

THE HORSE.

Some Common Early-Winter Ailments and Their Treatment.

The season following the hard work of fall, when the horses have been liberally fed and pushed to the limit day in and day out, in a final effort to get the plowing done and the fall cultivation completed ready for winter and spring work, is not the easiest on the horses. The hard-worked horse, suddenly deprived of strenuous exercise, and the colts brought in from the field to dry feed, require a certain amount of care in feeding to prevent digestive derangements and other troubles. Feed is scarce on most places this year, but hay is plentiful and no doubt there will be a tendency, particularly in the beginning of the season, to feed rather liberally on hay and to allow less exercise than would be in the best interests of the horse stock. Colds are common at this season; legs stock, coats become stary, scratches are prevalent, lymphangitis in thick-legged horses gives its greatest difficulty in control, distemper may develop, thrush may injure the feet, and other diseases may result owing to the sudden change in conditions from hard work and a measure of green feed to idleness and an exclusive ration of dry feed. It is, then, not out of place to discuss some of the commoner troubles.

Staring Coat.

A horse that is out of condition very often shows the lack of proper nutrition in the form of a harsh, dry coat. In cold weather it is impossible to keep the coats of some horses short, fine and glossy. Nature demands a growth of hair at the approach of cold weather, and the only thing that can be done externally is to groom well and blanket. Of course it is impossible and not necessary to blanket the farm horses stabled in a proper manner, and veterinarians advise against the administration of drugs having as the object the improvement of the coat, but where horses are out of condition it may be necessary to give a tonic, and before doing so it is wise to purge with from 6 to 8 drams of aloes and 2 drams of ginger, and follow up with one dram each of sulphate of iron and gentian twice daily for a time.

A little bran, fed in conjunction with a few crushed oats, and clover hay of finest quality, will help put matters right with the horse. Such horses, of course, should have sufficient daily exercise.

Most farmers do not take the time or trouble to groom all their horses in the winter, but for such as are not doing well it would be good practice to groom each day, thoroughly disturbing all the hair by rubbing in both directions with a currycomb, following this by smoothing down with a good, stiff brush. To make a complete job the horse should be rubbed with a cloth. The work horses would gain up more quickly after the busy fall season if groomed every day, and they would also be the better of purging when going on to dry feed exclusively, particularly if any signs of derangement are noticed.

Stocking.

Possibly no other trouble is quite so common with heavy horses, when first going into the stable in the fall, as stocking. Even light horses often show a thickening of the legs when idle on dry feed, particularly if they are rather heavily fed. At this time circulation is rather sluggish in the extremities, and lack of exercise is a contributing cause to the trouble. True, some horses are predisposed to stocking on account of faulty conformation. Exercise is one of the best means of overcoming this trouble. Poor digestion and carelessness are often found increasing the difficulty of keeping the legs normal. Constipation is often associated with the disease, and feeders should aim, in so far as possible, to prevent it rather than incur the difficulty of curing it. Those farmers who have a few roots should in every case save some of the best turnips or mangels for the horses. Carrots are better still, but on the average farm carrots are not grown in any quantity. A good-sized mangel or turnip once daily, preferably at noon, will go a long way towards keeping the horse's digestive system right. Roots are rather scarce this year and to take their place a feeder may use, to good advantage, a feed of scalded bran twice weekly, or a little linseed meal once daily. Some good feeders use a little raw linseed oil, mixed with the grain ration once daily. For those who will not go to this trouble and who do not care to buy bran or other feeds, a feed of boiled oats or a little boiled barley once or twice a week will give fair results. At this season, it is almost essential to make some slight changes from dry hay and oats in order to keep the horse's digestive system acting properly. Some believe that feeding on rolled oats is preferable to whole oats and that less leg trouble results from the practice than when whole oats are fed. One thing is certain, rolled oats can be made go a little farther than whole oats, and this is an important consideration in a year of scarcity of feed.

Those horses which have showed unmistakable signs of stocking should be purged with from 6 to 10 drams of aloes according to size, and 2 drams of ginger. When purgation has ceased and the bowels have regained their natural condition a dessertspoonful of saltpetre should be given in damp feed once daily for three or four days. This acts upon the kidneys. Hand rubbing of the legs frequently gives beneficial results, and sometimes it is necessary to bandage with woollen bandages, however, this is not commonly resorted to in treating horses which stock up in the fall. Do not

forget the exercise. Have the horses out in the yard for several hours each fine day unless they are doing some light work about the place.

Thrush.

Thrush is another disease which gives some trouble at this season of the year, particularly where stables are not kept properly cleaned, and the horses' feet are not cared for as they should be. Thrush is a disease of the fall and winter and cleanliness is essential in its treatment. Where the disease appears, clean out the cleft of the frog thoroughly and keep the animal in thoroughly dry quarters. Mix one part of formalin to three or four parts of water and pour a little into the cleft. Then put a little batting in to keep out dirt. Remove the batting every second day, clean out, put in more formalin, and plug with batting again until discharge and odor cease. It is well to keep the heels pared down and the feet clean and dry. Another remedy which may be used in place of formalin is calomel. Cleanliness is absolutely essential in the prevention and cure of this disease.



A Farm Team.

This team owned by A. O'Neil, Danfield, has won the special class for farmer's team at London two years in succession.

Scratches.

A common trouble in almost every stable is scratches or cracked heels and the fall of the year with its mud, snow and slush, generally finds many horses suffering from itchy, sore fetlocks and heels. The skin becomes red, swelling is noticed, heat and tenderness result. The swelling will go down with exercise, but in time cracks extending across the leg will be noticed and in cold weather these cracks often bleed a little. Where cases have become chronic the swelling does not disappear with exercise. As is the case with most diseases, the first thing to do is to seek the cause and remove it. Keep the horses at rest for a few days if possible and purge as previously directed in this article. Feed bran only until purgation ceases and follow this up with 3 drams of nitrate of potash twice daily for a week or ten days. Many horsemen make the mistake of washing their horses' legs at this season of the year. To be successful in treating scratches, water must be kept away from the legs and they must, in all cases, be dry-cleaned. When the horse comes in with his legs wet, or with mud, snow and ice frozen to them, it is well to wipe the legs dry with wisps of straw or with a cloth. In cold weather lotions should be avoided

because they have an astringent effect and dry up and harden the skin, causing it to crack open again. At this season oils or ointments have a more softening and at the same time antiseptic effect and owing to their nature tend to prevent cracking. In applying an ointment, it should be put on, if the horse is being used, before he is taken out, and freely used three or four times daily. Oxide of zinc ointment to which is added 20 drops of carbolic acid to the ounce is recommended by "Whip". Where a horse is in low condition and the trouble appears to be largely constitutional it is well to give, in addition to the aforementioned treatment, 1½ ounces Fowler's solution of arsenic twice daily for a week. For scratches then, careful feeding is necessary, legs must be kept dry, the horse should be exercised, and a healing ointment applied.

Lymphangitis.

Lymphangitis is sometimes called Monday-morning disease and horses predisposed to stocking and swelling of the legs sometimes develop this disease, which is very often more troublesome in the fall when the horses first become idle. Purgation is necessary in the beginning of treatment. This should be followed up with 2-dram or 3-dram doses of nitrate of potash three times daily. Local treatment consists in bathing at frequent intervals and for considerable time with warm water, applying camphorated ointment or other liniment after bathing. Horses showing this disease should not be exercised until soreness and lameness have disappeared. Grain rations must be reduced and bran should be substituted for a part of the oats. Keep comfortable, dry, and in a stall free from draft. There is a tendency for this trouble to become chronic and horses predisposed to it should be carefully exercised regularly and fed lightly when idle.

Coughs and Colds.

Coughs are common at this season of the year, owing to changeable weather, drafts, etc. A horse with a cough should be fed on first-class feed only and the amount of hay should be limited. It is well also to dampen all the hay and grain fed, with lime water. Give each night and morning 2 drams of solid extract of belladonna, 1½ drams gum opium, 1 dram camphor, and 20 grains of powdered digitalis. Moisten with treacle and give as a ball, or shake up with a pint of cold water and drench. Care should be taken to keep the stable free from drafts and if in a cold stable it would be well to blanket for a time until the cough stops. Be careful in removing the covering that the animal does not take further cold.

Influenza.

Influenza is a frequent winter trouble and often begins with the cold weather. In bad cases it is always wise to employ a veterinarian, as the disease is dangerous. In mild cases which the owner decides to treat himself, it is wise to keep the animal comfortable in a well-ventilated stall free from drafts. It is good practice to steam the nostrils three times daily, by holding the horse's head over a pot of boiling water to which has been added half an ounce carbolic acid. It is also good practice to rub the throat twice daily until it blisters, with equal parts spirits of ammonia, oil of turpentine, and raw linseed oil. Give 1 dram quinine and 2 drams chlorate of potash three times daily by dropping on the back of the tongue out of a spoon. Never try to drench as the horse's throat is liable to be so sore that he cannot swallow. If the animal becomes weak it may be necessary to give milk, eggs and possibly a little whiskey to drink in order to maintain strength. Feed out of a high manger.

We give these few hints taken from answers which



Some Clydesdales at Pasture.