

**On founder. Pedicida / [Anon].**

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## No. 5.

ON FOUNDER.—*Pedicida.*

This singular disorder has hardly ever been intelligibly described, and certainly has never obtained that attention that its importance merited.

It is by no means infrequent in this country, and still more frequent I believe in France. This I am disposed to believe, from what I observed of their treatment of the foot in shoeing, and from the immense heaps of these foundered feet collected in their veterinary colleges, and the great interest which appeared in what I had to communicate on this subject. What I am speaking of was about the year 1828; how it may be in this respect at present I know not, as many changes were daily taking place every where in the management of the feet.

The English name *founder* for this disease appears to us to have been obtained from a very ancient French word, brought to us from Normandy, viz. *morfondre*, signifying a melting down or sinking away, as a ship sinks in the waves of the ocean: *mor* being an ancient Gaulish word for the sea, and in British also, it signifies the same thing. We have in this country retained the name without much alteration, except the omission of the *mor*, whilst the French themselves, appear to have got, as in other instances, into another designation for this disorder, calling it *La fourbure*, of which expression I hardly quite understand the sense or intention.

As the ancients, both Greeks and Romans, do not appear to have been near so great sufferers from this complaint as are the moderns; being ignorant, most fortunately, of this ironing art, and of all its baneful accompaniments; so that Vegetius has hardly made mention of such a disorder. Now these ancients, very wisely as it appears to us, suited the road to the foot, by forming a hard, level, smooth causeway, upon which the hoofs would suffer very little, and on which the horses tabbered away at a great rate, they changing their animals frequently, as at every six miles, their stations being placed at this distance along these roads, with relays for government service of forty horses each. We moderns, on the contrary, try to suit the foot to the road, of whatever description it may be, and in so doing by an iron band nailed round the foot, have fallen into a black catalogue of disasters, diseases, and difficulties, little dreamt of or intended. Among the ancients, we hardly hear of any such thing as



tumble-down horses, or of broken knees, or of people killed by the falling of their horses, while such is happening to us daily, and among the killed we show at the head of the list two kings of Britain, and those of the most renowned and important character, destroyed by the stumbling of their horses, as we have elsewhere also observed; so that neither royal nor noble birth, wealth nor station, can exempt its possessors from the fatal effects of the practice.

With the Greek veterinary writers of Constantinople, or of the eastern empire of Rome, is found, however, a disorder of the feet mentioned by them, which appears to have been attended with the loss of, or shedding, of the hoofs.

This disorder was called by the name *κριθίασις*, *Crithiasis*,—translated *Hordeatio*, or the *Barley disease*, the usual food at that period of their horses, and it is described as originating in the stomach.\* And there can be no doubt that a mass of undigested food of any kind, weighing on the stomach, would paralyse its actions, and derange the whole system. We see at times cachectic and strumous children, that eat voraciously, losing the use of their lower extremities, apparently, from an oppression of the nerves going to those parts, which nerves are situated below the stomach, and are proceeding from the loins. Also after a severe attack of typhus, or low nervous fever, we often see, if the patient recovers, a peeling off of the cuticle, a loss of the hair, and even of the nails; that it is not therefore much to be wondered at, that the hoofs of animals should be similarly affected, from any deficiency obviously of nervous energy. In nerving horses also, as it is called, the paralytic state into which the feet are brought, by the loss of their nerves by this vile operation, will occasion the arteries going to these parts for their supply, to lose their energy, for the action between nerves and arteries is mutual and reciprocal, and either will become benumbed by the absence of the other. So that the arteries in the above case becoming paralyzed, and losing in degree their powers of secretion, an insufficient support causes a separation to take place, and, finally, a falling off, as we have on several occasions ourselves witnessed, with deplorable consequences, indeed no less than the death of the animal.

I formerly apprehended the very ancient writer, Simon, the earliest we know of on horses, and quoted by Xenophon, was alluding to the foundered foot, when, in his recommendation in the choice of a horse, he warned them against a soft footed one, and to prefer rather “one whose foot, when struck upon, resounded like a cymbal.” I now however believe, that he merely meant a flat-foot, where the furch, from being low, met the ground, as being of too tender a character to bear much battering upon the road. And Horace also, we now believe, only meant the same thing in his *mollis fultá pede*, for this disorder, we think, might probably have been somewhat of a rarity with them.

\* See *Scriptores Græci Veterin.* p. 33. *Ruellii Latine reddita.* fol. 14.



From a gentleman of my acquaintance, and who is well versed in horses, I learn that, in America at this day, they are subject to a disorder very similar to our founder, and which they also call by that name, accompanied as I understand at times, with a decadence of the hoofs.

He remarks that it usually takes place on a journey, after sharp travelling, and where the animal has been fed with *maize*, or *Indian corn*, (*Zea mays Lin.*) The meal in this case had perhaps been hastily made, and was not well masticated, and without the proper supply of water that was necessary for its solution; since this grain, has an exceedingly strong, heavy, glutinous body, and is requiring great care therefore in its exhibition, and the consequences of such a mass on the tender stomach of undigested food, we have above described.

It may also be remarked that maize, or Indian corn, has been in all periods the usual food of the eastern world, extending into the west also, certainly into Syria and Palestine, and as far as Greece, and which was certainly the corn spoken of in the Holy Scriptures, that our Saviour's disciples "plucked and did eat of on the Sabbath." So general indeed was its use in these countries, that we are by no means assured it was not at times the cause of this Crithiasis, the disorder above spoken of; being eaten perhaps when the more common food of barley, from scarcity was difficult to be had; still calling it by the name of the food usually eaten. All we wish here is, to draw a more exact attention to it, and to warn people against the administration of it in a slovenly and careless way, lest, in destroying the hoofs, they destroy their animals also, for a succedaneous hoof is not worth much, as we shall presently see.

We are now compelled, in further prosecuting our account of this disorder, to borrow or draw upon our own stores or materials, having in our publication on the foot formerly, been obliged to describe this disease, in order to its not being mistaken and confounded with the simple contracted foot, or any other disorder that distressed or incapacitated the animal from good going, well knowing at the time we furnished the description, that it was out of place there, and that at some future period it should be arranged with the other diseases of the foot, and where, in the next edition, if such should ever be required, we intend to affix it, so that, at present, to save expense to our readers and to ourselves, we shall refer only to the pages in those works, where these details are to be found, viz. : in the *Podora* at p. 32, 3, 4, 5, as far as line 12, ending with "parts inflame, and derangement is the consequence;" also, page 36 to line 23, ending, "in this direction." Next we are obliged to resort to the *Stereoplea*, at p. 43, 4, 5, 6, 7, to line 13, "too soon." And the very expensive assemblage of woodcuts also of foundered feet we bring from that work, to place it in this. Therefore, in future editions of the work just alluded to, this disorder of founder will be mentioned only in general terms, referring for particulars to the present collection.



That the present publication, however, may not be too sterile, and destitute of interest, we copy, from the above works, the leading circumstances, containing a short description of the disease, and some references to the plate of foundered feet.

“*A description of true Founder.*—The foot of the horse, not unfrequently, is subject to have its connection with the hoof weakened, or wholly detached. The coffin bone in this case dislodged, or its adherence impaired, is pressed down by the natural operation of the weight of the body, and sinking till it meets the sole, it there rests, with its front parts bearing upon the front parts of the horn of the sole, forcing it downwards and sometimes outwards, in such a way as that from being a concave, it becomes of a flat, or of a convex form. The horse is then, truly enough, said to be foundered, or *pom-footed*.\*—See Fig. 1 and 2.

“In order to afford a name, and of a cast somewhat more classical, for professional use, for this disorder, than the one vulgarly employed, and that would bear also the inflexions of language, I instituted the name of *Pedicida* for it, derived from *pes*, a foot, and *cado*, to fall, and to its congeners, where the bone was not so totally detached, the following, viz. : *Pedimota*, or the imperfect or partial founder, where certain deformities, or a partial sinking only of the bone has taken place, as an example see Fig. 3. Sometimes we have seen certain *bullæ*, or *bladders*, or *galls*, take place in this case at the coronet, filled with bloody serum, which, being opened, and the part freely let blood, a timely relief has been afforded, and the total disunion of the bone with the hoof has been prevented. These bladders after subsiding, disfigure sometimes the skin with the appearance of horny knots and of warts. The next affection I call the *Pediturba*, or wrinkled foot, by which I understand, &c.”

\* From *pomme*. Fr. an apple—not *pomet*, *pomed*, or *pumice*, as we sometimes see it written. One writer has endeavoured to make the *pumiced* foot, as he calls it, a distinct disorder, from founder, but certainly erroneously, since the state of the hoof he so designates and describes, is neither more nor less than the foundered foot after a considerable lapse of time, the hoof then assuming that spongy, thick, and shapeless appearance. Cut 1, Fig. 5.