

ADDENDUM.

Fatalities Following the Ingestion of Green Bracken.—While we had heard indirectly that animals might suffer from eating green bracken, it was not until quite recently (October 1, 1917) that any cases came directly under our notice.

Two horses owned in the village of Agassiz developed symptoms of narcotic poisoning while confined in a small pasture. The symptoms noted were exactly similar to the experimental cases recorded in this paper. When seen neither animal could stand, though earlier in the day they had been able to do so. The evidence as to the condition being brought about through the ingestion of green fern was indisputable. What grass was in the field had been nibbled so short that the animals were forced to eat the ferns. The most conclusive piece of evidence we found was the fact that the horses had been putting their heads through the wire fence, and that they had left nothing but the fern stalks within the area of their reach. Beyond this area was a green bank of fern. As stated before, the grass had been eaten bare all over the pasture, and the only other vegetation for the horses to eat was bracken, which was very plentiful.

One of the horses died after being down for three days, and the other recovered slowly. The treatment which had been given these animals was of a very rough character; apart from a preliminary dose of arecoline, the animals received but little attention, though their food was changed.

We have stated that horses will only eat dried fern when forced to do so, and from the above it is apparent that the same thing applies to the green fern. The only exception to this rule may be that an otherwise well fed animal will sometimes nibble at any green plant within reach.

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