

## A CASE OF DIPHTHERIA IN A HORSE.

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AN affection of the throat, in many respects identical with human diphtheria, undoubtedly occurs in cats, pigeons, fowls, and other birds, during periods of epidemic prevalence of this disease. Diphtheria is a disease natural to the cat, which causes intense broncho-pneumonia, etc., and has undoubtedly been conveyed to human beings through these animals.

So far as I am aware, and I have consulted several eminent veterinary surgeons in this district, I can find no record in any text-book in my possession of the occurrence of a case of diphtheria in a horse.

On December 16th, 1907, I was asked to see a suspected case of glanders by Mr. George Green, M.R.C.V.S. The animal was a horse, aged, suffering from the following symptoms:—

A muco-purulent discharge from both nostrils, which subsequently became sanguineous and had a very foetid odour; there was an enlargement of the submaxillary gland; a nasty cough; a general unthrifty appearance; temperature  $102^{\circ}$ ; no rigors; difficult deglutition; great thirst; diarrhoea, and rapid emaciation. Respiration 20, and pulse 34 per minute. There was also dyspnoea, with roaring inspiration. The Schneiderian membrane was covered with nodules and ulcers resembling diphtheritic sloughing masses.

The injection of mallein was tried, but gave no definite reaction, the temperature only rising 1 degree, and there being only a small swelling at the seat on inoculation, which was not at all characteristic of glanders. Anti-diphtheritic serum was not administered.

The affected animal rapidly got worse, the emaciation increased, with complete loss of appetite, and great difficulty in swallowing; the temperature rose to  $104^{\circ}$ , and death took place on December 22nd, 1907.

The stable was thoroughly disinfected with sulphur dioxide and whitewashed. Two other horses occupying adjacent stalls in the same stable escaped contracting the disease. Swabs were taken from the nose of each, and contained no organism with the exception of staphylococci and streptococci. These animals have continued in sound health up to the present date (January 13th, 1908).

*Bacteriological Examination.*—Four swabs were taken from the nasal discharge of the sick horse on different dates, and cultivations

made on potato, blood-serum, and agar slope. The growth on the potato, though profuse, did not assume the honeycomb appearance of glanders. Films were stained with carbol fuchsin, methylene blue, Neisser, Gordon Pugh, and Gram. Distinct Klebs-Loeffler bacilli were present, and very numerous; these were specially well stained by Gram's method, the bacilli being from 3 to 6  $\mu$  long, and  $\cdot 5$  to 1  $\mu$  thick, the polar staining being very well marked indeed. Sub-cultivations were made, one of which liquefied blood-serum, the other did not.

The swabs were forwarded to the Royal Sanitary Institute, and their report confirmed my opinion that the case was indistinguishable from human diphtheria.

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#### PROCEEDINGS OF THE INCORPORATED SOCIETY OF MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HEALTH.

FOUNDED, 1856. RECONSTITUTED, 1888. INCORPORATED, 1892.

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A GENERAL MEETING of the Incorporated Society of Medical Officers of Health was held at the Offices of the Society, No. 1, Upper Montague Street, Russell Square, London, W.C., on Friday, January 10th, 1908. Present: Drs. E. C. Seaton, D. S. Davies, F. E. Fremantle, J. M. Martin, W. N. Barlow, F. J. Allan, Harold Coates, A. Griffith, Gerard C. Taylor, S. C. Lawrence, Charles Sanders, G. Sowden, J. W. Hembrough, F. E. Cane, W. J. Howarth, S. Barwise, J. T. C. Nash, T. P. Puddicombe, J. A. H. Brincker, E. H. Snell, J. F. Taylor, W. J. J. Stewart, J. Elliott Robinson, W. H. Symons, Wm. Butler, W. A. Bond, C. W. F. Young, H. M. Richards, H. E. Corbin, Sir Shirley F. Murphy, Herbert Jones.

THE VICE PRESIDENT, Dr. E. C. SEATON, in taking the chair, explained that he did so in the absence, through illness, of the President, Dr. George Reid.

On the motion of Dr. W. R. SMITH, a resolution was passed recording the regret of the meeting at the cause of Dr. Reid's absence, and expressing an earnest hope that he would soon be restored to health.

*Minutes.*—It was resolved that the minutes of the last General Meeting having been printed and published in *PUBLIC HEALTH* for December, 1907, be taken as read, be confirmed, and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

Dr. HERBERT JONES (Hon. Sec.) read letters regretting inability to be present from Drs. A. Newsholme, Herbert Manley, Cooper Pattin, J. Taylor, B. A. Whitelegge, and E. Sergeant.

#### ELECTIONS.

The following candidates having been duly nominated, were balloted for, and the President declared them to be unanimously elected:—

#### AS FELLOWS.

Coleman, Charles John, M.B., D.P.H., Assist. M.O.H. Derby C.B.

Heggs, T. Barrett, M.B., D.P.H., M.O.H. Milton and Sittingbourne C.B.