Veterinary.

Shot of Grease, or Weed in Horses (Lymphangites).

SIR,—I have a good horse eight years old; I left him in the stable apparently all right at night, the next morning he was standing on three legs. I could see nothing wrong with the hind leg that was bad. He could not put it to the ground without pain. I could hardly touch the inside of the leg, but could see nothing wrong. Please let me know what is the best to do with him.

A SUBSCRIBER.

[We have referred to our Culloden veternary correspondent; he says the disease is "Shot of Grease, or Weed in Horses" (Lymphangites).

This is the season of the year that this disease is most common among Canadian, horses when they are hard worked, and highly fed, and generally appears after a day's rest, when they have had the same feed as when working. It is caused by too much nourishment being taken into the system forming more chyle than the absorbent vessels can carry, consequently causing congestion or inflammation of the lymphatics or absorbent vessels.

It is the hind legs that are generally affected, but the fore legs are also liable to the same disease.

The treatment requires to be more constitutional than local. Give a smart dose of purgative medicine, from six to eight drs. of Barbadoes aloes, with 1 dram of calomel in a ball. There is not much danger of giving too large a dose, as the bowels are generally constipated, and without purging treatment is of little avail. Bathe the leg well with warm water twice a day and rub till dry, taking care always to rub with the grain of the hair. Do not in any instance apply a blister or any irritant to the leg, as it greatly agitates the disease, and in many instances leaves a permanent thickening of the leg. After purging, give a teaspoonful of ground saltpetre in the food every night for a week or ten days. Feed on bran mashes, boiled oats, and other easily digested food, and give gentle walking exercise.—VET.]

SORE TEATS.—I have two cows that have sore teats. I am afraid they will become useless, as I have had other cows dry up before now. Can you give me any remedy?

S., Bryanton.

[See "Garget in Cows" on page 135.—ED.]

SIR,—Mr. Emmett wishes to know if you could give any information that would prevent a falling of the wethers in a cow that has not calved. I have used alum-water and Cayenne pepper for a wash without fail, but it will not prevent his cow casting it again. She is in good condition. If you should know anything, be kind enough to let us know in the next ADVOCATE. T. D., Sparta.

[This complaint appears to be constitutional with some cows, but there is not much danger as abortion seldom occurs, and the uterus cannot be inverted till the fœtus is expelled.

The animal should be kept in a stall with the hind end elevated so that the uterus would gravitate forward. Give occasional doses of an ounce and a half of laudanum to prevent straining; and the bowels kept regular by gentle laxatives, such as from half a pound to a pound of Epsom salts, as the animal may require. When the uterus protrudes so as to come in contact with any dirt, it should be washed with tepid water, and apply a little of the following lotion:—Sulphate of zinc, ½ dr.; alum, ½ oz.; cold water, 1 quart; laudanum, 1 oz. It is seldom necessary to apply a truss and pad. Feed well, but on easily digested food.—VET.]

SIR,—Can you or any of your readers inform me if there is a cure for black leg in cattle, or how it originates, as I have lost several valuable cattle with it this spring. Please insert in your next number, and you will much oblige.

A SUBSCRIBER, Hemmingford.

[Black leg is a blood disease caused by feeding on rich or succulent food, sometimes by impure air in stables. Treatment—Give doses of purgative medicine (such as salts or oil), followed by doses of black antimony, nitrate potash and sulphur. Put seaton in dewlap. If ulcers have formed, encourage matter; open and treat as common wounds. Prevention is better than cure. Do not let cattle on too rich pasture at first in spring. As soon as disease is noticed, change to poor pasture or feed on hay and oats in stable.—RUDD & TENNENT, Veterinary Surgeons, London.]

Care of Horse's Feet.

When the foot is gone, there is no horse left. There is an old adage to this effect, the truth of which is incontrovertible. Yet no part of a horse's anatomy is worse used than the foot, and there are no more frequent diseases to which the notice of the veterinary surgeon is brought than those of the feet. This comes of the unwise yet obstinately maintained fashion of rasping, cutting, burning, tarring, and greasing the hoofs. It would occupy too much space here to describe the anatomy of the foot fully, but it is a very timely matter just now to consider the structure of the horny outer covering or crust of the foot, by which the delicate inner parts are protected.

Horn is a fibrous substance, which contains 25 per cent. of water. The fact that it contains water in its normal composition is a very important one, and needs to be stated here, because, unless specific reasons are given, very little weight is generally accorded to all that may be written or said about the proper treatment of the horse's foot, by either horse owners, farmers, blacksmiths, or professional horseshoers. When horn is deprived of water it becomes dry, hard, and without elasticity, precisely like a piece of dry glue, which breaks and splinters into glassy fragments. It is necessary, therefore, that this water should be retained, to keep the horn in good condition. The common practices of burning the sole to procure a fit for the shoe, or rasping the outer surfaces to get a good shape, and so tarring and greasing the hoof, all tend to drive the water out of the horn, and not only to harden and contract it, but to make it brittle. In this condition its usefulness as a protection for the foot is at once impaired and partially destroyed. When the sole is burned by contact with a hot shoe, it is obvious that the water in the portion of the horn that is heated must be driven off. That is so obvious that no more need to be said about it. When the smooth, polished, hard surface of the horn is rasped away, the softer inner fibrous portion is exposed to all the evil influences of evaporation and degradation, and the numberless pores and cells or interstices of the horn are forced to give up the water they contain. The horn in this case is also made dry and brittle, and, of course, contracts. Tar contains an acid and a volatile oil, which evaporates and leaves a hardened pitchy mass. When tar is applied to the hoof the acid acts chemically upon the horn, and hardens or disintegrates it, and the oil, evaporating, leaves a space between the fibres filled with the hardened residue. It operates precisely in the same manner as when it is applied to leather—as a sole of a shoe, for instance—as a preservative, the leather in a few days becoming hard and unyielding, impervious to moisture, and dry. As with tar, so with grease; both these substance drive out the water from the horn and occupy its place, in time hardening and acidifying the substance of the hoof crust rendering it brittle, and contracting it.

The substance of the frog is horn, but is of a softer and more open texture than the sole and crust of the hoof. It is, therefore, more easily affected by injurious conditions, and when it becomes deprived of its water it shrinks more than the more solid horn. From this explanation of the character of the horny covering of the foot any reasonable horse owner may learn how to treat the hoof, and how to avoid injuring it. When a shoe is to be fitted, the edge or wall sole should be prepared by cutting or rasping and not by burning. Indeed the shoe should be fitted to the foot, and not the foot to the shoe. When, from bad management, the sole and the frog have become dry and contracted, no grease or tar should be used; but water should be used freely, and then the hoof should be dressed with glycerin, which will mix with water, and does not displace it. Glycerin contains no acid or acid properties, but is soft, bland, emollient, and does not evaporate. It therefore softens the horn, and allows the fibres to expand. Contraction is thus prevented or overcome when it has actually occurred.

Stock and Dairy.

Early Maturity of Beef.

In a former number of the ADVOCATE we referred to the comparatively great profit of fattening beef for the market at an early age. This has always been claimed as a great benefit from feeding well bred stock. At the time of our previously writing on the subject, young beeves well matured and in first-class condition were sold in the London market at 20 months old—"baby beef" it was called. The owner of those "baby beeves" then erected buildings to carry out that system by which he had succeeded in turning cattle of his own breeding at very early ages. In reference to this very farm, we have further information relative to the last year's results, which will, we are sure, be of interest to our readers. Eleven beasts were sold, averaging 18 months 2 weeks old, which brought, one with another, £20 18s 6d a head. The highest was £24 for an animal 17 months old, and £23 for one a month younger. These beasts were all sold by auction, and their estimated live weight was 50 score, 15 lbs.; this divided by 80 weeks, the average age of the animals, gives a weekly increase of 12½ lbs.

An English agricultural writer, referring to these early matured cattle, compares the profit from their feeding with the profit, if it can be called profit, returned from extra-fed animals shown at the last meeting of the Smithfield Club, and proceeds as follows:—

From these figures we can judge how very expensive and unprofitable show feeding is. There is, however, the chance of a prize, and now and then a beast leaves a handsome profit. The hope of distinction, and the ambition to produce a good beast, will be a sufficient incentive to insure competition. It is not to discourage such exhibitions, which are advantageous as a means of comparing the capabilities of different kinds of stock, that we draw attention to these figures; but to show how much more profitable is the process of feeding during the youth of the animal than at a more advanced stage. The animals in question—which, by the way, were ordinary Shorthorn stock—paid over 5s a week from birth, the cost of keep being very much less than it would be at a more advanced age. After the calf is weaned, and until one year old, the keep is not expensive, and at no time could these young animals have eaten more than 4 lbs. to 5 lbs. of artificial food per day, had they been fed on the ordinary matter; that is, kept in poor, low condition until two years old, and then put up to fatten, the cost up to that period would have been somewhat less; but the last year would have been costly, and the animals might have made £25 to £26, hence the returns would not have exceeded 3s 6d a week—a price under the cost of feeding. Such is the general result where animals are bred or bought in according to the old-fashioned system. Now, there can be no doubt that these beasts paid well, or at least left their manure free of cost—a result that is highly satisfactory. How, then, was it managed? The great point of the operator is to keep the animals under cover, never turning out, cutting a succession of green food during the summer, and not losing the calf flesh. The animals, constantly under the master's eye, fed with regularity and judgment, are kept in a thriving, improving state, never exposed to sudden changes of temperature; the minimum amount of food is required for fuel, and the progress is rapid and satisfactory. Nor must we lose sight of the fact that this constant housing results in the manufacture of a large quantity of valuable manure with the minimum expenditure of straw. For such a system, which it is evident has much to recommend it, covered yards are very advantageous; and now that the straw of our cereals is likely to be of equal, if not greater value than the corn, tenants who have liberty to sell straw, which under proper restrictions is desirable, if we want to make most of the land, will find it worth while to pay interest on the outlay; and landlords who wish to keep good tenants must not shrink from such improvements or fear to give such encouragement; for it is only by high farming, by the judicious employment of capital, that English farmers can hope to meet the competition with which they are threatened.