

which it often becomes enormously enlarged before an exit can be given to the gas. Relief may be afforded by perforating the stomach through the walls of the abdomen, or by the introduction of an instrument along the œsophagus to allow the escape of the gas. When these means are not adopted, the stomach often ruptures by the great distention which it sustains. And this may take place before inflammation commences.

Similar effects are produced in the stomach and intestines of the horse, during an attack of what is termed flatulent colic. When the animal has taken food difficult of digestion, or that gives rise to fermentation, an extrication of gas commences distending the stomach and intestines, and producing an attack of ileus in its severest form. And if the fermentation of the gas be not arrested, or if the gas be not speedily removed from the distended bowel, the most serious effects are produced. In a post mortem examination which I lately made, the animal dying after four hours' illness, the stomach had ruptured from the great distention to which it was subjected, and its contents pressing on the pyloric orifice, prevented the further escape of the gas from the bowels. The whole of the intestines, from the stomach to the rectum, were greatly distended with gas, and no contraction could be discovered in any part of the tube. Digestion seemed to have been arrested in the stomach, as scarcely any chyme was found in the duodenum which was filled with air, the cœcum was also enormously distended with gas, but contained a small quantity of water; no appearance of inflammation could be detected in any part of the intestines, but they everywhere maintained their natural hue, except a slight blush of redness along the lower curvature of the cœcum, where the blood vessels enter the bowel.

As no flatus could be expelled, nor evacuation of the bowels obtained, during the attack of the disease, it appears that the extrication of gas in large quantities distended the bowel and deranged its action, and that on the gas continuing to be generated, whilst the bowels ceased to perform their function, the walls of the stomach gave way under the great distention to which it was subjected.

That this is the case appears from the fact, that no trace of inflammation could be detected in the ruptured coats of the stomach, when examined with the greatest care; and that in other cases when the disease has not proceeded far, if medicine be administered which promotes the absorption of the gas, the animal often speedily recovers, whilst in some cases relief has been obtained by perforating the cœcum through the walls of the abdomen, to allow the escape of the gas.

Hence it appears that when the muscular tissue of the intestinal canal is subjected to strong and sudden distention, and the force continued