

Farmers' Department

BLACK POX.—This is a new disease in the western country. The distinguished Governor Vance, of Ohio, says no remedy has yet been discovered for it. It is very fatal, producing death in a few hours. It is usually perceived in the fore-leg or foot; the animal becomes almost unable to move; the flesh of the leg turns black, and mortification sets in. In the neighborhood of Plainfield, Illinois, one farmer lost a fifth of his stock by this disease during the past year. A correspondent of that excellent periodical, the Prairie Farmer, published at Chicago, gives the following remedy, which it may be well to try; especially as the disease will generally prove fatal, if left to itself.

Last May, says the writer, I had a valuable yearling heifer attacked by the following symptoms when found in the morning she was lying down, broadside; where she had apparently lain through the night, or longer, and was nearly helpless. One shoulder was considerably swollen, as far down as the knee-joint. With the assistance of a neighbor, I raised her, and with considerable urging, induced her to walk slowly a short distance. She scarcely bore any weight on the affected limb, and when she moved it, it produced a slight crackling noise, similar to that produced by wringing one's fingers. She refused food, but took a little salt. There were some sweat-drops on the end of the nose or muzzle. I am thus particular in describing the symptoms, because I don't know certainly what the disorder was. Several farmers saw her, and said it was the black-leg, and thought she would die. Others thought she had been bitten by a rattlesnake; and others again, that the swelling was caused by the animal having been hooked by another. But no wound was perceptible. Well, we took a sharp knife, and cut a gash through the skin from the knee-joint upward, about six inches. Under the skin there were numerous bubbles of air. We bathed the limb in strong brine, and thrust some salt into the wound. Sometimes we bathed it with hot soap and water. The cut discharged continually a thin yellow substance. She ate nothing for several days, except a little salt, and appeared very dull. After a week or so, however, she began to recover her appetite, eating a little grass, and considerable dry earth, from a small patch near by which had been lately ploughed. She continued to improve slowly, and when nearly well, the leg began to swell below the knee; but this was slight in comparison to the first attack, and finally disappeared of itself. The animal soon improved in flesh, and grew finely through the remainder of the summer.

Whether the treatment above described was of any service is more than I know. But in the absence of better information, I shall certainly pursue a like course under similar circumstances.

THE BLAIN.—This is a frequent disease. The animal appears dull and low spirited. Its eyes red, with tears in them. The eyes swell a little. The principal symptom, however, is blisters under the tongue, or at the back part of the mouth; the pulse is quicker than usual, and the bowels are confined. The flanks heave a little, usually. If the beast has had the disease some time, the saliva flows freely, often mixed with bloody, offensive matter. The animal becomes much reduced in flesh and strength; and is in danger of dying from the enlargement on the tongue.

CURE.—The first thing to be done, is to cut the bladders under and along the side of the tongue. This will relieve the beast materially. If there is much fever, take four or five quarts of blood, and give the following purge: Epsom salts, one pound. Powdered caraway seeds, half an ounce. Dissolved in a quart of warm gruel. If the fever continues pretty severe, the above medicine may be given once or twice in twenty-four hours, till it subsides. The mouth should be washed with equal parts of myrrh and water; or a decoction of green tea, so as to heal the ulcers. The gruel should be placed near to the animal, if the mouth is so sore that it cannot eat hay, and plenty of gruel administered by force. Sometimes the animal will become very weak, and lose its appetite. If this be the case, when the fever is gone, give it the following: Gentian root, two drachms. Tincture of iron, one drachm. Powdered ginger, one drachm. In a pint of gruel. This should be given twice a day, until the appetite returns and the beast improves. Be careful that none of the matter discharged from the mouth comes in contact with any sore place, as it may cause ulcers. If ulcers do appear, they may be cured by the application of lunar caustic.

COLD, COUGH AND CATARRH.—SYMPTOMS.—The animal is dull and stupid. Eyes weep; muzzle dry; hair sticks up; appetite bad; milk fails. Pulse sixty to ninety. Bowels costive. Treatment.—Take from six quarts to blood. Then a purgative as follows: Epsom salts, one pound. Powdered caraway seed, half an ounce; dissolved in a quart of warm gruel. Afterward give the following, night and morning.

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