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DETAILS OF A CASE OF CHOLERA.

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IN a preceding number; Sept. 27th, 1854, I offered some practical remarks upon what I considered a successful plan of treating the severe or even the collapsed stages of cholera, believing it to possess a more uniformly curative power over that insidious disease than any other of the many plans generally adopted. In those remarks I did not append cases in corroboration, which, although not indispensable, are generally thought to increase the interest, if not the value, of any proposed plan of treatment. Within the last few days, the sudden illness of a Mr. H. affords me an opportunity of recording the particulars of a strongly-marked and well-developed case of cholera Asiatica, if that term be necessary for the disease at this time. Let me premise by remarking that I lay no claim to originality or novelty as regards the administration of an emetic, simply as such, in cholera; for, as is well known, from an early period such has been strongly commended, not only in this disease, but in many others; and a reference to the recorded observations of many, eminent in our profession, will show in what estimation they hold them. Although a digression from the main subject, I may here say that I question very much whether the unpopularity or unfashionableness of emetics in many diseases, at the present day, has not deprived us of a certain and efficient means of overcoming the *principia morbi*, and thereby diminished the power of effecting more speedy cures. The principal object in directing attention to the subject and case, is to endeavor to establish the adaptation of the particular emetic to the disease, or the indications presented, especially in the worst stages, and also to claim for it the almost uniformly certain power of changing the asphyxiated condition attending a collapse into one eminently curable by ordinary appropriate remedies.

On Thursday, Oct. 12th, 8½, A.M., I was requested to call immediately to see Mr. H., supposed to be attacked by cholera. In a short time I was at the bedside, when I found that mustard poultices had been applied, repeated doses of laudanum and brandy given, with continued friction to the cramped limbs, but without effect. The condition of

the patient was as follows. The pulse scarcely perceptible ; the whole body of a dark livid color, and, as well as the feet and hands, bedewed with a cold perspiration. The face presented a death-like expression ; the eyes sunk in their sockets, with a black circle surrounding them. A general sensation of coldness ; the voice scarcely audible ; the breath and tongue cold ; violent cramps in the legs ; frequent vomiting and purging ; great thirst, with a painful, hot sensation in the stomach. He had not been well for a few days, and had taken, two days previously, a Seidlitz powder, which operated very profusely. He went to bed at an early hour the preceding evening, and rested well until 4, A.M., when the disease set in and progressed with rapidity. I considered the case very severe and unpromising, and felt great doubts of being able to effect a cure by any means. I had taken a package of the cholera remedy with me, and gave him two pills, with one teaspoonful of the syrup ; had the rubbing continued, and at short intervals repeated the pills and syrup without any apparent effect. The symptoms becoming more unfavorable, vomiting and purging continuing, the cramps increasing, and the medicine being thrown off, it was evident that the system was so powerfully prostrated, the *vis vitæ* so nearly extinct, that the administration of ordinary medicine, however powerful, could scarcely be expected to produce any great benefit. It appeared to me very doubtful whether even the perturbing and stimulating emetic would act, or could afford relief by arousing the vital energies, as on that all rested. A few minutes deliberation satisfied me that nothing else could be depended upon, and I accordingly went to the nearest drug-store, and without taking time to weigh quantities, procured cayenne pepper, ginger, mustard and salt, in what I thought sufficient proportions. Upon my return, I mixed all with three or four large tumblerfuls of water, unfortunately not hot, scarcely tepid ; two tumblerfuls were swallowed in rapid succession, and shortly thrown off without straining, and no appearance of the usual and anticipated salutary results. Two more were shortly swallowed, with similar results. I was disappointed and surprised, the more so as the patient positively refused to take any more. After considerable persuasion, and a threat to leave unless obeyed, he consented to try it again, when I added two teaspoonfuls of cayenne to what remained, and some hot water which was now ready. This was swallowed and remained down several minutes, when vomiting occurred, accompanied by more straining, but without any sensible general effect as to re-action, as far as the heat of skin and pulse were concerned. The only real apparent effect was an almost immediate and entire removal of the cramps, which had continued until the vomiting from this emetic occurred. In the space of ten or fifteen minutes the involuntary vomiting and purging ceased.

Finding him to remain *in statu quo* for half an hour, being quiet and more comfortable, I left for an hour, leaving a mixture of two teaspoonfuls of the cholera syrup, with four teaspoonfuls of brandy and water each, one teaspoonful to be given every fifteen minutes, and small pieces of ice as frequently as desired.

At the expiration of two hours, on my return, I was gratified to find

him rather improved, the skin being warmer and the pulse more distinct. Once during my absence he had vomited a little; bowels had not been moved, and no appearance of cramps, which last did not once return during the remainder of his illness. His only complaint was of a severe pain in his left breast, for which a mustard plaster was applied. Ordered medicine to be stopped, as I considered re-action had manifested itself; to continue the ice in small pieces when desired, and to give sago jelly with a little brandy, in teaspoonful or two doses at short intervals. I also directed the abdomen to be covered with several thicknesses of towelling wrung out of hot water and covered with flannels, to be renewed should it feel cool.

Half past 1.—A decided improvement. Pulse fuller and stronger; skin much warmer, with a warm perspiration. The bowels had been opened several times; discharges watery, filled with floating flocculi. Gave a pill and one teaspoonful of the diluted syrup, and ordered mild nourishment in small quantity every fifteen or twenty minutes.

Half past 4.—The improvement still more manifest; bowels are rather too loose. Continue nourishment, ice, and a little well-made toast water occasionally, if agreeable.

Eight, P.M.—Doing very well, though the bowels are too frequently open, but as neither cramps nor vomiting exist, and all other symptoms are favorable, do not feel disposed to interpose stronger astringents, either by the mouth or rectum, for fear of exciting cerebral symptoms. Directed to draw a band as tight as can be borne around the wet cloths on the abdomen, and to give of the diluted syrup a teaspoonful occasionally, if awake, as also the nourishment.

Friday, 8, A.M.—Passed a good night. The bowels open several times, discharged a little each time; considerable flatulence and desire to go to stool. Passed urine freely, more so than since his illness. Continue nourishment, and let him chew a piece of rhubarb not larger than a pea, and repeat the same in three hours, not with the object of operating, but to try and change the secretions, the tongue continuing, as it has been, much furred.

Five, P.M.—Disappointed in not finding him so well. The bowels had been moved many times, caused most probably by the too copious and frequent draughts of his nourishing drinks, which had not been properly prepared for a sick man. The small piece of rhubarb, only once chewed, was too much upon the homœopathic order to allow me to attribute to it the result. As the pulse continued equally strong, and the temperature of the body equally warm, I could not perceive any permanently serious effects. I gave another pill, and directed beef-tea, well made, and sago and brandy, to be given in moderate quantities at short intervals.

Ten, P.M.—I was sent for, as he did not appear so well. The pulse was weaker, and the bowels had been frequently moved, but no vomiting, or the least sign of cramp. Ordered an injection of twenty drops of laudanum in two tablespoonfuls of beef-tea, and to have the same repeated after each passage. I directed a mustard poultice to be applied to the abdomen, and after its removal to have the towels, soaked in hot

water, re-applied as before. I also prepared a strong infusion of ginger, cloves and cinnamon, in boiling water and brandy, of which one teaspoonful was to be given every ten or fifteen minutes, for an hour, and afterwards less frequently. Essence of beef also to be given.

Saturday, 14th, 8, A.M.—Has passed an uncomfortable night. The bowels had been frequently moved, although the injection of laudanum had been given regularly, at least so I was told. I now ordered the following—R. Tr. catechu, ʒ ss.; tr. rhei, ʒ ss.; tr. zingiber, ʒ ij. Dose, one teaspoonful every fifteen minutes, for three or four doses, and subsequently once an hour. I also ordered the following injection: Pulv. acaciæ, ʒ ss.; pulv. kino, ʒ ij.; tr. opii, ʒ ij.; aq. camphoræ, ʒ ij. Two teaspoonfuls in one tablespoonful of the sago and brandy after each stool. Continued the essence of beef as before.

Two, P.M.—A decided change for the better. The bowels have not been open for nearly three hours, the pulse is fuller and stronger, the heat of skin natural, and he says he feels comfortable. Directed the treatment to be continued.

Eight, P.M.—Still improving; the bowels open slightly twice. Continue the essence of beef, and only half the quantity of the medicine, at longer intervals. The injection in half the quantity after each evacuation.

Sunday, 15th, 8, A.M.—Passed a good night, having slept several hours. The bowels have not been moved for seven hours. Continue the medicine at still longer intervals, and omit the injection. Besides the essence of beef, let him chew occasionally a small piece of beef-steak, only swallowing the juice.

Five, P.M.—Improving; perfectly convalescent. Go on with the nourishment. Omit all medicine.

It is unnecessary to continue the notice. There was no drawback, in any form, and in a few days, after having been up in the room, he rode out, and still continues perfectly well.

The following inferences, in conclusion, appear to me to flow naturally from the facts noticed in the above interesting case. From the effects of the emetic, it seems clearly to follow, that in proportion to the early stage of collapse in which it is given, the desired happy results will be more immediately and positively produced; and also that if brought into use in severe or extreme cases of cholera, prior to the setting in of the collapsed stage, such will be prevented. In the above case, although, from the rapidity of its progress, the extreme prostration of the system, and the severity of all the well known attendant symptoms, the usual prompt and decided re-action was not well exemplified, there can be no question of the beneficial influence of the remedy; for the cramps which had existed from the commencement of the disease until the remedy had acted, ceased simultaneously and did not re-appear, and the vomiting in a short time disappeared as a symptom of the disease. Although, as will have been noticed, the frequent discharges of a watery fluid, filled with floating flocculi, from the bowels, continued for several days, it is an important fact that no other of the prominent symptoms of cholera manifested itself; the mere depression of strength and pulse would be natural and

necessary coincidences in other diseases of the bowels, without regard to cholera.

With these facts before us, is it unreasonable to infer that one of the remedial effects of this emetic—possibly of others of a similar character, if such can be found—is to overcome or remove the cause of the disease, whatever such may be, by the powerful impression made primarily upon the great nervous system, and subsequently through its influence upon the circulatory and other systems? If mere purging could bring on an attack of cholera, and such is well known to be a most usual premonitory symptom, the *causa morbi* existing, why should there not have been reproduced some of those characteristic symptoms previously existing, which however was not the case, although discharges from the bowels were for some time copious, frequent and watery? To what other cause such consequences could be attributed, other than the emetic used, I am at a loss to conceive.

I am not disposed to assert that I should not have acted more judiciously by resorting more early to means to restrain the frequency of the discharges from the bowels for so long a time; but the very absence of all unpleasant symptoms emboldened me so to act, and the successful termination of the case clearly proves I was not deceived, while it affords me the gratification to think, that, as the case stands, it is well calculated to substantiate the claims of the emetic proposed, as a sure, and, as far as human means are concerned, a certain mode of treating and curing cholera.

I cannot let pass the opportunity of mentioning that this evening, 30th Oct., I have seen the good effects of assafoetida, stramonium, a few drops of chloroform, and other minor articles, by inhalation, in a very severe case of asthma. The patient, after much previous suffering, expressed himself as fully satisfied upon that point; and I am sure that even in that disease, medical inhalation amply deserves a greater degree of attention from the profession. Tea pots, bowls, &c., will not answer in order to test the powers of inhalation.

OBSERVATIONS ON EPILEPSY.

[Continued from page 319.]

THE writer has often been applied to, from persons at a distance, to treat cases of epilepsy. Many of the applications have been by letter, from strangers, either the patients themselves, or their friends, and have usually requested medicine to be sent. Such calls seem to indicate to me a very singular and undesirable state of feeling in society, upon medical science and medical practice. If I am not mistaken, they unfold, to some extent, the secret upon which quackery is dependent for its great success; and it is this—a want of information upon medical subjects, or of a proper understanding of the nature of diseases. People think, if one has been cured by a particular medicine, all may be cured by the same medicine, of the same disease. They are perfectly sincere on this subject. They seem not aware that a disease which, like epilepsy, for