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Nec araneorum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se filagignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.

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Agricultural Journal.

From the Veterinarian for Nov.

On Dropping after Calving.—As the disorder of the cow designated puerperal fever, or dropping after calving, is still an unsettled subject as to its true nature; I trust any facts that may be gathered relative to the matter, although barren in themselves in point of elucidation, will not do any mischief by farther unsettling the affair. I do not presume any attempt at exposition; I only present to you a few simple observations.

First, the total absence of the ordinary characteristics of fever in most cases, through every stage of the disorder.

Secondly, the very sudden development of the disease in almost every case that occurs.

Thirdly, the equally sudden recovery of the greater number of those who were diseased.

The earliest symptoms that I have noticed are tremor of the extremities, especially the hinder ones, which rapidly increases to staggering, and ends in total paralysis—the secretions, especially that of milk, diminished in proportion as the disease progresses—the patient, when first down, perhaps supporting herself on her brisket, with her head turned to her flank and making a piteous moan at almost every expiration. If this latter stage of the complaint is not quickly remedied, she soon becomes unable to maintain this position, and lies prostrate on her side; the eyes become amaurotic—she is quite insensible to any and every object—in fact, she is universally palsied. The breathing becomes unnaturally slow, and in some instances stertorous, and in this condition death usually winds up the affair.

Now, Sir, with regard to treatment. Viewing it as an inflammatory or febrile disorder, I have had recourse to the ordinary antiphlogistic remedies, but where I have relied on these remedies I have invariably been disappointed. The depletive plan, with me, has proved a total failure.

This being the case, I have for many years abandoned it, and have adopted the opposite, or stimulant plan. I do, however, occasionally bleed if I am called in the early stage, but never at an advanced period.

I also take care to administer some purgative early in my attendance, but place no reliance on it without a stimulant being added. I think, as a purgative, croton and aloes have the preference in this case with me, and, as a stimulant, large doses of spt. nit. eth., with about two ounces of tinct. opii. A variety of other stimulants may, however, be used either separately or combined, with equally beneficial results; I also usually rub a stimulating embrocation well into the back and loins, and apply a sheep skin over all. I think a turpentine clyster also of much service. Many patients under this plan of treatment will be on their legs and feeding, as if nothing had happened, in from twelve to twenty-four hours from the administration of the first dose. This

is a fact worthy of remark, and every country practitioner, I think, will remember that no farther doubt needs be entertained as to their safety when once they can stand.

I scarcely dare venture any remarks as to its nature, and the post-mortem examinations have not been attended with uniform results; but that it is a nervous disorder I think most practitioners will admit. It also seems peculiar to the cow, and likewise to the period of parturition.

It appears to me to depend on a morbid impression made on the nervous fibrillæ of the uterus and adjacent parts, which is communicated to the spinal cord and brain, the consequence of which in a suspension or total destruction of nervous function, and this independent of inflammatory action, and in its nature quite as inexplicable as tetanus and some other nervous disorders. If congestion of the brain and spinal marrow exist, may not that be regarded as a consequence quite as much as a cause? If this view of the case is reasonable, it will not be difficult to understand why stimulants effect a cure when other remedies fail. If a morbid impression is the cause, a counter impression is indicated, and necessary for the restoration of the nervous function, and this appears to be best effected by the remedies which pass under the class of stimulants. Of course, in this case, as in all others, some modifications under certain circumstances will be necessary, and which can alone be determined by the practitioner in attendance.

Rheumatism.—Is very common in this country, especially during the wet seasons, in those places where the variation in the temperature is great, as in the Cedid districts. It frequently attacks in the night, and it is by no means unfrequent that a horse is in perfect health in the evening, and is taken from his picket in the morning with scarcely a limb to stand on. Sometimes it attacks one limb, and sometimes the whole are affected. The cure is similar to the attack; for sometimes one leg will suddenly recover, or it will shift from one leg to the other.

Although it is more frequent in this country, I did not think it is so difficult to remove as in Europe. I have generally met with the greatest success from bleeding, hot fomentations and warm clothing. If this should not succeed, and the animal is in high condition, the bleeding may be repeated. A rowel or seton may be opened contiguous to the affected part, and the part itself may be blistered. These last remedies are scarcely ever required in this country, as the disease usually disappears under the first mode recommended.

Spavins and Splints.—There is a small bone attached by ligaments to each side of the upper part of the common bones forming the lower parts of the hock and knee joints. These small bones are termed the metatarsal bones in the hocks, and metacarpal in the knees. One of

their chief properties is to receive part of the weight of the animal when in action; and their respective ligaments, elongating each time the weight of the animal descends, acts as a natural spring to prevent concussion; for there is no animal that moves with so much velocity and so little concussion as the horse: this proceeds, in a great measure, from the number of natural springs which he possesses in the knees, hocks, fetlocks, and feet.

If the horse is worked too young or too much, or if in shoeing the foot is pared away more on the inside than the outside quarter, the weight of the animal descends more on the inside of the leg than nature designed, and inflammation of the ligaments is effected, by which bony matter is secreted, and the ligament loses its pliability and becomes hard and bony. Excrescences of the same will also increase the bulk and injure the action of the joint.

If it is discovered in its earliest stage, it may generally be reduced by that treatment which will increase the action of the absorbent system. With this intent, four quarts of blood may be taken to relieve the pain and inflammation, and one of the following bolusses may be given every morning:—

Take of Venice turpentine	4 oz.
Yellow resin	ditto
Squills, powdered	1-2 oz.
Oil of mint or anised	ditto.

Mix and divide into twelve bolusses.

A blister of the following should be rubbed over the part afflicted:—Take of Spanish flies powder 1-2 oz. Corrosive sublimate 1-2 dr. Spirits of turpentine 4 oz.

Mix for use.

The corrosive sublimate should be previously dissolved in a table spoonful of spirits of wine, strong brandy, or arrack.

This blister should be thoroughly rubbed in, after which it may be tied up with a bandage. After six or seven days it should be repeated, and, when the effects of the second blister are quite removed, frictions twice a-day of strong mercurial ointment, for a few days, should succeed. The blister may increase the swelling, but it will abate with the effect of the blister.

If the complaint yet resists, I would recommend firing round the parts affected, which will tighten the skin and act as a kind of natural bandage. At the Veterinary College, the firing is recommended previous to blistering; but I should imagine this mode of hardening the skin would render the blisters and subsequent mercurial frictions less previous to the parts, independent of the unsound appearance which firing produces, and which we would evade if possible.

Gypsum.—This substance, called also Plaster of Paris, or plaster, is one of the many salts of lime, and is composed, when pure, of lime 33, sulphuric acid, 44, and water 21, so that it is properly a sulphate of lime. Plaster may be considered as one of the most valuable of what are called the stimulating manures, and its uses, al-

ready extensive, is annually rapidly increasing. Fortunately, the supply of this valuable substance is quite abundant in the United States, particularly in the central and western countries of New York, where, in connexion with clover, it forms the great support of the staple crop, wheat and gives an astonishing fertility to the soil. The modus operandi of plaster or the manner in which it produces its effects, have been the subject of much speculation, and various theories have been proposed, most of which the advance of science has shown to be untenable. Some have supposed that its actions was to be attributed to the force with which it absorbed and retained water for the use of plants. Others have contended, that it acts by favoring the decomposition of animal and vegetable matters; but Davy showed that the mixture of plaster with these substances does facilitate decomposition. Chaptal supposed that its value arises from its stimulating properties, which are prevented from being destructive, like some of the other salts of lime, by the slowness with which it is dissolved in water. He says, "the solubility of plaster in water, appears to be of precisely the degrees most beneficial to plants; 300 parts of water will dissolve only one of plaster. Its actions is, therefore, constant and uniform without being hurtful. The organs of plants are excited by it without being irritated or corroded, as they are by these salts which, being more soluble in water, and carried more abundantly into plants. Another theory has been lately proposed by Professor Liebig, which is certainly very ingenious, and explains the action of plaster in connexion with the presence of nitrogen in plants, more satisfactorily than any yet advanced. Professor Liebig was the first to discover that ammonia was a constant constituent in the atmosphere, and on this fact his theory is based. We quote from *Silliman's Journal*: "this fertility arises exclusively from the fact, that the sulphate of lime fixes the ammonia dissolved in the atmosphere; which would otherwise be volutilized with the water as it evaporated. The carbonate of ammonia contained in rain water, is decomposed in gypsum, in precisely the same manner as in the manufacture of salt ammonia. Soluble sulphate of ammonia, and carbonate of lime formed, and this salt of ammonia possessing no volatility, is consequently retained for the use of all plants."

Gypsum is scattered by the hand at the rate of two or three bushels per acre, and its effects on the grass are perceptible for three or four years. It is best strewn when the leaves are wet with a slight rain of heavy dew, and after the leaves of the plants begin to cover the ground. Some have objected to the use of plaster, that it produced greater crops at first, but that it speedily exhausted the land and impoverished it.—Those who make this objection probably took everything from the land, and returned nothing to it, relying on the plaster wholly to keep up the fertility, a course manifestly erroneous.