

CHAPTER XXI.

DISEASES OF THE HORSE.

311. Diagnosis. Only those diseases likely to be of interest to the breeder will be discussed in this chapter. If one has a thousand dollars or more invested in a stallion, he can ill afford to let him die, if there is any way known of saving his life. It is because of this large investment in a single individual that makes the usual home treatment unprofitable in a very large per cent. of cases. It is in diagnosing a case one finds the greatest difficulty. Even in colic and other diseases of the digestive organs, one often meets with great difficulty in learning the real trouble. Because of this, if it is possible to obtain the services of a veterinarian, it will prove a good investment to do so. Sometimes a veterinarian can not be had, and under such circumstances one should do the best he can. In diagnosing the ailments of a horse one need expect but little of breeders, when it is remembered that this is the one great and most uncertain task of veterinarians.

312. Colic in the horse occurs in various forms. Engorgement colic, obstruction colic, flatulent, or wind colic, spasmodic, or cramp colic, and worm colic are the most common forms. If a horse evinces abdominal pain he is likely to be put down as suffering with colic, even when the difficulty may be an internal hernia, overloading the stomach, or even a bladder or live trouble. Inguinal hernia is likewise often mistaken for colic, hence one can see the absurdity of advising treatment at long range. If the horse is a valuable animal, no time should be lost in placing him in the care of a veterinarian. The more valuable the horse the greater the need of this.

313. Engorgement Colic is induced by overloading the stomach with food. The horse may either be overfed, or else the stomach as a result of some cause may have failed to digest the food and passed it backward into the intestines. Greedy eaters are most predisposed to this disease. The one symptom likely to result in a correct diagnosis of this disease is attempts at vomiting. The movements are shown by labored breathing, upturned upper lip, contraction of the flank, active motion at the throat, drawing in of the nose toward the breast, causing high arching of the neck. Following retching, gas may escape from the mouth, and this may be followed by a sour froth and some stomach contents. The horse cannot vomit except when the stomach is violently stretched. If the accumulation of food or gas is great enough to stretch the stomach so that vomiting is possible, it