

and gentlemanly Secretary of the Board, had just returned from Abilene, Kansas, which place he had visited in company with a committee appointed to make investigation as to the state of the disease there. One of the chief objects of the visit of Mr. Reynolds and his colleagues to Abilene, was to test the truth of the "*Live Oak Theory*" as to the cause of the disease. That theory has been stated very confidently by several authorities; and among them by one who ranks high in the Veterinary profession. It seems that the "*Live Oak*" grows only in Southern Texas, and it was alleged that the cattle from that part of the State alone had the power of communicating Texan fever. It was also stated that cattle which came from Texas, by way of Abilene, were sound and could not contaminate others. The Southern Texas cattle were brought into Illinois, *via* New Orleans and Red River, Arkansas and the Mississippi, to Cairo, and thence by the Illinois Central Railway to the various points along the line. Unfortunately for this theory, the disease exists at Abilene, and there it showed the same symptoms as elsewhere, and it presented the same exacerbations. Your committee also had presented to themselves melancholy proof of the malignant character of the disease, and of the unsoundness of the "*Live Oak*" theory, at the home farm of Mr. McCoy, one of the proprietors of the stock-yards at Abilene, Kansas. The Messrs. McCoy have very fine estates some sixteen miles west of Springfield, and on one of them your committee found a large herd of very fine grade cattle, among which the disease was making sad ravages. At the time of their visit, ten animals had died, and they saw three of that number lying dead. Your committee had two autopsies here, and investigated four other cases of disease. At this place, there was complete evidence of the insufficiency of the "*Live Oak*" theory to account for the plague. Mr. McCoy's cattle first came in contact with Texan cattle about the beginning of June; they were afterwards with them about the end of July. There is a point of considerable interest connected with this herd, and one which may serve to show how far the theory is true, that diseased native cattle have not the power to impart the infection to other sound native cattle. A portion of the herd referred to had never been in contact with Texan cattle, but were brought from another farm, and now mingled with that portion of the herd which was infected. Mr. McCoy promised to inform the committee if any of them became diseased, but as sufficient time has not elapsed to perfect the incubation of the plague, no communication has as yet been expected from Mr. McCoy.

So far as the committee could ascertain, the disease first appeared at Cairo, the Southern terminus of the Illinois Central Railway, about the beginning of June. It appeared subsequently at various points along the line, and at Tolono, a small town at the point of intersection of the Toledo, Wabash, and Western Railway with the Illinois Central, on the 20th July. It was stated that between that date and the first of August 235 cows died. Between that time and the visit of your committee several hundred cattle died; in fact there was scarcely a hoof left in the neighbourhood. Texan cattle had been discharged from the cars, until popular feeling became so strong that its continuance was not permitted. It was estimated that some 15,000 head of cattle had been delivered at Tolono alone; they carried the seeds of disease and death wherever they went. In other parts of Illinois and Indiana similar debarkations had been going on for several weeks. The temptation to replenish the wide and luxuriant pastures of those States with cattle so cheaply purchased, and procurable in such numbers, was almost irresistible; and, in the face of a stringent law, the trade was carried on without stint. In addition to the actual losses resulting from the traffic, the amount of bad feeling engendered has been very great. And this is not surprising when it is remembered that multitudes of farmers and others lost every beast they had, although they did not traffic in Texas cattle. Their feelings were much exasperated when they reflected that their herds had been swept away because

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