

THE HORSE.

Retention of the Meconium or Constipation in Foals.

Retention of the meconium in foals is probably responsible for more fatalities than any other abnormal condition. During foetal life the liver of the foetus secretes small quantities of bile. As this is secreted it is conveyed to the small intestine by the bile duct. Here it becomes inspissated and formed into balls of a dark brown, almost black color, a gummy, sticky nature, about the consistency of putty, and is called meconium. Under normal conditions its expulsion commences soon after birth and continues at intervals until it is all expelled, which usually is in about 24 hours, after which the faecal matter voided is of a yellowish color. The passage of yellow excrement is evidence that the meconium has all been voided, and that now passing is the excreta from nourishment taken after birth.

While retention of the meconium may occur under any and all sanitary conditions, it is more frequently observed in early foals whose dams have been fed on dry fodder and have had little exercise during the winter. The foals of mares that have had regular exercise or light work during the winter, and been fed on laxative, easily-digested feed, do not suffer so frequently, but the condition is liable to occur even under these conditions, and it is not unknown in late foals, whose dams have been on grass for a greater or less length of time before parturition. Again, the condition is very liable to occur in foals of dams from whom the milk has been escaping for some time before delivery. The first milk or fluid that escapes from the mammae of the dam after or shortly preceding parturition is of a different character, both as to appearance and constituents, from real milk. It is of a clear, viscid nature and of an oily appearance. It contains more constituents of a laxative nature than milk does. Its function is to nourish the young animal and, at the same time, exert a slightly laxative action on the bowels. It is called "colostrum," and if, from any cause, the young animal is deprived of it, there is a greater danger of retention of the meconium than under other conditions.

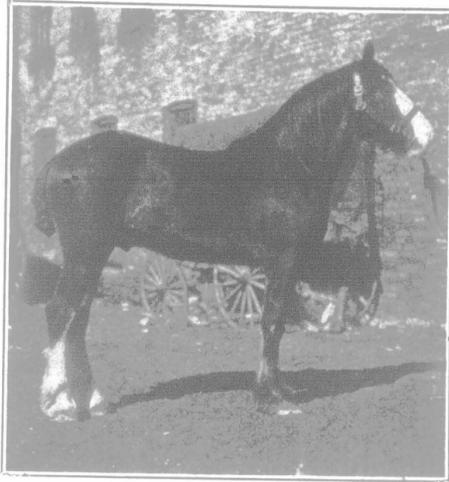
At the same time it must not be considered necessary, or even advisable, to substitute purgatives when the colostrum is absent. The administration of purgatives in such cases (unless in very small doses) usually complicates matters, and often renders incurable a condition that in all probability could have been successfully treated. The meconium, as stated, "exists in lumps of a gummy nature and of about the consistency of putty."

In the majority of cases where this is not spontaneously voided, these lumps, with which the rectum is full, are so large that the little animal has not sufficient expulsive power to force them through the anus. In such cases it is obvious that purgatives would tend to complicate matters, as they act upon and tend to fluidify the contents of the anterior intestine, increase the backward action of the same, but have practically no action upon the contents of the rectum. We can readily see how this, by increasing the action of the anterior intestine, without removing from the rectum the obstruction which prevents the escape of faeces, will increase distress and lessen the prospect of successful treatment. Hence, we must be very careful about dosing with purgatives or laxatives, but depend largely upon mechanical treatment.

Symptoms.—The symptoms are plain. The foal arches his back, elevates his tail and makes ineffectual efforts to defecate. At first the distress is not great, but as time passes these efforts become more frequent and prolonged; he becomes restless, lies down, rolls on his back, takes little nourishment, becomes "tucked up" in the flank, grinds his teeth, becomes weaker and weaker, suffers intense abdominal pain, looks around toward his sides, and eventually dies.

Treatment.—As stated, purgatives should be avoided. When the first symptoms are shown the attendant should trim the nail of his fore finger, oil it, get an assistant to hold the foal, and then carefully introduce the finger into the rectum, and remove all the lumps that he can reach. In the meantime the foal makes expulsive efforts, and as the meconium is removed from the rectum a fresh supply is forced into it, and, of course, this also should be removed. It is not unusual for the operator to remove a pint or more at one operation. This should be followed by injecting into the rectum of a liberal supply of soapy, warm water or of warm water and raw linseed oil or glycerine in equal quantities. In the course of 3 to 4 hours the operation should be repeated, and every few hours afterwards until yellow faeces are observed. So long as the meconium reaches the rectum it can be removed by the finger or by the use of a doubled wire, and it is not wise to give any medicines whatever by the mouth, but when the obstruction is so far forward that it cannot be reached, even by a wire, it is well to administer 1 to 2 oz. of raw linseed oil or castor oil (according to the size of the patient), but in no case should drastic purgatives, as aloes be given, except in very small doses, as diarrhoea is very easily caused and very quickly weakens the foal. It is good practice to remove the meconium, as stated, from all foals shortly after birth. The operation, if carefully performed, so as to not irritate or scarify the parts, does not injure the foal in the least, and in all cases saves more or less exertion, and while in many cases it is not necessary, it is better to be on the safe side and anticipate trouble, rather than await symptoms. The lives of many foals would be saved if this precaution were taken early.

Foals should be carefully watched in this respect, until the faeces passed are of a yellow color, after which there is little danger of constipation if the mare be properly fed. WHIP.



A Well-bred and Well-grown Two-year-old Clydesdale Stallion.

LIVE STOCK.

Don't forget to dock the lambs.

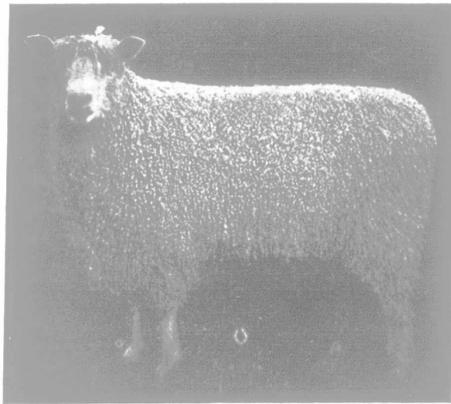
Study the individuals in the herd. Some animals require different treatment from others.

Squeeze out the warbles on the cattle's backs and so prevent the grub from developing into the fly to propagate its species during the warm days of August next.

McConnell's Herefords, of Nebraska, averaged \$596, and fifty-eight Angus in Iowa, averaged \$562. The prices of cattle of all breeds are maintaining a high average.

The apparently lifeless new-born lamb or calf can sometimes be revived by blowing into its mouth and vigorously rubbing its sides with sacking or straw. This starts lung action and sets the blood circulating if there is a spark of life left.

A number of Shorthorn sales have recently been held across the line, at which high averages have been obtained. At Williamsville, Illinois, J. R. Jones made an average of \$1,029 on thirty-four head. L. M. Andrews, of Iowa, realized \$24,095 on forty-one head.



A Champion Wensleydale Ram.

A consignment sale at Columbus Grove, Ohio, made an average of \$675 on seventy-three head. In Illinois, G. G. Atwood's herd of sixty-six averaged \$502. A Shorthorn Breeders' Association Sale, at Kansas City, averaged \$314 for one hundred and eighty-seven head.

Our English News Letter.

The English Board of Agriculture is to be reorganized and made a first-class Department of State. That announcement was made in the House of Commons on March 26. Legislation is going to be introduced to effect that end as soon as possible. It has been proposed to set up an agricultural authority in each country and to follow the Irish practice of establishing an Agricultural Council in England and Wales. The Commissioners of Agriculture are to be increased and a number of demonstration farms are to be run to prove

to the young mind and the slothful old mind how to increase market production. These state farms are to be run on commercial lines—with pedigree cattle I hope; not scrub commercial stock.

We have a live-stock improvement scheme operating these last five years among small holders and little farmers who cannot afford to invest in pedigree stock and build up a herd. The time for running this scheme has ended, but it has proved such a success that the Board of Agriculture is going to carry it on and per chance increase its workings as it itself grows into a first-class Department of State. The scheme is fundamentally one of giving small farmers assistance in the matter of obtaining the services of sound and pedigree heavy stallions, pedigree boars and pedigree bulls—both milch and beef strains. So far 710 bulls, 254 boars and 110 heavy stallions are on the list of assisted nominations, and that they are improving the stock of the countryside goes without saying. We have a bad lot of "commercial cattle" in this country, considering also that across in the next field to a pack of scrub cattle may be one of the finest pedigree herds in the Kingdom, of one breed or another. The dividing line is cut sharp and short by the hedges in between. However, the Board of Agriculture is now spending £25,000 a year on improving our scrub stock, and the money is being wisely spent, too. Milk recording is one especial phase of this work and £1,000 more will be spent on extending this important section of the scheme in the immediate future.

England held its first sale of milk-recorded cattle—mainly dairy Shorthorn type—at Reading in March, and the most dubious farmer now must be convinced, as a result of this sale, that there is money in milk records and that £10, £15 or £20 can be added to the value of each heifer calf got by a milk-bred bull. Cows of good dual-purpose type with praise-worthy records were eagerly snapped up at prices from £15 to £20 in excess of what they would have been had they been sold in local markets without any milk records appended to their names. A massive-framed red cow with an average of 10,264 lbs. of milk with her first four calves made 140 guineas. She had no pedigree! A 9,129-lb. cow fetched 84 guineas, and another cow with 11,929 lbs. to her name made 86 guineas. Your farmers are much more alive to the value of milk records than ours, but the cult is growing apace.

Shire-bred working horses made 250, 230, 210 and 200 guineas at Crewe, and vanners offered at Reading realized £130, £107 and many over £100. Farm horses (Shire-bred) realized 200 and 150 guineas on a holding at Louth (Lincolnshire). Clydesdale-bred farm animals realized 200 guineas at Penrith. In Hereford, 212 guineas was the top price for a Shire-bred six-year-old gelding. Twenty-three working mares averaged £120 5s. at Borough Fen, Lincolnshire, where two-year-olds realized £63, and yearlings £48. The farmer who sold the stock I have just enumerated reckons that he has in sixty-two years' tenancy on one farm sold 53,000 sheep, 549 Shires and 3,500 Lincoln Red Shorthorns. Thus is pedigree breeding the handmaid of successful farming in the Old Land.

ALBION.

The Sheep Protection Act.

The time is drawing near when sheep will be turned on pasture and the danger from dogs worrying the flock will be accentuated. Dogs have been blamed for preventing a more rapid growth of the sheep industry in this country, and it must be admitted that it is very discouraging to have a few of the best of the flock killed and the rest mutilated, or thoroughly frightened, by the inroads of dogs into the sheep paddock or pasture. It is not the well-bred dog used to stock that molests the flock so much as the mongrel cur that is forced to hunt for his living and is allowed to roam the country day and night. Under such circumstances the wolf-like instinct of the canine is almost bound to show itself. It is generally believed that the Dog Act for the protection of sheep, enacted by the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, is the best in existence. True, there may be faults to be found with it, but if the law is enforced it does give protection to the sheep owner; at least, the penalty is such that few will take the chance of giving their dog unlimited freedom if he shows the least disposition to wander from home. By increasing the tax on dogs, many of the curs have been disposed of. The assessor enters on the assessment roll the number of dogs owned by each man on the list, and the penalty for not giving the assessor the correct information is a fine of five dollars. If the assessor fails to carry out the provision of the Act he incurs a penalty of ten dollars. The Act put into force in 1918 states in Section 8 that "any person may kill any dog: (a) which is found pursuing, worrying or wounding any sheep; (b) which is found straying between sunset and sunrise from the premises on which such dog is habitually kept." Section 10 of the Act is to the effect that the owner of any sheep killed or injured by any dog shall be entitled to recover the damage occasioned thereby from the owner of such dog by an action for damages or by summary proceedings before a Justice of the Peace. The aggrieved party may recover in such action or proceedings whether or not the owner of the dog knew that it was vicious or accustomed to worrying sheep. The Act states that "If it appears at the trial that the damage or some part thereof was the joint act of some other dog than of the dog owned by the person charged, the court, judge or justice may, by the judgment or conviction, apportion the damages among and against the respective owners of the dogs as far as they are known, in such proportions as may be deemed just." The owner of any dog to whom notice is given of