

# D.V.M. In a Humane Society

## History and activities of the Animal Rescue League of Boston

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**A**BOUT twelve years ago when I was given an opportunity to work for the Animal Rescue League, I was somewhat reluctant to take a position with a humane organization. It had been my belief, undoubtedly shared by numerous veterinary students and others, that humane organizations were "crackpot" groups operated by unreasonably neurotic persons whose sole mission in life was that of making trouble. My ideas since then have of necessity been radically changed.

The movement responsible for the development of the Animal Rescue League and some five hundred other organizations of similar function began in New York City in 1866. The founder was Henry Bergh, an outspoken citizen, who deplored the abuses to which animals were subjected. He was instrumental in the enactment of laws giving protection to animals in the state of New York. These laws have been copied in many other states as well as abroad. Strangely enough, laws pertaining to the protection of animals are older than those enacted for the protection of children. It may be of interest to note that the first case of child abuse successfully prosecuted was tried in the state of New York by using the reasoning that since man is an animal, children are animals, and consequently the rights and welfare of children can be protected by laws pertaining to animals.

The Animal Rescue League of Bos-

\* The Animal Rescue League of Boston, Mass.

ton was founded in 1899 by Anna Harris Smith (Mrs. Huntington Smith). Since that time it has been constantly enlarging in personnel and in work done, until at present it has forty-eight persons on its payroll. There are two buildings; namely, a headquarters and an animal shelter with facilities for 400 stray animals. The work is divided into several departments, consisting of the Clinic, Collection Department, Inspection Department, Humane Education, and the Rest Farm with its small animal cemetery.

This organization is one of a relatively small group of humane agencies which operate an animal clinic. Three full-time veterinarians are employed. The clinic is maintained for the care and treatment of animals belonging to those unable to pay for the services of a veterinarian. In this clinic, from 14,000 to 17,000 patients are



Grave in the small animal cemetery.



The author at work in the fully equipped small animal clinic of the Animal Rescue League, Boston.

treated each year. The work is entirely out-patient in character, and the equipment includes a nitrous oxide-oxygen-ether anaesthesia apparatus, X-ray, fluoroscope, diathermy, electrical scalpels, drugs, biologics, and some limited laboratory facilities. In fact, the clinic has all the equipment necessary for the proper maintenance of an out-patient department. The only fees are for castrating, spaying, and bathing. All other work is done on a donation basis, averaging about forty-one cents per patient.

The collection department of the small animal service has eight ambulances operating daily, covering an area of about twenty-five miles to the north, south, and west of Boston. Two additional ambulances are employed exclusively on Cape Cod. Each year approximately 15,000 stray, sick, or unwanted dogs, and about 45,000 stray, sick, or unwanted cats and kittens are picked up.

A large part of the work is that of investigating maltreatment of pets, horses on the street, neglected animals, and similar abuses. Every report of maltreatment is promptly investigated by a competent agent. Several of these agents are authorized to make arrests and to prosecute in the courts when suggestions for betterment of abused animals are not heeded. Another duty of the agents is to visit the stockyards and abattoirs regularly to guard against improper handling of livestock. An agent is constantly in attendance at rodeos, circuses, carnivals, fairs, dog and horse race tracks, horse and dog shows, auctions, sale and delivery stables. Also, frequent inspections are made of riding schools and stables, markets, pet shops, trained animal acts in theatres, and other places where animals are used or exploited.

Three teachers are employed who visit

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### Jr. A.V.M.A.

Dr. M. D. Johnson, a former member of the Department of Surgery, spoke at the April 14 meeting of the Jr. A.V.M.A. Dr. Johnson gave a very interesting talk on the restraint of large animals in the field.

Mr. Oderkirk, associate professor in the Dept. of Agricultural Economics, spoke to the society April 28, 1943, on the grading of poultry and eggs. Mr. Oderkirk is head of the division on the grading of poultry and eggs for the O.P.A. in Washington, D. C.

The Jr. A.V.M.A. society has appropriated \$400.00 for the establishment of a medical library in the clinic reading room. An additional \$250.00 has been withdrawn from the treasury for the purchase of war bonds. Any money remaining from the library fund will be used to purchase additional war bonds.

### Cardinal Key

Robert J. Kirkpatrick, winter '43, was initiated into the Cardinal Key, men's major honorary society, March 11, 1943.

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the public schools regularly to give instruction through lectures and marionette shows in the conservation and the proper care of animals. The Animal Rescue League conducts a summer training school for the benefit of agents and executives of animal welfare organizations throughout the country, and for instruction in animal care and conservation to public school teachers and directors of humane education. These classes have been attended by hundreds of people from all over the United States.

The Animal Rescue League cooperates with the Eastern Livestock Loss Prevention Association in the improvement of handling and shipping conditions which tend to produce injuries to livestock in transit.

A stable and good pastures are maintained in Dedham, Massachusetts for the benefit of work horses which have become pavement sore, or which need a rest during the summer months. There is a cemetery for small animals and a crematory adjoining the farm. In this cemetery are buried many famous dogs as well as many beloved pets. Here, perpetual care of the graves is maintained.

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## CLINICAL MEDICINE

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drainage is poor or absent, the animal will show symptoms of general intoxication.

Sulfanilamide treatment of the condition in the acute febrile stage may be used. After necrosis has begun, radical treatment is required to provide free and continuous drainage for the toxic fluids. In the early stages drainage can be made by amputation of the teat near its base. The amputation is done with the animal in lateral recumbency; 2 percent procaine infiltrated above the line of incision is given for local anesthesia. Hemorrhage is controlled with hemostats or interrupted over-lapping sutures. Drainage of the quarter may also be produced by making a vertical incision through the udder wall extending to the bottom of the milk cistern in the teat.

If extensive necrosis of the quarter has occurred, amputation of the part is necessary. For this, local anesthesia is not necessary since the sensory nerves to the part are inactivated by necrosis and toxic materials. Amputation is made well within the area of necrotic material.

Intravenous administration of dextrose solutions may be employed to aid in systemic detoxification.

—Wendell J. Kopp, fall '43