

PLOUGH HORSES AND THEIR TREATMENT.

The treatment of the farm horse at this season of the year requires great attention, patience and labor. His work is connected either with the plow or the cart—if with the former, his legs and belly are not so much exposed to damp and mud of a sticky nature as when performing his work in the cart in a very soft and wet road. The operation of cleaning and drying cannot be too carefully attended to. There are, however, many of our farm servants who undertake the duty of driving our horses in the wagon and plough who are quite unconscious of the evils which arise from inattention to scraping and cleaning their horses after work in wet weather. The scraping knife generally used in the farm-stable is a piece of iron hoop, which will answer the purpose if properly applied, in the absence of a wooden instrument. In the case of a team having been exposed to a great deal of rain, the scraping instrument will be found exactly suited to remove the wet mud, the rain, and perspiration. The operation need not be confined to the belly of the horse, but to the neck and sides also, and other parts to which the knife may be applied. Drying is necessary before cleaning. Cart horses have generally a large quantity of long hair attached to their heels.—Where the horse, with very long hair growing from the back and hollow of the pastern is daily exposed to wet feet, the plan of partially reducing the hair will be found to hasten the process of drying, which ought to be the great object of the farm servant when engaged in whisking the horse. The following we quote from good authority: “When the horse is carefully tended after his work is over, his legs quickly and completely dried, the less hair he has about them the better.” It is the cold produced by evaporation that does all the mischief; and if there be no moisture to create evaporation there can be no cold, no loss of heat save that which is taken from the air.—If there were more hair about the heels, they could not be so soon nor so easily dried. In some horses, the hollow of the pastern is very apt to crack; the unctuous secretion is not sufficiently plentiful to keep the skin from cracking. This evil, with others of a more serious description, may be numbered in the train of diseases which are to be traced to bad grooming. We do not recommend that the mane and the tail of the draught-horse should be often thinned, but that they be daily combed and brushed. Heavy draught horses are very subject to colic, brought on by water given after a liberal feed, by exertion with a full stomach, and by a sudden change of food from hay to grass, or from oats to barley. The treatment to be used in case of colic is recommended as follows, in “Stewart’s Stable Economy” (where draught horses are kept this remedy should be always at hand): “Take a quart of brandy; add to it 4 oz. of sweet spirit of nitre, 3 oz. of whole ginger, and 3 oz. of cloves. In eight days this mixture or tincture is ready for use; the cloves and ginger may still remain in the bottle, but they are not to be given. Set the bottles past, and put a label upon it; call it ‘colic mixture.’ The dose is 6 oz., to be given in a quart of milk or warm water every fifteen or twenty minutes, till the horse be cured. Keep his head straight and not too high when it is given. Rub the belly with a soft wisp, walk the horse about very slowly, or give him a good led and room to roll.

“In eighty cases out of ninety this treatment will succeed, provided the medicine be got over the horse’s throat before his bowels become inflamed, or strangulated, or burst. The delay of half an hour may be fatal.” A disease called the *Stomach or Grass Staggers* has been lately brought before the public by Professor Dick, of the Veterinary college, Edinburgh. The Professor describes the symptoms of the disease in a horse he had been called to see. He found his head was pressed into a corner of a loose box in which he was placed, and with difficulty could be moved from this position. The animal appeared quite unconscious; his pulse was about forty, full and strong; he would take nothing, and his bowels were inactive. He was therefore bled freely, a dose of laxative medicine given; glysters were administered and cold water constantly applied to his head. The horse got worse during the night, and died next morning. This disease appeared as an epizootic since the summer of 1846; the season of the year, as well as the nature of the food, being concurrent with the cause. Farm horses are more liable than any others, but neither carriage nor stable horses are exempt. Rough, coarse grasses, which spring up luxuriantly on moist ground in hot and dry seasons, when taken into the stomach, after using hay or another kind of feed, produce staggers, from inflammation of the stomach. The principal