

SYMPTOMS.—The symptoms of blackleg are so characteristic that the disease is usually easy to recognise. These symptoms may be classified as (a) general and (b) local.

(a) *General Symptoms.*—The principal general symptoms evinced by an animal suffering from blackleg are as follows: High fever, suspension of rumination, lameness, dullness and depression accompanied by entire loss of appetite. Animal generally segregates itself and lies down; if remaining standing, shows a disinclination to move. Drinks frequently at short intervals, if water convenient, but not much at a time. The mucous membranes (skin lining nostrils, mouth, etc.) are at first a deep dark red and congested but later change in the course of from twelve to eighteen hours, to a dull, dirty gray or purplish colour.

(b) *Local Symptoms.*—These are characteristic and are the principal means of diagnosis. The most important feature is the development of a tumour or swelling under the skin which generally appears on the hind quarter, but is also found on the neck, shoulder or foreleg, in fact any portion of the body except below the knee and hock joints, and on the tail.

The swelling is at first small, warm and extremely tender but increases rapidly in size and may, in a few hours cover a large portion of the body. This swelling is filled with gas which is evolved by the germs in the process of multiplication. Upon being pressed it gives out a crackling sound (crepitates) and upon being tapped (percussion) a clear resonant note results.

The tumour, in the more advanced stages, is cool to the touch and insensitive in the centre. The skin over it is dry and parchment like. These tumours or swellings usually appear before the general symptoms are noticeable. As the swelling increases in size the general symptoms become more intense. The temperature may reach 107 degrees Fahr. and the respirations may exceed 140 per minute.

In the later stages of the disease the animal is unable to rise, the extremities become cold and some little time before death the temperature falls and may become subnormal. There is trembling of the muscles which, as death approaches, increases in violence.

With rare exceptions, the disease terminates fatally in from twelve to thirty-six hours after the first appearance of the symptoms. Animals have been known to recover, but their condition is such as to render them practically valueless.

The carcass of an animal which has died from blackleg soon becomes distended with gas. In the neighbourhood of the swelling the muscles are swollen and spongy, of a dark brown colour and seemingly pitted with still darker spots and short stripes. They have lost their elasticity and are easily torn. Sometimes a dark, frothy, blood-coloured discharge flows from the nostrils and anus. This is highly infective.

TREATMENT.—Curative treatment in a disease like blackleg, with its rapid and almost always fatal development, is practically out of the question. Numerous remedies have been tried and recommended, but in the last analysis we must conclude that *there is no satisfactory curative treatment for blackleg.*

HYGIENIC MEASURES.

Blackleg is due to the blackleg germ and *cannot occur unless the germ is present.* Bearing this in mind and also the fact that the germ is found in the soil and in coarse fodder and bedding, it will be seen that all measures which tend to decrease the spread of the infection will be of great assistance in the control of the disease.