

DISEASES OF THE SHEEP.

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Inflammation of the Brain is sometimes produced by excess of nourishment, particularly if the alteration from poor to rich food is sudden. The symptoms are of extreme violence: the motions of the animal sometimes assume a ridiculous form. The treatment should be prompt: the vein of the neck (the jugular) should be opened, and from half a pound to a pound of blood abstracted, and a purgative, such as two ounces of sulphate of magnesia, administered. In the lamb, the dose as well as the bleeding, will be less in proportion.

Louping-ill.—A disease attacking sheep and lambs in the spring; rare in England, but common in Scotland, occurring when dry, frosty, and easterly winds prevail.—Symptoms.—Dulness, deadness of coat, loss of power of one or both sides, tremblings, contractions of the gullet, convulsive fits, disturbed breathing, gnashing of teeth and foaming of the mouth, and a sidelong motion of the body. Treatment.—Immediate and copious bleeding from the neck, followed by purgative medicines.

Turn-sick, Giddiness.—The sheep appears dull and moping, is unsteady in his motions, and, after some time, moves round in a circle. Treatment.—If any soft place can be felt on the surface of the skull, the hydatid may be penetrated by means of a common awl, and relief has in some instances been afforded. In others, the operation of trephining has been had recourse to with success. Unless a soft place can be felt on the surface, when the awl or trephine may be used, it is better to confine the sheep, and, by means of cut food and oil-cake, get it fit for the butcher.

Obstructions in the Gullet are less frequent in the sheep than in the ox. Treatment.—The probang, previously oiled, should be passed into the gullet over the root of the tongue—the head of the sheep being elevated, and held firmly between another man's knees.

Hoove, Hoven, Blasting, are terms given to the distention of the rumen with gas, caused by the fermentation of the food. The treatment must be prompt, in order to be successful. If the hollow probang is at hand, it may at once be passed into the rumen, and so allow the gases to escape through it; or, if nothing else is at hand, a dessert-spoonful of salt may be dissolved and poured into the throat; or, better still, a drachm or more of chloride of lime, dissolved in water. This is more particularly called for if the putrefactive process is commenced; whilst, in the early stage, two to four drachms of hartshorn in half a pint of warm water will often give relief. Sulphuric ether, in doses of two drachms, is also a very effectual remedy. In some cases there is no time to administer medicine, but it is necessary to plunge a trochar or a penknife into the rumen, through the flank. If the latter is employed, a small tube, such as a quill, should be kept in the wound, so as to admit the escape of the gas, which, when the trochar is employed, is effected by the canula, which accompanies it. After-treatment is often requisite, as indigestion sometimes succeeds, as well as sub-acute hoove. The following draught will be useful:—

Sulphate of magnesia. 2 ounces.
Gentian 1 drachm.
Ginger. 2 drachms.
Chloride of lime. 1 scruple.

Dissolve in warm water or gruel.

Great caution should also be used with regard to the diet; and, by way of preventive, it will be an excellent plan to sprinkle any luxuriant herbage with salt previous to sheep being turned on it.

Poisons.—Great losses have sometimes occurred from sheep partaking largely of indigestible or deleterious matters. The treatment in these cases should be the administration, as soon as possible, of large doses of linseed oil, so as at once to sheathe the coats of the stomachs, and get rid of the offended objects by purgation.

Diarrhœa.—In some places a cure is effected by turning the sheep into a pasture abounding with common tormentil or septfoil. By way of medicine, the following will be found a very suitable mixture:—

Catechu, powdered. 4 drachms.
Prepared chalk, powdered. 1 ounce.
Ginger, powdered. 2 drachms.
Opium, powdered. ½ drachm.