

the actual morbid developments; or, in other words, "it consists in the reproduction of an equilibrium of the vital forces—a restoration of the normal temperature, periodicity, and functional movements of the whole organism." A complete cure of the disease occurs, when external action and resistance in the diseased part are brought into equilibrium.

We have already seen that whooping cough is not a self-limited disease; that it may be cut short, the facts cited by Dr. Cornell amply prove.

Is typhus fever a disease of self-limitation? or, in other words, must it run a definite course before it terminates? In answering this question, I shall cite two authorities only—but they might be multiplied largely. Says surgeon Ross, in the *London Lancet*, March 18, 1843, "My observations have proved to me, most unquestionably, that not only are these daily exacerbations in typhoid fevers, but also *intermittent periods* of the quartan type, defined by an augmentation of all the febrile symptoms." Acting upon this unquestionable fact, he has given us the result of the treatment of a large number of cases, in the following words:—"The foregoing cases are selected from among the worst which came under my notice, and demonstrate most clearly the correctness of my data. The convalescence in every case was remarkably brief, for the patient was commonly restored to his usual health in the course of a week. The disease was *incontestably shortened* in every case, and the dogma that typhus is a disease which must run its course, despite our various resources, is no longer of any authority."

Says surgeon John Findlay, R. N. (Medical Enquirer, London, 1850), writing from the African coast:—"Epidemics we do not lack—and although not molested with influenza, or cholera, we have a far fiercer enemy to contend with in the shape of bilious typhoid fever. During the last three months, I have had *sixty-six* cases, without losing one. My treatment is to give large doses of quinine. This knocks the disease on the head at once, and your patient recovers—not a blanched and wretched remnant of humanity, but in a few days as useful as ever."

For the past eight years I have rarely found typhus fever continued beyond the second quartan period, and in a majority of cases convalescence has been established on the fifth day.

JUNIUS.

[To be continued.]

May 27th, 1854.

ALCOHOL IN MEDICINE—REPLY TO DR. FULLER.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

MESSRS. EDITORS,—In your Journal of May 3d, I notice an article from Dr. Fuller, on the use of alcohol in medicine, containing some allusions to my remarks in a former number of the Journal. In a periodical devoted to matters of a strictly scientific nature, I think it improper to introduce moral topics for discussion. I will not, therefore, ask space to notice the remarks of Dr. Fuller touching this part of the subject. He says, "when Dr. Hall will show any other useful and im-

portant remedial agent that has done a tithe of the evil, both morally and physically, that alcohol has done, then will I agree with him to enter into an examination of the merits of that agent." I ask Dr. F. if it is not the use of alcohol as a *beverage*, and its consequent *abuse*, and not its medicinal use, that has done all this harm, "both morally and physically"? No other agent has been so improperly used in this country as alcohol. Other agents might do as much harm, if used to the same extent. Opium is capable, when used excessively, of doing a great deal of harm. Will any one, therefore, totally condemn it as a remedy in disease? Let any one read Bayard Taylor's picture of a victim of opium-eating, and ask himself if it is not equal in its effects, both morally and physically, to the effects of alcohol. If opium were used to the same extent in this country, that it is in others, perhaps the "Pine Tree State" would have to enact the same stringent laws against it, that it has against alcoholic liquors.

I think it *not* debatable whether it be better to let a patient, "bitten by a serpent," die than to use a remedy of *known value*. Were I to do this, I could not keep my "conscience void of offence." Dr. F. says—"I submit to Dr. Hall whether he would prescribe the drunkard's drink to reformed inebriates." In answer to this, I will say that if, "after mature reflection and investigation," I should deem it proper, should think the therapeutic indications required it, I should not hesitate to prescribe it, even to such. Again, he says, "if it could be shown that coffee and tea, when used as beverages, invariably do harm, would not Dr. H. infer that they might do harm in disease?" By no means, I answer. All medicines, when used in health, *invariably do harm*, but in disease are beneficial. Coffee and tea are stimulants, and if they are hurtful in health, it does not follow that they would be so in disease. All medicines are hurtful in health. "They that are whole need not a physician [nor his medicines], but they that are sick." People, Dr. F. says, often ask how, if alcohol is a poison, and very detrimental in health, it can be used with impunity in sickness. It should not be used with *impunity*. We can use no potent remedy with entire impunity—all must be used with great caution.

I have penned the present and former articles, Messrs. Editors, only for the purpose of eliciting truth, and if it can be shown that alcohol is pernicious as a remedy, and ought to be discarded from the *materia medica*, I will not only give up its use, but will frankly own my error. But until this is done, I trust I may be free from the imputation of "contributing to make drunkards."

GEO. W. HALL.

Carthage, Illinois, May 13th, 1854.

PARACENTESIS THORACIS.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

A FEW months since, by request of Dr. H. I. Bowditch, I furnished him a copy, from my *case-book*, of a report of the case of John G. Henry, on whom I had four times performed the operation of paracen-