

**APPENDIX TO THE HORSE, AS  
PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY  
FOR THE DIFFUSION OF USEFUL  
KNOWLEDGE, PP. 473-529**

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Appendix to *The horse*, as published by the Society for the diffusion of useful knowledge, pp. 473-529 by W. C. Spooner

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**W. C. SPOONER**

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APPENDIX

TO

THE HORSE,

AS PUBLISHED BY THE

SOCIETY FOR THE DIFFUSION OF USEFUL KNOWLEDGE.

DESIGNED TO ADVANCE THE WORK

TO

THE PRESENT STATE OF VETERINARY SCIENCE.

BY

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## CONTENTS.

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	PAGE		PAGE
Prefatory Remarks . . . . .	473	Bronchitis . . . . .	495
Diseases of the Brain, Megrims . . . . .	475	Catarrhal Fever, Influenza . . . . .	ibid.
Apoplexy . . . . .	ibid.	Chronic Cough . . . . .	498
Stagger, &c. . . . .	476	Broken Wind, Roaring . . . . .	ibid.
Tetanus . . . . .	477	The Diaphragm . . . . .	499
Epilepsy . . . . .	ibid.	Spasmodic Cough . . . . .	500
Palsy . . . . .	ibid.	Colic . . . . .	500, 501
Rabies, or Madness . . . . .	478	Inflammation of the Bowels . . . . .	501
Neurotomy . . . . .	ibid.	Physicking . . . . .	502
Common Inflammation of the Eye . . . . .	479	Hernia, or Rupture . . . . .	ibid.
Specific Ophthalmia . . . . .	480	Inflammation of the Liver . . . . .	503
Cataract . . . . .	481	Jaundice . . . . .	ibid.
Gutter Serena . . . . .	ibid.	Inflammation of the Kidneys . . . . .	504
Nasal Gleet . . . . .	ibid.	Diabetes . . . . .	ibid.
— Polypus . . . . .	482	Inflammation of the Bladder . . . . .	ibid.
Glanders . . . . .	483	Cutting for the Stone . . . . .	505
Farcy . . . . .	485	Castration . . . . .	ibid.
Lampas . . . . .	ibid.	Sprain of the Shoulder . . . . .	ibid.
The Teeth . . . . .	486, 487	Broken Knees . . . . .	ibid.
Wolves' Teeth . . . . .	487	Splints . . . . .	506
Diseases of the Teeth . . . . .	ibid.	The Leg . . . . .	ibid.
— Tongue . . . . .	488	Strains of the Flexor Sinews . . . . .	507
Strangles . . . . .	ibid.	Windgalls . . . . .	508
Poll Evil . . . . .	489	Grogginess . . . . .	ibid.
Star Gazers and Ewe-necked . . . . .	490	Cutting . . . . .	ibid.
Inflammation of the Vein . . . . .	ibid.	Strain of the Coffin Joint . . . . .	ibid.
Roaring . . . . .	491	Ringbone . . . . .	ibid.
Form of the Chest . . . . .	ibid.	Strain of the Round Bone . . . . .	509
Chest Founder, Anticor . . . . .	492	Stiff Lameness . . . . .	ibid.
The Pulse . . . . .	ibid.	Dislocation of the Patella . . . . .	510
Fever . . . . .	ibid.	Thorough-Pins . . . . .	ibid.
Bog and Blood Spavin . . . . .	493	Curbs . . . . .	ibid.
Bleeding . . . . .	ibid.	Bog Spavin . . . . .	511
Inflammation of the Lungs . . . . .	494	Bone Spavin . . . . .	ibid.
Catarrh . . . . .	495	Capped Hoek . . . . .	512

	PAGE		PAGE
Grease . . . . .	512	Roaring, Wheezing, &c. . . . .	523
Acute Founder . . . . .	ibid.	Orib-biting . . . . .	524
Pumiced Feet . . . . .	513	Curb . . . . .	ibid.
Contraction . . . . .	ibid.	Cutting . . . . .	ibid.
Navicular Joint Disease . . . . .	ibid.	Enlarged Hoek . . . . .	525
Sandcrack . . . . .	518	The Eyes . . . . .	ibid.
Quitter . . . . .	ibid.	Blood Spavin . . . . .	526
Shoeing . . . . .	519	Splent . . . . .	ibid.
Operations . . . . .	520	Thickening of the Sinews . . . . .	ibid.
Blistering . . . . .	521	Thrush . . . . .	ibid.
Firing . . . . .	522	Soundness . . . . .	ibid.
Setons . . . . .	ibid.	Pores of the Skin . . . . .	527
Vicious to Clean . . . . .	ibid.	Moulting . . . . .	ibid.
— Shoe . . . . .	ibid.	Colour . . . . .	528
Not Lying Down . . . . .	ibid.	Mange . . . . .	529
Shying . . . . .	523	Medicines . . . . .	ibid.
Soundness . . . . .	ibid.		



## APPENDIX;

DESIGNED TO ADVANCE THE WORK TO THE PRESENT

### STATE OF VETERINARY SCIENCE.

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#### PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE extensive sale which this work has received during the eighteen years it has been before the public, affords the best possible evidence of the high estimation in which it has been held. The interest that is always attached to the subject of the work, the easy and familiar style in which it is written, the agreeable manner in which important truths have been impressed, dry subjects relieved, and good principles inculcated, are merits which sufficiently account for its popularity. While, however, the history of the horse remains the same, and there is but little to be added to our previous knowledge of his anatomical structure, the science which relates to the diseases of the animal has not stood still. Many minds have been devoted to the subject, old experiments have been repeated and new ones tried, principles have been tested, and truths, or what were considered as such, have been re-examined, so that it is hard if, with all this, some improvement has not been made. It is with this view of the matter that we have limited our Supplement to the more practical part of the work, that relating to Pathology: by so doing we have brought it up to the present state of Veterinary science, and, we trust, enhanced its value in no trifling degree, so far as utility is concerned. We could readily have enlarged the Appendix by extending our observations to the other portions of the work, but at the risk of distracting the attention of the reader without adding to the real value of our labours.

We have spoken of the merits and attractions of the work—we may also notice its errors. In the wish to render the subject clear and simple, the author has occasionally overstepped the mark, and represented things as far easier than actual experience will justify; and he has also spoken of many diseases as if the reader, with the superficial knowledge books alone are capable of imparting, were competent to treat them. It is a trite saying, that a man who defends his own case has a

fool for his counsel. We doubt very much whether he has a much better claim for wisdom when he attempts to treat the diseases of his own horses. Bad, however, as this practice is, it is infinitely preferable to that of employing an *ignoramus*, as is too frequently the case; a man, perhaps, totally ignorant of the principles of medicine, the anatomy of the animal, or the very rudiments of science. The information afforded by this work will enable the owner of horses to discriminate between the man of science and the mere empiric.

The writer, in the course of many years' experience in his profession, has found almost invariably that the man who has had the greatest experience of horses is most diffident of his own knowledge as to the diseases of the animal. He has now in his eye three individuals, one a trainer of race-horses, another a large coach proprietor, and the third an extensive dealer in horses, each highly respectable and well-informed in his respective department, and each possessing an experience of some twenty-five to thirty years, and yet neither of them would presume to treat a horse labouring under disease, or trust to his own judgment in the matter. Yet, during the period of his acquaintanceship with them, the writer has met with many a young gentleman or pseudo-sportsman in his first scarlet coat—many a shopkeeper fresh from the counter—and many a groom whose experience has never extended beyond some twenty horses, who have not hesitated to give their opinions on the diseases of horses with the utmost confidence, or to pit their judgment against that of the regularly educated veterinary surgeon. It is a point of honour with many shallow-brained individuals never to acknowledge their ignorance of any matters relating to the horse, regarding with the utmost asperity any impugning of their knowledge of horse-flesh. Such gentlemen (when they are gentlemen) afford very excellent prey for horse-chaunters and low dealers, to whose company, indeed, they are extremely partial. They would seem to illustrate the adage, that "a little knowledge was a dangerous thing;" but in our opinion it is not the little knowledge which is so dangerous, but the small modicum of judgment with which such knowledge is too frequently applied.

To return, however, to our subject, it is hoped that the many thousand purchasers of "The Horse" may find in the present Supplement the means of rendering the work complete; so that, to speak medicinally, by the transfusion of a little fresh blood, new vigour may be imparted into the frame of the old Horse; and that, instead of being laid entirely on the shelf, or confined permanently to his *box*, we may find that he has still a *new race* to run.

## APPENDIX.

### (1.) PAGE 101.—DISEASES OF THE BRAIN.—MEGRIMS, &c.

Horses are not particularly liable to diseases of the brain; far less so than the human subject, in whom a formidable batch of maladies, denominated mental diseases, are met with. Disease of the brain is oftener found in sheep, and carries off annually a considerable per centage of these animals. One of the most common affections of the brain in the horse is the *Megrims*, which has been treated of in the text. It is supposed to arise from sudden determination of blood to the head. It is certainly the case that this disease is most prevalent in the spring, and amongst fat plethoric subjects; and therefore we may justly conclude that a determination of blood to the brain is the cause in many instances. There are others, however, in which the symptoms border on *epilepsy*, and appear to arise from disordered functions of the brain. Young horses are rarely affected with these cephalic diseases, which are generally confined to old subjects. Small animals are more subject to these complaints than large ones, and we have found that neither heavy cart, nor thorough-bred horses are so liable as others. Such is the susceptibility sometimes, that any sudden alarm will cause the animal to reel and fall backwards.

We have known some horses more liable to this disease in very cold frosty weather; in such instances the symptoms have been those of giddiness, without the severity of ordinary megrims; the animal has reeled, however, like a drunken man, and been extremely dangerous both to ride and drive. We have known an old horse thus continue almost useless throughout the winter, and gradually shake off the disease as warm weather came on. Now, it must be evident that the exciting causes in such instances must be altogether different from that of ordinary megrims; and, whilst the bleeding and purging are very proper, as recommended in the text for ordinary megrims, arising from plethora, it is not to be advised for that variety of disease to which we have called attention, and which is rather to be benefited by warmth, good grooming, and tonic medicine.

### (2.) PAGE 102.—APOPLEXY.

Horses can scarcely be said to be liable to *Apoplexy*, as it exists in the human subject, although we have known death produced almost suddenly, in which it has been found that there has been a rupture of some small vessels on the brain. A case in point occurs to our recollection. A young mare, in plethoric condition, was working in a field with some cart horses, when suddenly she started off, galloped furiously round the field several times, then fell, and died almost immediately. On examining the body, no disease could be detected, but a small blood-vessel had ruptured, and about half a tea-spoonful of coagulated blood was found on the