, from which to form a clench. The clenches should be short and broad, and not thinned by rasping away any of their substance, but hammered at once into a notch, made in the hoof under each, and the rasp should never be allowed to go over them, after they have been hammered down ; for the sharp steel rasp is very apt to cut through the soft iron clench, just where it turns down, and leave the appearance of a clench, when in truth it has been cut off at the bend, and the loose end only remains, buried in the notch in the hoof. You will do good by rasping

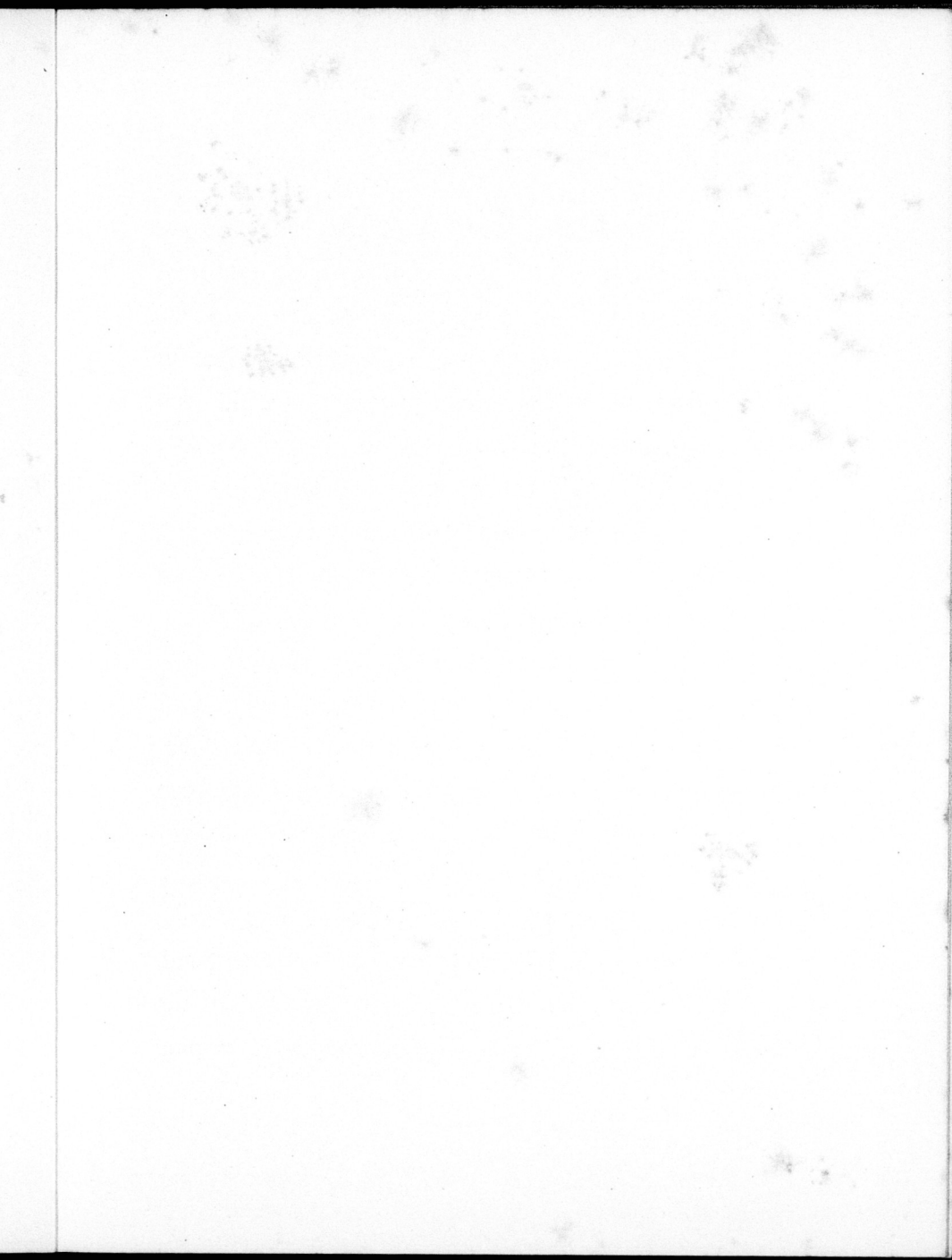


Fig 1.

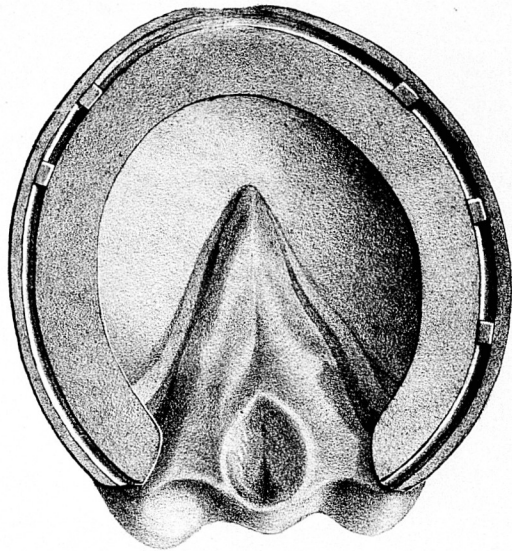
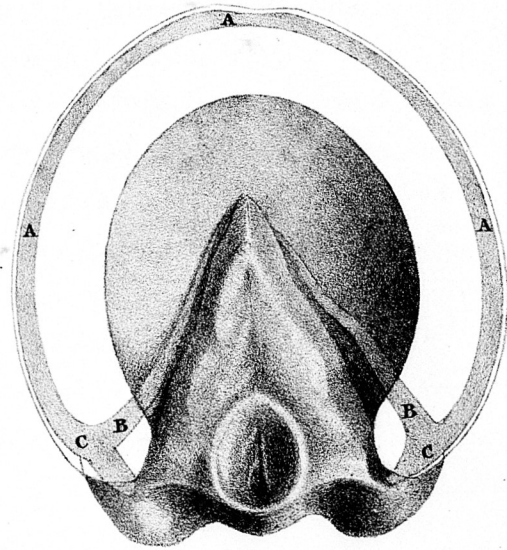


Fig 2.



below the clenches, because you will remove the horn, that has been destroyed by the former nails ; but on no account ever use the rasp *above* the clenches ; if you do, you will tear off the thin outer covering of the hoof, which is placed there for the purpose of retaining the natural moisture, and keeping the horn tough ; and, if you rasp it away, you will expose the horn to the air, and it will soon become dry and brittle, and make the hoof difficult to shoe. This thin covering of the hoof is like the shining covering of a man's finger nail ; and most people know from experience, how dry and brittle, and easily broken a finger nail becomes, when by any accident it loses that covering.

Plate V represents the ground surface of a near fore foot with the shoe nailed on by five nails. Fig. 1 shews the shoe in its place on the foot ; and Fig. 2 represents the same shoe, made transparent, so that the parts of the foot, that are covered by it, are seen through it. A shews the

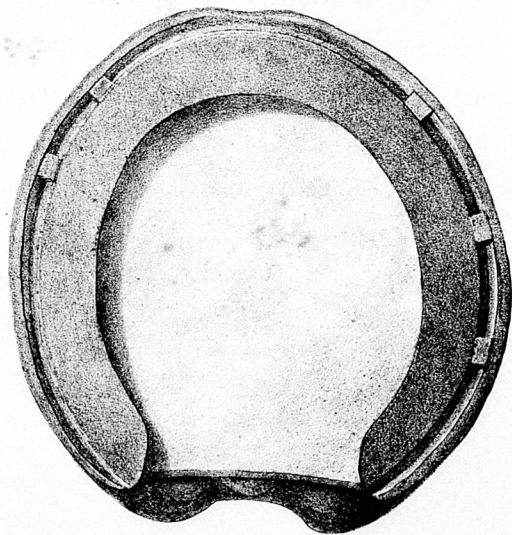
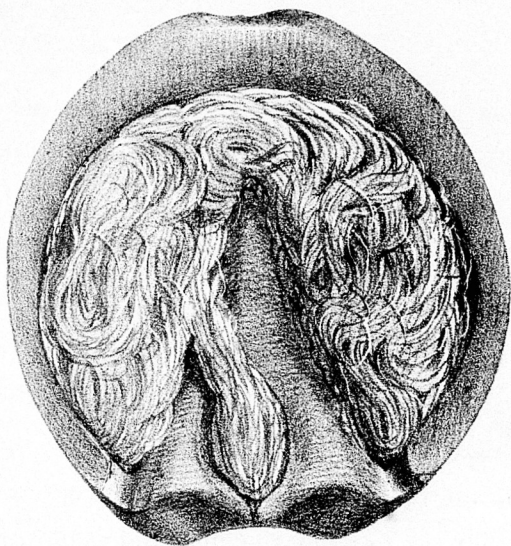
crust, B the bars, and C the heels of the hoof supported by the shoe. I have invariably found, that corns disappear altogether from a horse's foot, after it has been shod two or three times in this manner, and that they never return, while the same method of shoeing is continued.

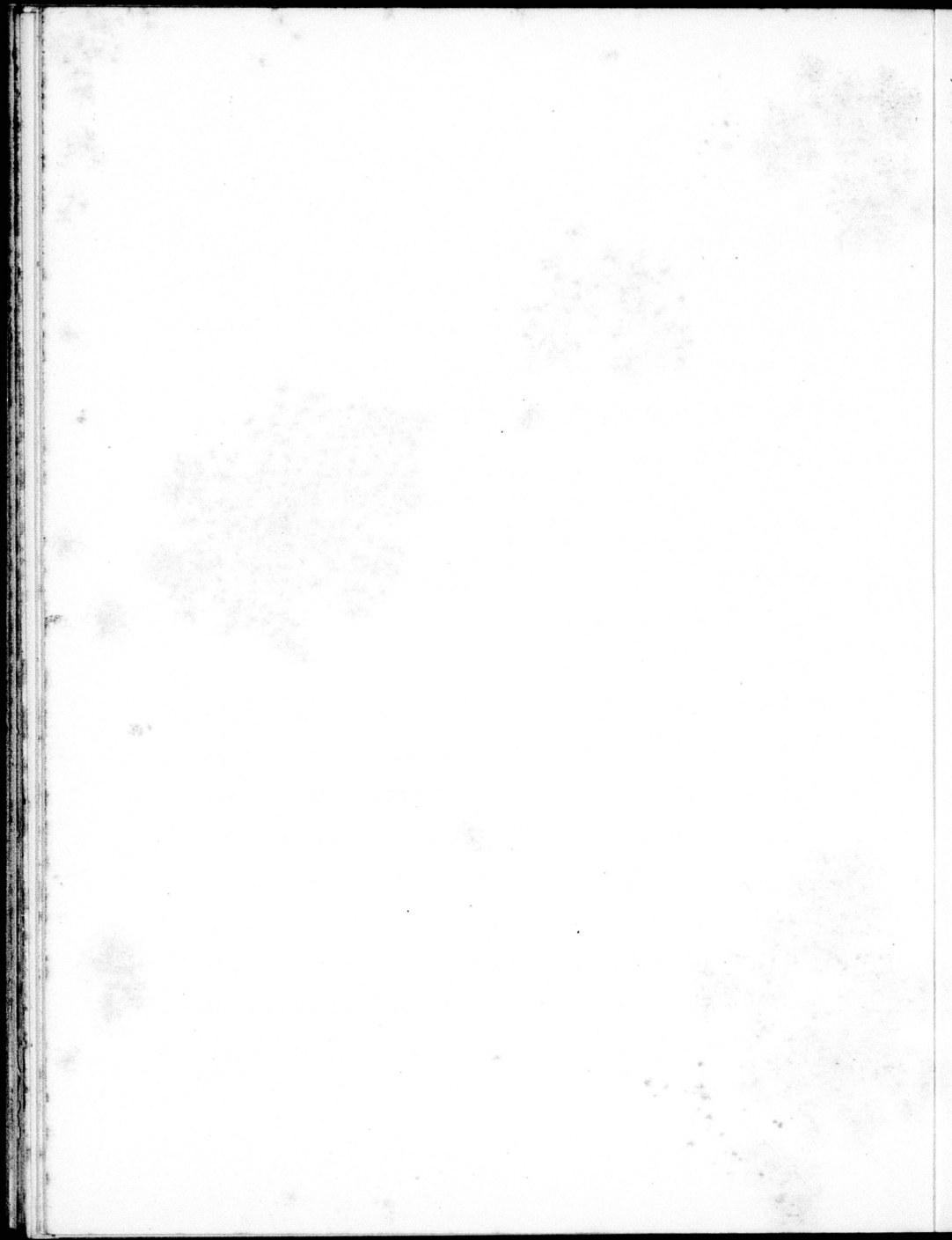
SHOEING WITH LEATHER.

Many tender footed horses travel best with a covering over the sole, and leather is commonly used for the purpose, but, I think, gutta percha, a quarter of an inch thick, or waterproof felt of the same thickness answer better, because they both resist wet, and do not alter their shape, as leather does. When leather is wetted, it becomes soft, and heavy, and yielding; but, in drying again, it contracts and hardens, causing a frequent change of pressure on the frog, which does not happen with either of the other two substances. I have used felt for the last three or four years, and prefer it very

much ; but, whichever covering you use, it must be put on in the same way ; so I will at once tell you how to do it. You must fit the shoe to the foot with as much care, as if nothing were to be put under it ; and, when it is “filed up,” and ready to be put on, lay it with the foot surface downward on the covering, whatever it may be, and mark the form of the shoe upon it with the end of the drawing knife ; then cut the piece out, put it in its place upon the shoe, and fix them both in the vice, which will hold them close together, while you carefully cut the edge of the covering, until it agrees with the edge of the shoe ; then turn them in the vice together so, as to bring the heels of the shoe uppermost, and cut out a piece slightly curved downward from heel to heel, that nothing may be left projecting for the ground to lay hold of. The next thing, to do, is to smear the whole of the under surface of the foot well with Barbadoes tar mixed with a little grease, but be sure, that you

never use gas tar instead of the other, for it dries up the horn, and makes it as hard, as flint, while Barbadoes tar keeps it moist and tough: then you must fill the hollow between the frog and the crust on both sides with oakum (which is better for the purpose, than tow) dipped in the tar, pressing it well into the hollow, until the mass rises above the level of the frog on each side, but never put any oakum upon the frog itself, excepting a piece in the cleft, to prevent the dirt and grit working in; very little is ever wanted on the sole in front of the frog. The use of the oakum is to protect the foot, but more especially the navicular joint, which lies above and across the frog, from being jarred by stones on a hard road; and the best way of doing this is to fill the space on each side of the frog with oakum in such a manner, that it shall share the pressure with the frog, and prevent the full force of the shock from falling on the navicular joint.





The usual mode of stopping a foot is to place a thick wad of tow over the whole surface of sole and frog together, making bad worse by adding to the projection of the frog, and causing it to meet the ground sooner, and receive the full force of the jar.

You must now nail on the shoe with five nails, exactly as you would do, if there was nothing under it ; and, if you have attended to the fitting, there will be no fear of the shoe shifting, or coming off.

Plate VI, Fig. 1 shews a foot stopped, ready for shoeing. The ends of the oakum, placed in the cleft of the frog, are collected together, and carried across the body of the frog, to be mixed with the oakum on one side, which keeps it in its place in the cleft, and prevents it from working out behind.

Fig. 2 shews a foot properly shod with leather, and also the shape, to which the leather should be cut, between the heels of the shoe.

THE HIND SHOE.

The hind shoe, like the fore shoe, should be brought in at the heels, and be made to follow the exact shape of the hoof; but, as the weight of the horse falls differently upon the hind feet, to what it does upon the fore feet, and as the rider often obliges the horse to stop suddenly and without warning, when he is least prepared to do so, it becomes necessary to guard against strains of the hock, and back sinews, by raising the heels of the shoe, but this should be done in such a manner, as will give both heels an even bearing upon the ground. Calkins may be, and, I believe, are useful to heavy draught horses, but they are objectionable for fast work; and turning down the outside heel alone should never be done; it throws the weight upon the inner quarter, which is the least able to bear it, and strains the fetlock joint. The plan, I have adopted for many years, is to have the last

inch and a half toward the heel forged thicker, than any other part of the shoe ; the heels are then made red hot, and the shoe is put in the vice with the hot heels projecting, which are beaten down with a hammer, until they are about an inch long, and then the sides are made even, and the foot and ground surfaces level on the anvil. I have found horses travel pleasanter, and receive less damage to their hocks, back sinews, and fetlock joints with these heels to their hind shoes, than they have with any others, that I have tried.

The toe of the hind shoe is exposed to great wear, and should be made stout, and thick, and rather pointed with a small clip in the middle, to prevent the shoe from being driven backward, and the back edge of the web should be rounded off, to guard against "over-reach." The toe should rest fairly on the ground, to enable the horse to get a good purchase for throwing his weight forward.

It is a bad plan to make the toe broad, and to place clips at the side of it; it is almost sure to cause the very evil, it was intended to prevent, by making the horse "forge," as it is called.

Many persons think, that "forging" is caused by the front of the toe of the hind shoe striking against the heel of the fore shoe, but that is a mistake; the sound is produced in this way; when the horse raises his fore foot from the ground, and does not instantly throw it forward, but dwells in the action, the hind foot, following quickly, is forced into the opening of the fore shoe, before the fore foot gets out of the way, and the corners of the broad toe, made still broader by the clips at the sides, are struck against the inner rim of the web of the fore shoe on each side just behind the quarters, and cause the unpleasant clicking sound. The only way to avoid this disagreeable noise is to make the hind shoe narrow at the toe, and rather pointed, with the clip in the centre, and then the

point of the toe, clip and all will enter the opening of the fore shoe, held up to receive it, and be stopped by the sole, or frog, before any part of the two shoes can come together, and the noise will cease.

I have said, that you should round off the back edge of the web at the toe, to prevent an "over-reach." It is commonly supposed, that this also is done by the *front* of the toe; whereas it is always done by the *back edge*, which, in a well worn shoe you will find, is as sharp, as a knife. Now if the horse in galloping does not lift his fore foot from the ground, and throw it forward in time to make way for the hind foot, the hind foot over-reaches it, and cuts a piece out of the soft parts above the heel, and produces a very troublesome wound.

The hind foot expands less, than the fore foot; still you should place the nail holes so, as not to confine the foot. I have found four nails on the

outside, and three on the inside sufficient to hold any hind shoe firmly to the foot. The holes on the inside should be stamped closer together, than those on the outside, and they should be placed forward toward the toe so, as to leave the inside quarter and heel free to expand. A small foot may be shod with three nails on each side; but no foot requires more than seven altogether.

Plate VII represents a near hind shoe. Fig. 1 shews a level surface for the foot to rest upon, the raised heels, and the thickened toe with a small clip in the centre.

Fig. 2 shews the toe rather pointed, the back edge rounded, and the nail holes properly placed.

CUTTING.

Horses strike their feet against the opposite leg in such a variety of ways both before, and behind, that it is impossible to form a shoe, that would suit every case of "cutting"; I therefore advise

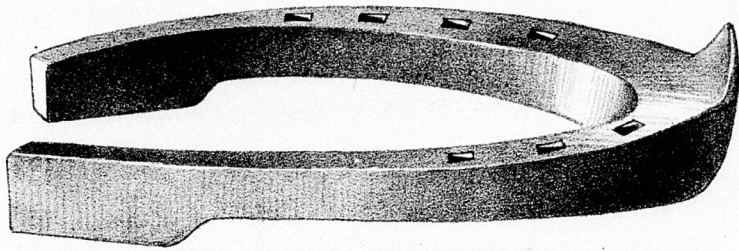


Fig. 1.

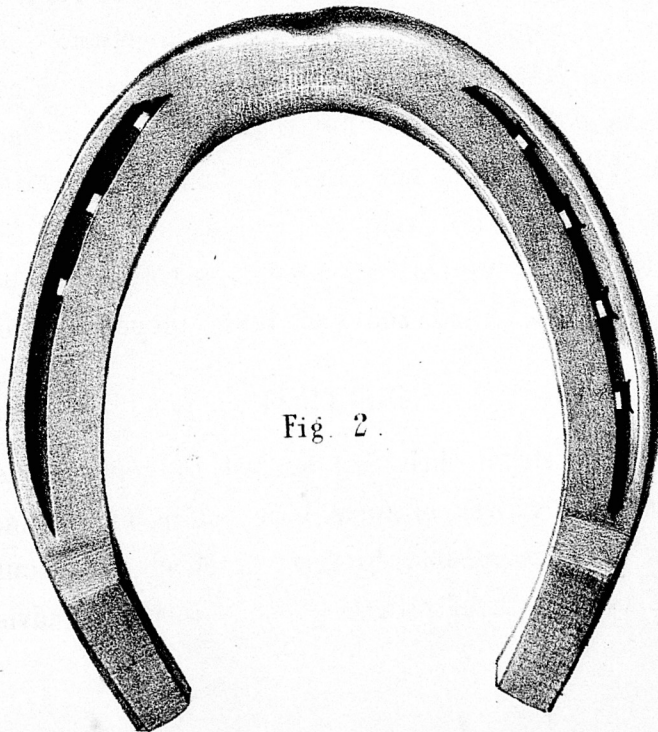
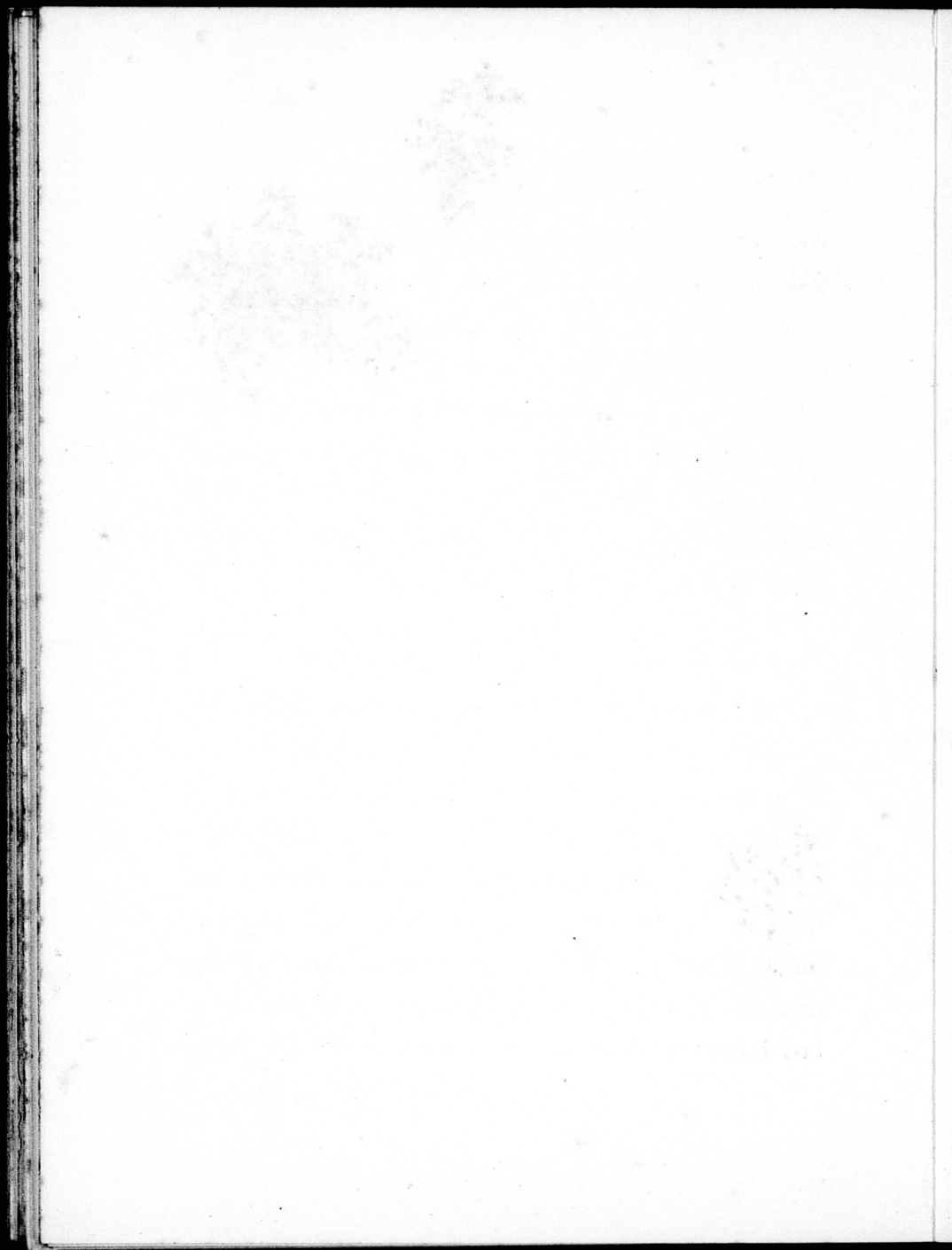


Fig. 2.



you, whether the horse cuts before, or behind, to fasten something, like a boot, covered thickly with wetted pipeclay, over the place, where he strikes the leg, and then trot him along the road ; he will soon pick off some of the pipeclay with the opposite foot, and shew you the exact part of the shoe, he strikes with, which you can easily alter in the new shoe ; and you will often be surprised to see, how small a matter causes the mischief.

REMOVING.

The time, at which a horse's shoes should be removed, must depend very much upon circumstances. If a horse wears his shoes out in less, than a month, they had better not be removed ; and horses with thin, weak horn, which grows slowly, are likewise better left alone between each shoeing, unless their shoes last six or seven weeks, in which case they should be removed once within the time : but horses with strong feet, and plenty of horn,

that wear their shoes a full month, should have them removed at the end of the first fortnight; and when horses are doing so little work, or wear their shoes so lightly, that they last two months, they should be removed every fortnight, and at the second removal the shoes should be put in the fire, and refitted, or the feet will out-grow the shoes; as the horn grows much quicker, when a horse is idle, than it does, when he is in full work.

Having now gone carefully through all the circumstances, necessary to good shoeing, and stated the reasons, why certain things should *always* be done, and certain other things *never* done, I will repeat shortly the few things, which *are to be done*, in the order in which they occur; and you will find, that they are really very few, when separated from the reasons and explanations.

Raise the clenches with the buffer.

Have only one foot bare at a time.

Pare out the foot ; but leave the frog alone.

Cut off the heels of the shoe, as I have directed.

Open the nail holes straight through the shoe.

Form a clip at the toe, and turn up the toe of the shoe.

Fit the toe, then the quarters, and lastly the heels.

Heat the shoe, and apply it to the foot, to see, that it fits properly.

Cool the shoe, " back hole " it, and file it up.

Nail it on with five nails, coming out low in the crust.

Hammer down the clenches without rasping them, and only rasp the hoof *below* them.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

I have said, that five nails are sufficient to hold on a fore shoe at any kind of work, in any country, and at any pace ; and I again advise you to employ that number, placing three on the outside

of the shoe, and two on the inside, because, I know from experience, that with the very commonest care on the part of the smith they will hold a shoe through any difficulty of ground, or pace; but I am prepared to prove, that they are *more*, than sufficient for the purpose; and to shew, that many smiths *can*, and *do* keep on a fore shoe by *three* nails only; *two* placed on the outside, and *one* on the inside.

It is very nearly seven years, since I have had more, than three nails in the fore shoe of any one of my six horses; and they are all shod with thick felt and stopping; some of them do not require the felt, but, having begun it as an experiment some years ago, and finding no inconvenience from it, I have gone on with it. In a former work I published several cases of horses having done a variety of work with only three nails in each fore shoe; and I may now add another, which happened to a horse of my own last year, and which ought

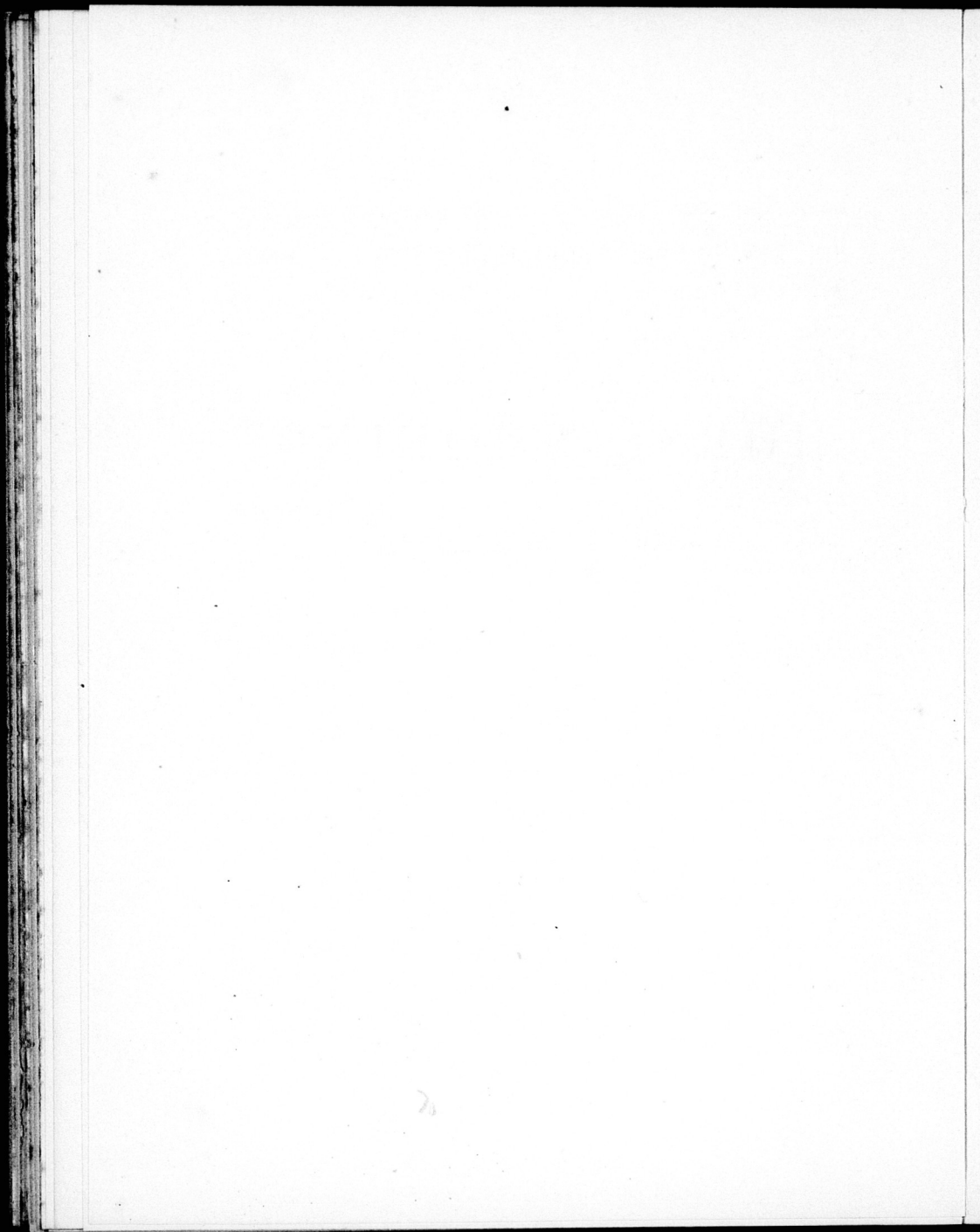
to set the question at rest, supposing any doubt still to exist, as to the capability of three nails to hold a shoe. The horse, I allude to, is twenty-eight years old ; he is a high stepper, and impetuous in company, and has large flat feet, which grow horn very sparingly, so that it is quite necessary to protect his feet by a stout shoe with felt and stopping under it. He happens to be a particularly nice lady's horse, for one who has plenty of nerve, and can ride well, and I lent him to join in a large riding party of ladies and gentlemen, on a visit at a friend's house, who took long daily rides in a very hilly district, regardless of pace, over commons covered with heath, furze, and stones, through rough stony lanes, and in every variety of ground ; and although his shoes had been on ten days, when I sent him away, he returned to me at the end of five weeks with his shoes worn out certainly, but firm on his feet, and the clenches all close. I mention this last

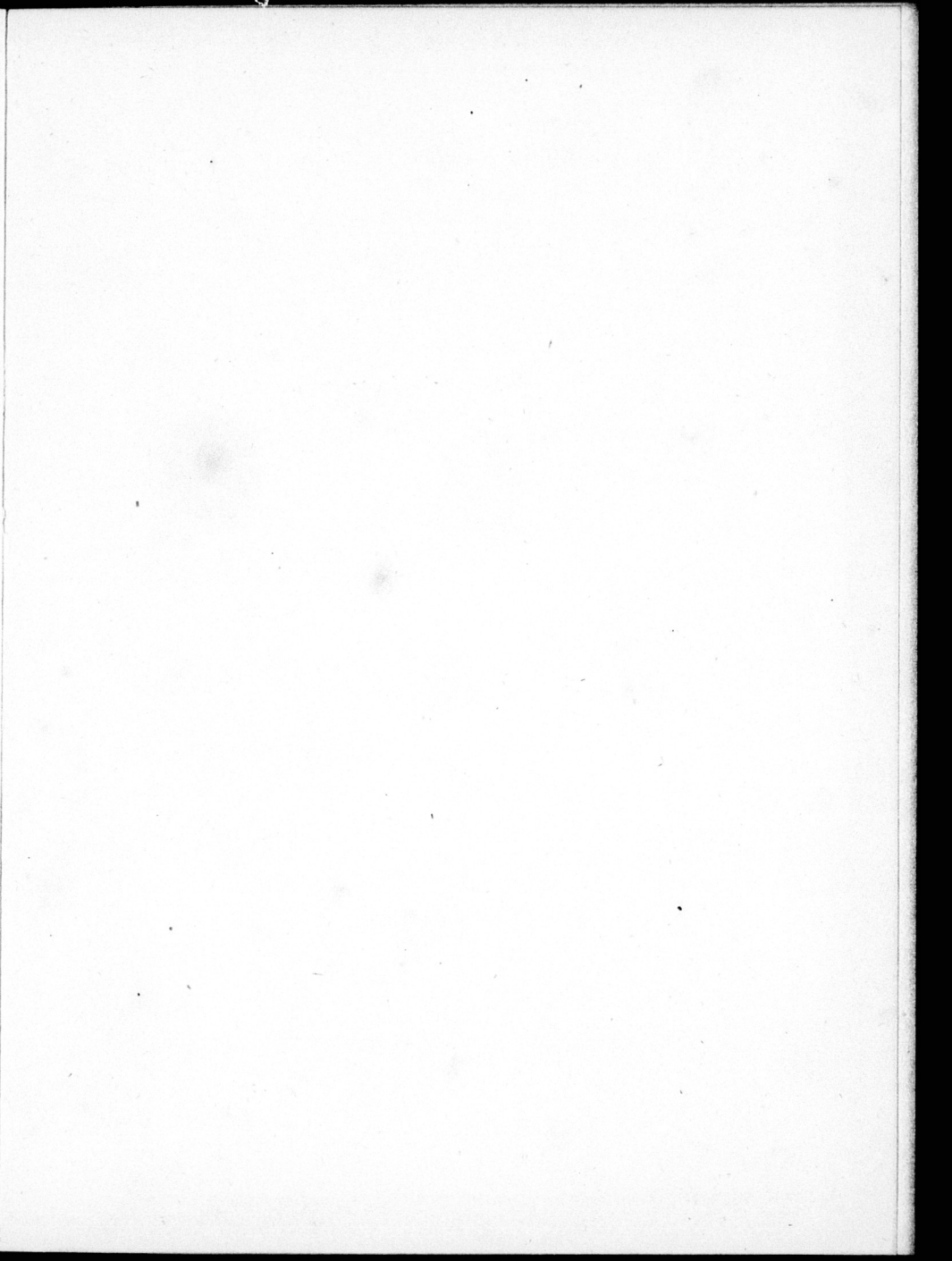
circumstance, because it is a proof, that his shoes had been put on with proper care, for whenever you find a clench rise, you may be certain, that you have done something wrong ; either the crust did not bear upon the shoe all round, or the nail holes did not pass straight through the shoe, or the heads of the nails did not fill the bottom of the holes ; any one of these things may cause a clench to rise ; and a risen clench is a sure sign of careless shoeing.

I may mention, as further proof of the sufficiency of three nails to keep on a shoe, that Colonel Key, who commands the 15th Hussars, at present stationed at Exeter, has four horses shod with three nails only in each fore shoe. Finding how my horses were shod, he was induced to try the plan upon his hack, and felt so satisfied with the result, that he immediately had the others similarly shod, and continues to do so ; and an officer in the Prussian Hussars, who did me the honor to translate my

book upon the Horse's Foot into German, and publish it at his own expense at Frankfort sur Maine, writes me, that *his* horses also are shod with three nails only in each fore shoe, and that he finds no difficulty whatever in keeping their shoes on.

I think, I may consider, that I have now proved beyond dispute, that a fore shoe *can* be kept on by *three* nails ; therefore *he* must be a sorry bungler indeed, who cannot manage it with *five*.





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