

ANIMALS SUSCEPTIBLE.

As stated, it attacks practically all domestic animals, though some classes are far less susceptible than others. Cattle are generally considered most susceptible; but sheep, swine and goats are also readily infected, the disease spreading rapidly in the case of all these. Human beings may contract it from coming in contact with diseased animals, from contact with those attending such or from drinking milk from infected animals in which the germs have not been destroyed. In some instances horses, dogs and cats have been known to contract the disease, but such cases are not common. As in other diseases, certain animals of the same species seem more resistant than others.

PERIOD OF INCUBATION AND SYMPTOMS.

The period of incubation or the time elapsing between the exposure of the animal to infection and the appearance of the disease varies from forty-eight hours to ten days.

Early symptoms are dullness, loss of appetite, shivering, staring coat, arched back, stiffness of movement and a decided rise in temperature. The temperature may rise from normal (in cattle from 100 deg. to 102 deg. Fahr.) to 105 deg. or 106 deg. Fahr., and sometimes higher, but this rise is not always accompanied by an increase in the pulse.

These premonitory general symptoms are usually followed by the more localised conditions which characterise the disease. These include definite lameness, salivation or slavering at the mouth accompanied (in cattle) by a smacking or sucking sound. Saliva becomes more ropy and viscid as disease progresses. Within 24 hours of the appearance of general symptoms vesicles or blisters appear on the mucous membranes, especially those of the mouth, on the pad, inside the lips, and on the tongue. In the feet they appear at the junction of the skin with the hoof, on the soft tissue between the digits, and around the coronet. They are commonly found on the teats in females, and less commonly on other tender portions of the body. These vesicles or blisters vary in size and shape from the size of a small pea to a hazel nut, being from one-fifth of an inch to an inch in diameter. They are soft and watery, but, at first, are not usually accompanied by inflammation of the surrounding tissue. Those on the tongue are usually larger and less easily ruptured than those on the pad and lips. These vesicles are easily ruptured. If not ruptured by the animal's efforts to eat, they burst spontaneously on reaching maturity. When ruptured a limpid, yellowish fluid exudes which grows denser and more opaque as the disease advances. This fluid is intensely infective. The mucous membrane over the newly ruptured vesicle looks like the skin over an ordinary blister and separates easily from its attachment. The under surface is a red, angry, raw and painful sore, gradually changing to a reddish-yellow colour. The vesicles on the feet are similar to those on the mouth except that the covering is thicker. These erosions are extremely painful, and even under favourable conditions, heal slowly.