Clinical Department.

A CASE OF HYDROPHOBIA.

IN THE SERVICE OF C. F. FOLSON, M.D., *Visiting Physician, Boston City Hospital.*

REPORTED BY H. G. WILBUR, M.D., *House Physician.*

A GERMAN, John K., aged fifty-three, a hostler, was admitted to the hospital September 3d. He was bitten by a dog in the thumb of the left hand on July 4th, two months previous while trying to separate two dogs that were fighting. A small cicatrix marked the site of the wound. The dog was not known to be rabid, but shortly afterwards it killed several pigs, and was shot by the owner of the pigs.

He is said to have been more or less worried about the bite, and feared that he would have hydrophobia. He was as well as usual, however, until the morning of September 3d, when he could eat nothing. On attempting to drink, he could not swallow. Later on he went to work in the stable, but in putting his hand into a pail of water to reach for a sponge, he started back exclaiming that the water frightened him.

On entering the hospital, nothing unusual was found; the physical examination was negative. Temperature normal, pulse slow and full. There was some difficulty in giving him his bath, he was so frightened at the water. He refused food. On giving him some milk he seemed frightened at the sight of it; we assured him that he could drink the milk. He took a little, and, on attempting to swallow, it came out of his mouth as if the pharyngeal muscles closed with a spasm and expelled it. His hands trembled, and there were violent movements of the arms and body with every effort to swallow. He was very thirsty, and with every effort to drink came these spasms; and he could, after repeated trials, swallow but very little of the milk.

The convulsions occurred with every effort to drink; they were not characteristic of any one thing. There was no retraction of the head, no especial movements, except trembling of the hands, rigidity of the abdominal muscles, and a few quick, involuntary motions of the body, and rapid respiration.

He was given an enema of bromide of potassium three times during the night, but he slept very little. On the morning of September 5th, I was called, and found the patient wildly excited and delirious. He wanted to get away; said that some one was going to kill him. Attempting to restrain him, he became furious, and the spasms were more frequent and violent. His lips were dry, and he complained of frequent thirst. The temperature then was 102°, respiration 34, pulse rapid, but of good strength, mouth and tongue extremely dry. Water was given him frequently, which he drank, but always with great effort and violent trembling. It was not possible to restrain him completely, and keep him in bed. It was noticed that he walked with great effort, his gait was very unsteady. From 6 A. M. until 4 P. M., when he died, the spasms increased in frequency and violence.

At ten o'clock he began to vomit, and there was a frothy exudation from the mouth, which was occasionally streaked with blood. He was delirious most of the time. He fancied he was driving a team or taking care of horses. As the spasms increased in violence, he was given:

Chloroform.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5 ss.
Chloral.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	gr. xv.
Bromid. potass.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	gr. xxx.

Every three hours, by enema.

The convulsions seemed to be excited by talking to him, as well as by the effort to drink. He vomited, at intervals of ten minutes, from about eleven o'clock until three. The vomitus, which at first was whitish and watery, became dark and granular — coffee ground — in appearance. It was frothy, and an occasional streak of fresh blood. Under the microscope the granular substance was shown to be blood. Free hydrochloric acid was shown by the Smagdgriin and the Tropaeolin tests.

The frothy and sticky exudation from the mouth and fauces became more abundant; the expectoration frequent and profuse. It was accompanied by a short, hollow cough. The mouth closed frequently with a quick snap. Several times he tried to bite the attendants as they wiped the froth from his mouth.

At one o'clock the temperature was 102.5°, pulse fairly full, but irregular and intermittent.

With each convulsion there were tonic spasms of all the muscles; the abdominal muscles were very hard and resistant. The face was congested and bathed in perspiration. He was given brandy and water to drink; he swallowed with less effort than at first. There was frequent grating of the teeth. The delirium towards the end was continuous, there were no lucid moments. A peculiar smile was frequently repeated. The hands were markedly cyanosed and cold, and the spasms less frequent, one hour before death. The vomiting also gradually ceased; the temperature went up slowly, pulse became small and intermittent, and he laid down exhausted, no longer able to retain the upright position which, up to this time, he had kept. He had complained frequently of weakness and loss of power in the left arm. It was noticed that in the writhings and convulsive movements of the body and extremities, the left arm was quite powerless. Just at the end, the face became markedly cyanosed, and there were clonic spasms of the muscles of the jaw.

An autopsy, by Dr. H. F. Sears, assistant pathologist, on the following day revealed nothing except slight congestion of the medulla and rupture of small blood-vessels in the stomach.

On the same day, September 6th, Dr. Harold C. Ernst, of the Harvard Medical School, inoculated two rabbits with some emulsion made from the medulla. One rabbit died on the next day, from the wound made in trephining. The second showed on the 20th, fourteen days later, well marked symptoms of rabies, namely, paralysis of the posterior extremities, and, finally, paralysis of all the muscles, including those of deglutition and digestion. These are the characteristic symptoms of rabies in rabbits, and since they came on within fourteen days, the virus must have been especially powerful.

— Doctor (to patient). — “What ails you?”

Patient. — “Indeed, I don't know. I only know that I suffer.”

“What kind of a life do you lead?”

“I work like an ox, I eat like a wolf, I am as tired as a dog, and I sleep like a horse.”

“In that case I should advise you to consult a veterinary surgeon.” — *Paris Paper.*