

SEPTIC FEVER IN CAGE BIRDS.

A lecture to the members of the London and Provincial Society, by R. H. Clarke, M.A., M.B., Cantab M.R.C.S.

Mr Chairman and gentlemen: I desire, in the first place, to express my gratification at meeting the members of this society, and my regret for having failed to keep my engagement to lecture last May. I am sure you will believe that no one was more disappointed at that failure than myself, and that it did not arise from any circumstance I could control, as I was incapacitated at the time by an attack of influenza.

The original title of my lecture was "Some Diseases of Cage Birds," but I propose to confine my remarks to-night to that mis-named, and misunderstood disorder which is, I hope, becoming gradually recognized as Septic Fever, a title which does not mislead nor confound the malady with others, with which it has little in common. And I think there is good reason for this restriction: first, in the serious nature and prevalence of the pestilence and the great loss it occasions—a loss which is preventable, and due to ignorance or carelessness—secondly, in the fact that neither the nature of the disease, nor the means to prevent it appear to be generally recognized, and lastly, because I have availed myself of various opportunities of investigating the subject for several years, and I hope I may be able to give you some useful information.

I have made some attempts to ascertain the extent of the average annual loss from this cause, but without much success. People are loth to admit that they have suffered from the plague for obvious reasons, and an estimate of the precise figures would only be a rough guess, but I am sure it is superfluous

for me to tell the members of this association that the loss and mortality are very great.

I do not think I shall experience much difficulty in establishing my second point, viz: the ignorance with which this subject is enshrouded. A glance at the descriptions of *post mortem* examinations in any of the bird papers for the last few years, will disclose numerous cases of undoubted septic fever, attended with nodules in the spleen and liver, and histories which can leave no doubt as to the nature of this disease; and these significant signs are constantly followed by the too familiar diagnosis of tuberculosis.

(To be Continued.)

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