

SPASMODIC COLIC IN HORSES.

The attack of this colic is very sudden. There is often not the slightest warning. The horse begins to shift his pasture, look round at his flanks, paw violently, strike his belly with his feet, lie down, roll, and that frequently on his back. In a few minutes the pain seems to cease, the horse shakes himself and begins to feel, but on a sudden the spasm returns more violently, every indication of pain is increased, he heaves at his flanks, breaks out into a profuse perspiration, and throws himself more violently about. In the space of an hour or two, either the spasms begin to relax and the remissions are of longer duration, or the torture is augmented at every paroxysm, the intervals of ease are fewer and less marked, and inflammation and death supervene.

Of the symptoms by which it may best be distinguished from inflammation of the bowels, we shall speak when we treat of that disease. Among the causes of colic are, the drinking of cold water when the horse is heated. There is not a surer cause of violent spasm than this. Colic will sometimes follow the exposure of a horse to the cold air, or a cold wind after violent exercise. Green food, although, generally speaking, most beneficial to the horse, yet given in too large a quantity, or when the horse is hot, will frequently produce gripes. In some horses there seems to be a constitutional predisposition to colic. They cannot be hardly worked, or exposed to unusual cold, without a fit of it. In many cases when these horses have died, stones have been found in some part of the alimentary canal.

Fortunately we are acquainted with several medicines that allay these spasms, and the disease often ceases almost as suddenly as it appeared. Three ounces of oil of turpentine, with an ounce of laudanum, given in a pint of warm ale, will frequently have an almost instantaneous effect. The account which we have just given of the cæcum will not be forgotten. Even a small quantity of fluid will seldom be detained in the stomach, but will pass through the ileum to the cæcum or water stomach, and in this passage will come in immediate contact with the spasmed part.

If relief be not obtained in half an hour, it will be prudent to bleed, because the continuance of the spasm will produce inflammation. Some practitioners bleed at first, and it is far from a bad practice, for although the majority of cases will yield to turpentine, opium, and aloes, an early bleeding may occasionally prevent the occurrence of inflammation, or serve to mitigate it. If it be clearly a case of colic half of the first dose may be repeated, with a full ounce of Barbadoes aloes dissolved in warm water. The stimulus produced on the inner surface of the bowels by the purgative, may counteract the irritation which caused the spasm. The belly should be well rubbed with a brush or warm cloth, but not bruised and injured by the broom-handle rubbed over it by two great fellows with all their strength. The horse should be walked about, or trotted moderately. The motion thus produced in the bowels, and the friction of one intestine over the other, may relax the spasm, but the hasty gallop may speedily cause inflammation, succeed to colic. Clysters of warm water, or containing a solution of aloes, should be injected.

When relief has been obtained, the clothing of the horse should be removed and fresh dry clothing substituted. He should be well littered down in a warm stable or box, and have fresh mashes the two or three next days, and lukewarm water.

Some persons give gin, and even gin and pepper, in cases of gripes. This, however, is a practice to which we strongly object; it may

be useful, and even sufficient, in ordinary cases of colic, but if there be any inflammation or tendency to inflammation it cannot fail to be highly injurious.

INFLAMMATION OF THE BOWELS.

There are two varieties of this malady. The first is inflammation of the external coats of the intestines, accompanied by considerable fever and costiveness. The second is that of the internal or mucous coat, usually the consequence of an overdose of physic, and accompanied by violent purging. We will here speak of the first of these affections. Inflammation of the external coats of the stomach is a very frequent and fatal disease, and it is of great consequence that its early symptoms should be known. If the horse has been carefully observed, restlessness and fever will have been seen to precede the attack; in many cases a direct shivering fit will be observed; the mouth will be hot, and the nose red. The horse will soon express the most dreadful pain by pawing, striking at his belly, looking wildly at his flanks, graining and rolling. The pulse will be quickened and small; the ears and legs cold, the belly tender and sometimes hot; the breathing quickened; the bowels costive, and the horse becoming rapidly and fearfully weak.

It may be useful to give a short table of the distinguishing symptoms of colic, and inflammation of the bowels, because the treatment recommended for the former would often be fatal in the latter.

Colic.—Sudden in its attack—pulse not much quickened, but fuller—legs and ears of the natural temperature—relief obtained from rubbing the belly—relief obtained from motion—intervals of rest—strength scarcely affected.

Inflammation of the Bowels.—Gradual in its approach, with indications of fever—pulse much quickened, small, or scarcely perceptible—legs and ears cold—belly exceedingly tender and painful to the touch—motion evidently increasing the pain—constant pain—rapid and great weakness.

The causes of this disease are, first of all, and most frequently, sudden exposure to cold. If a horse that has been highly fed, carefully groomed, and kept in a warm stable, be heated with exercise, and have been for some hours without food; and in this state of exhaustion be suffered to drink freely of cold water, or be drenched with rain, or have his legs and belly washed with cold water, an attack of inflammation of his bowels will often follow. An over-fed horse subjected to severe and long continued exertion, if his lungs were previously weak, will probably be attacked by inflammation of them; but if his lungs were sound, the bowels will, on the following day, be the seat of disease. Stones in the intestines are an occasional cause of inflammation, and colic neglected, or wrongly treated, will terminate in it. The treatment of inflammation of the bowels, like that of the lungs, should be prompt and energetic. The first and most powerful means of cure will be bleeding. From six to eight or ten quarts of blood should be taken as soon as possible, and the bleeding repeated to the extent of four or five quarts more if the pain be not relieved, and the pulse have not become rounder and fuller. This speedy weakness that accompanies this disease should not deter from bleeding largely. If the weakness that is the consequence of violent inflammation of these parts, and if that inflammation be subdued by the loss of blood, the weakness will disappear. The bleeding should be effected on the first appearance of the disease, for there is no malady that so quickly runs its course. Next to bleeding will follow clysters. Although the bowels are usually confined we can not administer a strong purgative; the intestines

are already in far too irritable a state. The clyster may consist of warm water, or very thin gruel, in which half a pound of Epsom salts or half an ounce of aloes has been dissolved, and too much fluid can scarcely be thrown up. If the common ox bladder and pipe be used it should be frequently replenished; but with Reed's patent pump already referred to, sufficient may be injected to penetrate beyond the rectum and reach to the colon and cæcum, and displace them to evacuate their contents. The horse may likewise be encouraged to drink plentifully of warm water or thin gruel; and draughts, each containing a couple of drachms of dissolved aloes, may be given every six hours, until the bowels are freely opened.

Next it will be prudent to endeavour to excite considerable external inflammation as near as possible to the seat of internal disease, and therefore the whole of the belly should be blistered. In a well marked case of this inflammation, no time should be lost in applying fomentations, but the blister be at once resorted to. The tincture of Spanish flies, whether made with spirit of wine or turpentine should be well rubbed in. The legs should be well bandaged, to restore circulation to them, and thus lessen the flow of blood to the inflamed part, and for the same reason the horse should be well clothed, but the air of the stable should be cool.

No corn or hay should be given during the disease, but bran mashes, and green food, if it can be procured. The latter will be the best, and may be given without the slightest apprehension of danger. When the horse begins to recover, he may get a handful of corn two or three times in the day, and if the weather be warm, may be turned into a pasture for a few hours in the middle of the day. Clysters of gruel should be continued for three or four days after the inflammation is beginning to subside, and good hand rubbing to the legs.

The second variety of inflammation of the bowels affects the internal or mucous coat, and is generally the consequence of physic given in too great a quantity or of an improper kind. The purging is more violent, and continues longer than was intended; the animal shews that he is suffering great pain; he frequently looks round at his flanks; his breathing is laborious, and the pulse is quick and small; not so small however as in the inflammation of the external coat of the bowels, and contrary to some of the most frequent and characteristic symptoms of that disease, the mouth is hot, and the legs and ears warm. Unless the purging is excessive, and the pain and distress great, we should hesitate at administering any astringent medicine at first. We should plentifully administer starch, made thin, gruel, or arrow root, by the mouth and by clyster, removing all hay and grain, and particularly green food. We should endeavour thus to sheath the irritated surface of the bowels, while we permitted any remains of the medicine to be carried off. If, however, twelve hours should pass and the purging and the pain remain undiminished, we should continue the gruel, but add to it chalk, catechu, and opium, in doses of an ounce of the first, a quarter of an ounce of the second, and two scruples of the last, repeated every six hours. As soon as the purging begins to subside, the astringent medicine should be lessened in quantity and gradually discontinued. Bleeding will rarely be necessary, unless the inflammation be very great, and attended by symptoms of general fever. The horse should be warmly clothed, and be placed in a warm stable, and his legs should be hand-rubbed and bandaged.

Violent purging, attended with much inflammation and fever, will sometimes come