

speaks only French, calling herself Sainte Julie, and speaking continually of le Bon Dieu.

The treatment consisted in leeching the temples, after which twenty grains of calomel were administered at night, followed by castor oil next morning. The bowels were afterwards kept freely open by active injections, and occasional doses of oil; very warm foot baths, with salt or mustard, as also the semicarpium, and sinapisms to the inside of the thighs, by way of revulsion, were had recourse to with advantage; camphor was sometimes given, in liberal doses at night, as well to procure sleep, as to diminish the morbid nervous irritability, which was in this, as I believe it is in most cases of the kind, the *fons et origo mali*. Opium being considered only a doubtful remedy at best, in the disease, was not administered; neither was the hyosciamus at first, which, agreeably to that very able and learned lecturer, Professor Sigmond, is contraindicated whenever there is either delirium or mania.

Towards the last, however, the disease being on the wane, the sleep, which followed the henbane, combined with camphor, was certainly productive of benefit. Having observed that my patient became jealous of her husband, and believed him to have conspired, with some others of her nearest relations, against her, I succeeded in undeceiving her; very soon after, she called her husband to her bedside, acknowledged having wronged him, poured out a flood of tears, and forthwith every symptom of mental alienation disappeared.

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ART. V. *Reports of Cases of Nervous Affections.* By J. YOUNG, M. D. of Chester, Pa.

CASE I. *Spinal Irritation.*—Miss E. P., ætat. 21, of a good constitution, has uniformly enjoyed good health till within two years; requested that I should see her, January 6th, 1834. In visiting her, I learned that she had been for eighteen weeks past, unable to put her left foot to the floor, on account of pain and soreness under the external malleolus. It was much swollen, of a bright red colour, and exquisitely tender to the touch. Was first attacked with pain in the right side, in the region of the liver: had sent for a physician, who pronounced her complaint liver disease, and prescribed bleeding, purging, blistering, dieting, and finally, salivation. At length the pain moved from the side to where it now is. Her physician then prescribed a great variety of medicines internally, and baths, cataplasms, &c., to the ankle without benefit; and falling sick himself, another attended her for some weeks without the least benefit resulting; she was then removed some miles to a third of much celebrity, who exhausted his resources and his patience, in

vain efforts to produce relief; spoke of amputation as the only remaining resource; and finally handed her over to me, as she was more immediately in my neighbourhood, and the weather was unfavourable for riding three or four miles to visit her.

On my first visit, I found the ankle enveloped in a mercurial plaster, which I ordered removed; I applied six cups on the *sacrum*, which drew probably four ounces of blood; left her some directions concerning regimen; ordered no medicine; and positively forbade any application to the ankle, save only a dry flannel around it.

8th. Swelling and redness nearly gone from ankle—has been entirely free from pain since she was cupped; has slept well at night; but her foot and ankle “feels as if asleep.” Applied the cups again to the sacrum, and ordered the cupped part to be rubbed with a liniment of *spts. terebinth. ol. olivar. et tr. opii* three times a-day, commencing to-morrow morning.

11th. Swelling, inflammation and formation entirely gone; no pain since first cupping; soreness disappearing: the toes are drawn inward, so that she is “parrot toed” with the affected foot: a circumstance not noticed before, but which very probably existed, and which continued to some extent for more than a year after her entire recovery. Continued the friction with the liniment, and the diet as before.

Next day (12th) I was sent for, in haste, to see her; found her with violent lancinating-pain in the forehead. Applied a cup on each temple, and three on the nape of the neck. They drew well, and relieved the pain while drawing. She now remained free from pain until the 23d when it returned in the ankle, and was entirely relieved by six cups on the sacrum.

February 3d. Sent for to draw one of her teeth—she had been walking about for some days, on crutches; was nearly distracted with pain, in what proved on extraction, to be a perfectly sound tooth. The operation, however, afforded relief.

19th. Has been well since last visit—now has violent pain in right hypochondrium, pain at the top of shoulder very severe; a harassing dry cough—no fever. Four cups on the spine opposite the seat of the pain, relieved every symptom of disease within twenty-four hours. I now began to suspect local means were not sufficient to remove the disposition to disease, and ordered *carb. ferri. ʒj.* three times a day. This was continued till 28th, when I was called to her in the night;—found her puking violently, with violent pain at stomach—extremities cold; had been attacked with chill. Applied a sinapism to stomach, gave a teaspoonful of laudanum. Applied jugs of hot water to feet—she poked in a few minutes after taking the laudanum, and I gave a two grain pill of opium; this was repeated twice at intervals of one hour, without any good resulting. Not having cups with me, I applied two common half-pint tumblers to the spine opposite the stomach, scarified them freely with a thumb lancet, they bled probably four ounces, and relieved her in ten minutes—she sunk into a comfortable sleep

and slept soundly till next morning, when she awoke free from sickness and pain.

To pursue the case throughout would prove tedious, and would be little else than a repetition of the same local treatment, while the general treatment was varied from carb. ferri to Fowler's solution with laudanum; from that to quinine, tinct. valerian, æther, assafœtida, alteratives of blue mass and aloes. In short, tonics, antispasmodics, alteratives of every variety were successively tried, but still the attacks of pain would return at irregular intervals; sometimes in the knee—sometimes in the respiratory organs resembling croup, and sometimes whooping cough, with the most alarming paroxysms of incessant coughing, until the system was brought under the full influence of laudanum. Sometimes for a week or more, she would salivate incessantly, continually ejecting mouthfuls of glairy, viscid saliva—sometimes it would locate itself in the kidneys and loins, when it resembled, in many respects, gravel, or nephritis; at other times the pleura, an eye, a tooth, the ankle, hip or head would be attacked; but they could always be relieved for the time, by cupping and laudanum, or morphine.

It continued thus till March 15th, 1835, with intervals rarely exceeding three or four weeks, and frequently not so many days.

Despairing of effecting a cure, I now ordered pills consisting of arsen. alb. one-sixth gr., ext. belladonna three-fourths grs. each, one to be taken three times a day. In a few days she became œdematous, and they were discontinued till it subsided, when she commenced taking two a day, and in about a month from commencement she had taken 30 of them—she had no other attack of disease till the following June, about three months, when it returned in her knee. I again cupped the sacrum, and ordered the same pills—she took them as freely as circumstances would permit, till 46 were taken, when they were discontinued, and she remains entirely free from all symptoms of her disease at this time.

CASE II. On the day that I was first called to the above case, I was requested to see an old lady with colic. She had had frequent similar attacks within the last three months, but always relieved them by domestic means. Her former remedies, however, failing on this occasion, I was sent for. I remained with her three hours, during which time I gave her large doses of laudanum alone and combined with æther; applied hot fomentations to the stomach, sinapisms to the stomach, and all without avail. I now applied four cups to the spine opposite the stomach, and in fifteen minutes she was perfectly relieved for the time. In a week afterwards I was called to her again, with a similar, though less violent attack. I applied the cups at once, and without giving any medicine, or using any other means, she became entirely relieved, and has had no similar attack since.

**CASE III.** Mrs. E. was confined with her first child, October 29th, 1833. She has always enjoyed excellent health. Every thing progressed as well as usual with her until the third week, when she was attacked with a violent neuralgia of the bowels, attended with excessive costiveness; by large doses of morphia, repeated injections, and castor oil, she was relieved in about a week. She was now attacked with pain under the right mamma, alarmingly severe. Not suspecting the nature of the affection at first, a variety of frictions, fomentations, sinapisms, and finally a large blister, were applied; but none of the local applications afforded any relief; and such were the general symptoms that the disease could not be considered inflammatory; large doses of morphia were given, with the effect of very prompt relief. In a few days she was about her room again, when the pain returned in the same part, as severe as at first. We now resorted to morphia at once, which speedily gave relief. Such, however, were the doses required, that for two days the patient was confined to bed, on account of the prostration produced by the medicine. In a few days after getting about the room, the pain returned again; it was relieved in the same manner, and returned the fourth time. I now, for the first time, suspected spinal irritation, and on an examination, found, by pressure on the seventh dorsal vertebra, much soreness, with great aggravation of pain under the mammae. A cup was applied over the affected vertebra, which at once relieved the pain, without morphia, or any other application; nor did it return again for near six weeks, and then much less violently. A single cup was again applied which produced an entire cure. She has been twice confined since, and has had no return of the pain.

**CASE IV. Chorea.** Since my last reported cases of chorea, I have treated three others; two in my own practice, and one in consultation. Some months ago I was called on by my friend, Dr. S. A. Barton to consult in a case of this disease; he had had it under treatment about two months, during which time he had used all the remedies usually prescribed, but without the least check having been given to the affection; it, in fact, was gradually progressing from bad to worse, in spite of all his efforts.

The patient was an interesting little girl of 12 years old, and the parents and physician almost despaired of her ever being cured. We placed her on the use of a *heaped teaspoonful* of the pulverised *actea racemosa*, three times a day, and in two weeks every appearance of the disease had disappeared.

**CASE V.** A short time before being consulted in the above case, I was requested to see a little girl aged fourteen, with the same affection. The mother, having heard of the snakeweed as a cure, had procured some and had been giving it ten days, without any effect. The child's general appearance, indicated ill health; she was pale—her appetite irregular; bowels costive—

and from her age, appearance, and her never having menstruated, I supposed if her general health could be restored, her catamenia would probably appear, and perhaps the chorea disappear. I accordingly put her on a course of purgatives, with "Hooper's Pills," (a most valuable article in cases of retained, or suppressed menstruation,) for a month; at the end of this time, her health was much improved; but her catamenia did not appear, and her chorea had increased. It was confined originally to the left inferior extremity. It had now extended to the superior extremity of the same side, and to the muscles of the face, and of deglutition, so that the latter function was performed with much difficulty. We now commenced anew with the *actea racemosa*, in *teaspoonful* doses three times a day, with Hooper's pills, as occasion might require, to keep the bowels open. In three days, there was an evident improvement, and in six days more, the disease had entirely disappeared; nor has it returned since. She has menstruated regularly for the last five or six months, and enjoys fine health.

CASE VI. March 26th, 1838, I was requested to see Miss P., aged between 11 and 12 years, with chorea. The mother supposed it had been stealing on her for three months, but so insidiously, that she was not aware of the nature of her ailment till within two weeks. She has been using snakeroot, but it did not cure. Her general health appears good; spirits lively, appetite variable, the tongue slightly covered with a white slimy coat; bowels tolerably regular. The snakeroot was discontinued, and she was purged actively with Brandreth's pills, (they being a favourite medicine with the mother) for a week; when, through anxiety probably, for the recovery of the daughter, without my knowledge, the snakeroot was again commenced with, and given for some days, but without effect. We recommenced purging, with a restricted diet, and continued it, with the view, not of unloading the bowels alone, but of reducing the system, as she was of a full, robust habit. In about two weeks, the floridness had left her cheeks, and as she was thoroughly evacuated, we again commenced with the snake root. In three days, there was no evident improvement. The warm bath, morning and evening, was now recommended in addition, and an immediate improvement took place, which progressed until on the eleventh day she was entirely well, and has had no return of chorea since.

Concerning the theory of this disease, no satisfactory conclusion has been arrived at; all, however, agree that it is one of the most intractable diseases we meet with. While purging has been found, almost uniformly successful by some practitioners, I must confess that, in my hands, in no single instance, have I found the least benefit result from it. In the first case of the disease I was ever called upon to treat,\* I commenced with purging, with *cremor tartar* and *jalap*, and in a few days, it was frightfully aggravated, and no good has

\* See this Journal, for February, 1832, p. 310.

resulted in any case in which it has been tried since. I have never tried tonics, such as barks, préparations of iron, &c., because, fortunately, shortly before my first case occurred, I heard of the *actea racemosa* having been successfully used in it, and determined on giving it a trial.

Nine consecutive cases have now been reported, in which it has completely answered the purpose for which it was given; eight by myself, and one by Dr. Lindsay of Washington city. This is a successful result that has not attended any other known mode of treatment; and establishes the fact of this article possessing greater controlling powers over this disease than perhaps any other article with which we are as yet acquainted.

That there are cases, which it will not cure, without other *preparatory* means, is not denied; the second case above reported, goes far to establish that fact; the last case, too, furnishes evidence, that active and continued purgation would not cure, nor in the least relieve the patient; as well as that, perhaps, the *actea* would not of itself cure; after purging and dieting; however, aided by the warm bath, it was perfectly and speedily successful. There are, doubtless, too, other cases depending on obvious causes, which this, or any other remedial agent now in our possession or perhaps in existence, can control; such as tumours, or morbid growths affecting the great nervous centres. One such case, in which the muscles of one side of the face, and one arm became affected, during the progress of a chronic disease, which was evidently caused by a tumour in the brain, and which, it is almost needless to add, terminated in death, after a protracted illness of four or five years, I have met with. In many cases, however, this article will be found sufficient to cure, without any other means whatever being used; and in a very large proportion of cases, where all other means fail, this alone, or conjoined with other medicines and means which have been heretofore found serviceable in occasional cases, will, I believe, place this intractable disease, as much under our control, as many of the more manageable ones now are.

**CASE VII. Epilepsy.** It was suggested, in my first communication on this subject, that the *actea* probably might be found serviceable in some other of the *neuroses*. Acting in this belief, since that time, I have used it in two cases, of what I believe was incipient *epilepsy*. The cases were twin sisters, in a family in which epilepsy had been hereditary among the females, for two or three generations. At the age of about fourteen, one of them, from having previously enjoyed very good health, became subject to attacks of pain in the head, preceded by giddiness, nausea, lassitude, &c. The frequency of these attacks increased, from once in five or six weeks, to once a week, or oftener; at length one of her attacks was accompanied with a "severe fit." I was sent for in haste, but not being found, another physician was procured, who prescribed an emetic, to be followed by a cathartic, &c.; in a few days she was as well as usual again. In about two weeks,

she was similarly attacked, with another "fit." On this occasion, I was again called on; but before my arrival the fit had gone off. I found the patient stupid and dull, complaining of an uncomfortable feeling in the head, but had no knowledge or recollection of any thing more than common having been the matter. I was informed that, since her former attack, she had been well as usual; cheerful, lively, a good appetite, and every thing indicating good health, until that morning, when she got up with a swimming and giddiness of the head, and in about two hours after, she fell down in a fit. The parents were excessively alarmed, dreading the malady several aunts, &c., had been afflicted with for life, and implored me to arrest it, if possible. I ordered a cathartic of calomel and jalap, and the *actea racemosa* to be procured, as soon as possible. It was got, and she commenced the use of it next day, a large teaspoonful three times a-day; it was continued four days in the week, with an omission of three, for a month. More than five years have elapsed since that time, and she has never had a similar attack. She commenced menstruating awhile after having taken the snake root, and has ever since enjoyed excellent health.

CASE VIII. A few months after the above attack, her sister was taken very similarly, with some headache, &c., and finally a fit. I saw her in an hour after her recovery; she was languid and dull; was not aware of having had a fit—she had never menstruated. I ordered her a cathartic of calomel and jalap.

They had a quantity of the *actea* remaining since her sister's illness; I ordered her to use it, as her sister had done. She never had any thing like a fit since; but soon after became "regular," and has enjoyed fine health from then till now. Whether these were commencing epilepsy or not I am not certain; and what share the snake root had in preventing the recurrence of them I know not, but such were the symptoms of the cure, and such were the only means used, and the patients both got well, and have continued so ever since. Certain it is, the parents and other relations attribute the cure to "them powders;" having assured me at the time, and repeated it since, that the patients were attacked "just like their aunt was when she was about the same age," and who, at that time, was upwards of 50 years old, and had been subject to fits nearly 40 years.

Chester, August, 1839.