

CHAPTER III.

THE MUSCULAR SYSTEM

COMMONLY CALLED FLESH.

MUSCLES are the chief organs of motion, each one being separated from the other by a thin, delicate membrane made up of connective tissue, which forms a sheath for the muscle. A muscle is divided into two parts, viz.: muscular and tendinous. The muscular part is the larger of the two and forms the larger portion of it, and is sometimes called the belly of the muscle. It is made of muscular tissue, which has a reddish meaty color. At both ends of the muscle we find a tendinous part, or the hard, white portion of the muscle where it becomes attached to the bone. Every muscle is attached to two or more places on different bones, and, upon their contraction, moves the joints of the body. They are well supplied with nerves, which give strength and feeling, and also well supplied with small blood vessels, from which the muscle is fed. Muscles are found in separate groups, all of which have different actions to perform. There are two kinds of muscles—voluntary and involuntary. The voluntary muscles are under the control of the will of the animal; example—the muscles of the legs, hip, back, head, and neck. The involuntary muscles are beyond control of the animal, and will act even though the animal were asleep—such as the heart, the large muscular curtain which separates the chest cavity from the abdominal cavity, which is one of the great muscles of breathing; also the muscles around the chest which assist in breathing.

Voluntary Muscles are in groups. The first one we call attention to, after removing the skin, is a thin muscle almost entirely covering the body, and is sometimes accidentally removed if not careful in skinning the animal. The action of this muscle is to shake the skin when flies or something bother the horse. At the head we find a group of muscles which assist in chewing, or masticating, the food. Around the throat is another set of muscles, sometimes called the muscles of the gullet, or pharynx, which assist in swallowing. The neck muscles are divided into two groups, one on each side. The action of these are to raise and lower the head, also to turn the neck and head from side to side. The muscles of the back are generally divided into two