

preceding delineations have shown the typhus of Great Britain to be identically the same with that which raged along our shores in 1847-48. Adynamia is there, as it was here, the chief element of the disease, requiring for its management the adoption of the same principles of treatment. Yet such management is the farthest possible remove from a senseless and empirical routine. And I cannot more appropriately close this imperfect sketch of typhus fever in Great Britain, than by an extract bearing on this point, from the works of the eminent observer and writer I have so often quoted in the course of these papers. Says Dr. Jenner: "In no disease is the advantage of refraining from meddling more clearly displayed than in typhus fever. In no disease is the prompt use of powerful remedies more clearly indicated than in typhus fever. It is in determining when to act, and when to do nothing, that the skill of the physician as a curer of disease, or, rather, with reference to fever as an averter of death, is shown. Interfere, bleed or stimulate, when nothing should be done, and the patient, but for you safe, is lost. Refrain from depletion, or withhold wine, when the one or the other is required, and the patient sinks into that grave from which a judicious treatment might have saved him."

BELLADONNA IN ARRESTING THE LACTEAL SECRETION.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

MESSRS. EDITORS,—I send you the result of my experience in the use of belladonna to arrest the secretion of milk, which drug I was induced to make trial of for that purpose by an article in Part XXXIV. of *Braithwaite's Retrospect*, reported by R. H. Godden, Physician to St. Thomas's Hospital.

My experience is limited to three cases, in all of which I was highly gratified with the result. They do not, of course, any more than the cases already reported, *settle* the question of its efficiency in suppressing the lacteal secretion; yet I cannot but think that, although it may not be found a specific for that purpose, it will prove, on further trial by the profession, a valuable adjuvant to this end.

CASE I.—Mrs. B., fifth confinement. The child, a fine and apparently healthy boy, died at the end of the third day, from retention of urine. The secretion of milk occurred within twenty-four or thirty-six hours from birth, and as little was taken by the child, great pains were used to keep the breasts free with the pump and other means, but with little success; they soon became tumid, hard, painful and tender. I then applied the tincture of belladonna (official strength) to the areolæ with a feather; in a few hours the pain and tenderness were relieved, the tumefaction subsided, and at the end of thirty-six hours all trouble was at an end. No

further secretion of milk occurred. The belladonna was applied but three times. A slight nausea was perceived on the application of the tincture, which was relieved by a few spoonfuls of decoction of serpentaria.

CASE II.—Mrs. M., first child; premature birth; stillborn. The secretion of milk commenced before confinement, and spontaneously passed away; but now it was more copious, and notwithstanding the use of the pump and the mouth of the nurse, the breasts became full, hard, painful, &c., but on the application of the belladonna, the secretion soon seemed to cease, the tumefaction and soreness subsided, and in a day or two all was right.

CASE III.—Mrs. B., third child. The lacteal secretion duly occurred; but though the child was robust and nursed well, little or no milk could be obtained from the left breast. It will be proper to state here, that during the previous nursing, the patient had severe milk abscesses of this breast, which were, unwisely, permitted to break of their own accord, by which, probably, some injury was done to the lacteal tubes. Mrs. B. was now very anxious lest she should experience "such a time" as she had on the previous occasion, and earnestly wished, if anything could prevent it, to have it done. After all reasonable effort had been made to abstract the milk, and to relieve the tumefaction and pain, by fomentations, &c., without avail, and the hardness and tenderness continuing to increase, I made free application of the belladonna, both to the areola and the hardest portions of the breast. Relief was soon experienced; the swelling and pain subsided, though induration of portions of the breast continued some time longer. These were removed by a plaster of diachylon, softened with a little olive oil. This plaster, I would say, I have used some fifteen years for these lacteal indurations, and with uniform success. There has been no return of the secretion of milk in this breast, though the other furnishes a full supply for the child. There was nausea experienced after the application of the drug, as in Case I., which was also relieved by the serpentaria.

In all these cases other remedies were used, but with little or no apparent effect, and the speedy relief following the use of the belladonna, satisfied the patients, at least, of its efficacy; and the last patient, especially, was *delighted* with the result, having before suffered so much with "broken breast," and now seeing before her a prospect of another similar siege. These cases might possibly have terminated favorably if they had been left to the resources of nature, as your correspondent in to-day's JOURNAL supposed his might; but I much doubt it, and I more doubt if they would have terminated so speedily. But the remedy is a simple one, and easy to be tried, and every physician has opportunities enough to test it, so that its virtues will doubtless soon be fully proved.

A. D. BACON.

Sharon, Ms., Aug. 26th, 1858.