

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND VETERINARY SCIENCE

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That the work and knowledge of the Animal husbandman and the Veterinarian are closely related is too obvious to require discussion or explanation. But just what the relationship is, and how it should be considered or adjusted in the practical promotion or development of the livestock industry is not so apparent. Further more, the relationship and the application are not the same in all localities nor under all conditions. This variation doubtless accounts for the frequent appearance of articles on the subject in various places. In the present article I shall confine myself to the conditions of application of this relationship in Thailand at the present time.

I might begin by asking the often repeated question, why an Animal husbandman, and why a Veterinarian? It is generally known that

the business of the Animal husbandman is to produce and to improve the livestock; that of the Veterinarian is to cure diseases and injuries of domesticated animals, and thus prevented their unnecessary losses. The two aims meet on a common ground; namely, the conservation of animal life for the economic use of mankind. Animal husbandry promotes the multiplication of animals by direct means by favouring the union of good animals and bringing into expression their intrinsic merits through careful feeding and proper management. Veterinary science does the same thing indirectly, by preventing the death, or deterioration through disease of parents obviously needed for multiplication.

Because the practice of the Veterinarian increases with the increase in animal population, and

also because his remuneration increases with the rise of the relative value of livestock, whether due to artificial rise caused by the fluctuation of supply and demand, or to the rise because of the intrinsic value of the animals through being better fleshed, larger, or being good animals for breeding purposes. The Veterinarian is naturally interested in the work of Animal husbandman; and in turn, the Stockman is interested in the work of the Veterinarian, because of the protection of the life and health of his animals which his knowledge and skill has given. Thus, it is evident that the gain of the Stockman is the gain of the Veterinarian, and the loss or poor business of the Stockman is also poor business for the Veterinarian. In other words, it may be said that Animal husbandry and Veterinary science work for the same goal. Both are interested in the same ultimate objective - the production of livestock.

Differences, however, do exist in practice.

1. Animal Husbandry is more fundamental than Veterinary Science.

As animals must exist before

they can be treated for ailments; the work of the stockmen is more fundamental. Veterinary science is only an aid that makes for better success in the proper multiplication of livestock.

2. Objectives diametrically opposed.

A Veterinarian looks for diseases in animals, and is disappointed in a way when he fails to find it. An Animal husbandman looks for disease in his animals only to eliminate the sick one from his herd quickly, unless the animals are of special merits warranting expensive treatment. These two objectives are not as a rule combined in the same individual. This statement holds true whether that man knows Animal husbandry or Veterinary science. The best Veterinarians in Thailand and elsewhere possess a very good general knowledge of Animal husbandry, and the outstanding Animal husbandmen are usually fairly well qualified practical if not technical Veterinarian.

3. Antagonistic interests.

The Veterinarian while working on disease control receives more cri-

ticism from the Stockman. His quarantine measures often work a direct personal inconvenience, if not an actual loss to the Animal husbandman, and like the man who obeys implicitly the dictum "A bird in hand is better than two in the bush", the Stockman does not worry about his future troubles, but rather concerns himself about the immediate ones. Of course, it does not generally take long for him to learn from experience his error in estimating the relative value of his immediate convenience as compared with the future safety of his own property; and the lesson once learned is never forgotten. In Thailand, most of the Veterinarian and the Stockman know that there are not many localities where this lesson has not been taught by experience during the last 20—25 years. The result is that it is yearly becoming easier to enforce a quarantine, especially if any measure of this kind is preceded by a campaign of education in which the Stockman are reminded of what had happened in the past.

Notwithstanding these differences and because the Animal

husbandman and the Veterinarian must always work together, and also because experiences in the United States and other countries seems to show that a more harmonious relationship can be secured by reciprocal understanding of each other's work, it seems highly desirable to combine whenever possible, the two functions in one man.

We may be losing sight of the fact that Animal husbandry is essentially a part of Agriculture. It includes not only the breeding, care, feeding and management of animals, but also the raising of feeds for these animals. This, by the way, is one of the most important of all of the farmer's undertakings. The fine breeds of horses, cattle, sheep and pigs of England could not have been developed excepted by the sturdy English farmers who knew animals and the proper methods of feeding them. A Stockman understands thoroughly such problems in raising livestock as pasture management, soil fertility, including the value of manures as fertilizers and the proper use and handling of the same. He also understands the problems re-

lating the distribution of animal labor on the farm and many phases of Agricultural Economics. These factors, which by education and experiences are integral parts of the knowledge of the average Stockman, and not generally appreciated by the average Veterinarian, for no Veterinary College gives their students a basic course in General Agriculture.

The Veterinarian, on the other hand, knows the latest development in Animal surgery, the most up-to-date method of treating certain disease, and the best means of controlling epizootics, for Veterinary Science being basically medical, must train its students in the fine points in Medicine.

It is evident, then, that one might say in full justification of the creation of the Department of Livestock Development, that the most problem of Veterinary Science in this country to tackle, is to clean out the whole area of the country to be free from rinderpest. But let us not forget that besides the disease to tackle, we still have to work on Animal production as well, viz., breeding, dairying, nutrition, etc.,

which should be entered into more intensively as well as working on wiping out the rinderpest disease. Purely Veterinary science as such in its limited fields could not be justified as the main function of our Department of Livestock Development.

Since the function of the Department of Livestock Development must be quite varied, and should include besides disease control, such important works as the breeding of farm animals for improvement, feeding and nutrition in general; management, marketing and researches in various field. It is essentially that it must be adequately staffed to do the works of such fields. In this age of specialization, it is essential in order to attain maximum efficiency that the mechanics of the work is so important that different divisions of the Department should be placed in the hands of degree-men that have been trained along specialized lines; It would be preposterous to expect the Veterinarian to perform the duties of breeding of animals or milk or meat control with the same degree

