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The Spahlinger Treatment.

It is to be hoped that the wide publicity given by the following article in the *Daily Mail* (Dec. 8th) will relieve Dr. Spahlinger of his financial anxieties :

I am able to give to-day the first account of a series of highly important experiments which have just been completed at Geneva by M. Henri Spahlinger, whose treatment for consumption has already produced remarkable results. Part of these bovine tests were to have been made at Crewe last year, but had to be postponed owing to M. Spahlinger's ill-health, and the urgent call for supplies of serum for human beings, which necessitated his constant presence at Geneva.

For the last ten years M. Spahlinger has been making private experiments on cattle, but those conducted during the last twelve months were under the control of officials of the State of Geneva. The results have been such that it is now possible to state that M. Spahlinger has succeeded in most brilliant manner in immunising cattle against tuberculosis, on the same principle as human beings are vaccinated against smallpox. The incalculable importance of this achievement, perhaps the greatest step towards eradication of the dread scourge since Koch started the scientific world 44 years ago by announcing his discovery of the tubercle bacillus will be appreciated when it is remembered that in England and Wales alone the disease claims a death roll of 42,000 victims every year.

It is an accepted fact that in the great majority of cases of pulmonary tuberculosis in human beings the disease was originally contracted through the intestinal tract, the germs having remained quiescent for years in the glands, where the bovine bacilli adapt themselves to the human environment, breaking out later when the defences of the body are weakened or occupied in fighting some other disease.

That cattle could be successfully immunised against the scourge was known to M. Spahlinger already in 1917, as the year previously he had vaccinated 20 Freiburg cows with *complete* vaccine, over a period of six months.

Massive doses of living tubercle germs were afterwards injected, but the virus failed to have any effect whatever upon the animals, which have remained "consumption-proof" up to the present day. Every year one or two of the herd have been slaughtered, but not the slightest trace of tuberculosis has been discovered in them.

Despite great financial difficulties, M. Spahlinger resolutely refused all offers to commercialise his bovine vaccines until he could produce them at a cost which would bring them within the reach of everyone. In 1921 he successfully vaccinated a few cows with "partial" or incomplete vaccines, but, notwithstanding these satisfactory results, he set about still further simplifying his method of immunisation.

The tests recently completed show that in this he has entirely succeeded.

In the course of these different experiments various forms and quantities of simplified vaccines were used on heifers in order to ascertain :

(1) What combination of vaccines and what dosage would prevent a vaccinated calf from contracting tuberculosis when inoculated with a moderate dose of virulent virus such as is met with in the normal life of the animal.

(2) What combination and doses of vaccines would prevent a vaccinated calf from contracting tuberculosis when injected with massive doses of virus.

The experiments were conducted under the strict supervision of M. Antoine Bron, President of the Government of Geneva, and MM. Larue and Montant, official veterinary surgeons.

The virus was taken from virulent cultures of bovine tubercle, rendered hypertoxic by M. Spahlinger's method of irritating the strains. Equal quantities of the germs were placed in ampullas and handed to M. Bron, in whose possession they remained until the injections were actually made.

A certain number of the calves had been previously vaccinated, while others of the same age, weight and breed, certified free from tuberculosis, to be used as "controls," remained unvaccinated.

After the virus had been injected, all the animals were placed in the keeping of the Geneva State officials, who alone had access to them during the experiments.

The results of the tests can be described only as amazing. M. Larue, the official in charge, yesterday summarised them to me in the following words :—

All the cattle vaccinated with M. Spahlinger's simplified bovine vaccines, two and three, successfully resisted the infection and showed no trace of tuberculosis at the autopsy; whereas all the unvaccinated calves or "controls" had developed "progressive tuberculosis."

In confirming the above, M. Bron said :

I am happy to be able to declare that the experiments were successful beyond all hopes.

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These magnificent results open up a new horizon in the preventive immunisation of cattle, and justify the hope that before long humanity will be relieved of one of its most appalling maladies.

It is said that none of us really escapes the invasion of the tubercle bacillus, which is generally introduced early into the system through cow's milk, though most of us possess natural defences which prevent the dire consequences.

Silver Foxes in Switzerland.

Country Life (Dec. 4th) gives a description of the experiments to acclimatise silver foxes in the Engadine. There are other similar farms in Villars and the Valais, and the results will be watched with general interest; experiments have been tried in England but have not so far been successful.

An enterprise has recently been started at Klosters, near Davos, for the breeding of Canadian silver foxes. The breeding of these valuable foxes in captivity has been successfully carried out in Canada for many years, and the Swiss promoters hope to be equally successful. Certainly the mountain climate here appears to suit the animals well, and the long, severe winter is ideal for the production of first-class fur. The farm at Klosters has sixty pairs of foxes, all bred from pedigree stock, imported from the well-known farm of Colpitts Bros., Calgary, Canada. They are kept in pairs in a series of long enclosures formed of strong wire netting on stout beams arranged at a steep angle, as shown in the illustration. This is necessary to prevent the lodgment of enormous weights of snow in winter. A feature of this farm is a system whereby any private individual can buy a pair of foxes and "board" them on the farm for a yearly payment. The initial outlay appears somewhat large at first sight—a pair of pedigree silver foxes costing about £350. As however, each pair breeds four or five cubs

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