

have grown rapidly, and although at the necropsy it seemed possible to have removed it by operation, I do not think that a surgeon would have been justified in the attempt in so young an infant, especially when he could have no certainty as to the nature, extent, and connexions of the tumour.

#### MESSAGE AS A CURATIVE AGENT.

BY T. GERALD GARRY, M.D., M.Ch., M.A.O.

THE following cases may be of interest as showing the value of massage where medicines are comparatively powerless.

CASE 1.—Mrs. A—, aged thirty-seven, with a decided neurotic history, for the past twelve months had been gradually losing weight and strength, and when first seen presented an emaciated and very anæmic appearance. She complained of weariness along the spine, which was worse in the morning and evening, but did not at any time amount to actual pain. Pressure on the tips of the vertebræ caused no discomfort, except at one well-defined spot in the lower part of the cervical region. Here deep pressure caused slight pain. The patient also complained of a feeling of numbness and burning in the right hand and forearm, which was much paler in colour than the left. These feelings commenced in the fingers, and gradually extended upwards until the forearm became involved, and after this no further progress was made, and the disease remained quiescent for a time, when the same sensations showed themselves in the left hand, but never amounted to very much. Both hands retained their normal power, and no alteration was noticeable beyond the paleness of the right arm already alluded to, and which no amount of friction could alter. This lady enjoyed very good health until about twelve months ago, and attributes her present ill health to domestic troubles. When first seen she was listless and depressed, and presented a very anæmic and careworn appearance. There was no hereditary history, nor was there any history of constitutional disease. She had been taking medicines for a long time, but without any apparent benefit. These were now dispensed with altogether, and the patient was placed under the massage treatment, under which she rapidly got well; indeed, an improvement was experienced from the first week. Special attention was directed to the spine, and whilst this part was “rubbed” the feet were placed in medicated water. She is now quite strong, and feels perfectly well in every way.

CASE 2.—Mrs. B—, aged thirty-five, for the past few years had been rapidly gaining in weight, and when first seen weighed 14 st. 4 lb. During this time her health had become very much deteriorated, and the slightest exertion, even walking along a perfectly level ground, was only accomplished with difficulty. The muscles were weak and flabby; the heart sounds were weak and the pulse almost imperceptible. She was often seized with faintness, and these attacks were usually preceded by intense pain in the region of the heart, which was relieved by deep pressure. Thirst was a prominent symptom, and it was always worse at night-time. Urine normal, except that it occasionally contained a trace of sugar. There was every indication of the nervous system being at fault, and the patient was told by a well-known London physician that it was in a most impoverished state, and recommended that she should go abroad for two years. “All kinds of medicines” had been tried without benefit, and lately she had on her own recommendation taken large quantities of some patent drug reputed to diminish corpulency. It had the desired effect, but on its cessation the weight of course increased again. An interesting point in connexion with this case is the fact that under the influence of mental anxiety and worry the weight rapidly increased; indeed, on a few occasions I have known her to gain as much as a pound and a half daily when the mental strain was very great. On the other hand, prolonged rest had the effect of diminishing the weight, whilst even very moderate exercise had an opposite effect. These facts fully demonstrate the neurotic nature of the case, and have an interesting bearing on some points recently brought forward concerning the management of neurasthenic subjects. Massage was employed three times a week, each sitting at first lasting half an hour. After a few weeks it was used daily. The patient’s condition commenced to improve after the first fortnight. It ought to be mentioned that at the commencement of the treatment

the patient had very little faith in “the rubbing,” having already tried it in London and Brighton, but it effected nothing beyond a few intractable bruises. The method now employed was first introduced into this country by Dr. J. F. Little, of Welbeck-street, and is exactly the same as practised by Weir Mitchell at Philadelphia. Besides the massage, the patient was allowed a Russian bath occasionally. In suitable cases they are very useful adjuncts. After a little more than four months the patient lost 2 st. 3 lb., and gained wonderfully in strength. The heart sounds are strong, and pain has long since disappeared. She is now capable of walking many miles without feeling exhausted; and, although the massage has been discontinued for a considerable time, there has been no increase in the weight, but, on the contrary, a slight diminution.

#### NASAL CATARRH AND APROSEXIA.

BY R. HINGSTON FOX, M.D., M.R.C.P.

DR. GUYE of Amsterdam has applied the term “Aprosexia” ( $\alpha$ , priv., and  $\pi\rho\omicron\sigma\acute{\epsilon}\chi\epsilon\upsilon$ , to apply) to the symptom of inability to fix the attention on any subject—a kind of mental lassitude. He points out the association of this with nasal affections, both acute and chronic. The explanation is offered that the lymphatics passing from the anterior part of the brain into the nasal fossæ become more or less choked, and hence there is exhaustion of the cerebral centres from retention.<sup>1</sup> Some experience, objective and subjective, of severe nasal catarrhs has familiarised me with this symptom. The inability to fix the attention is attended with depression of spirits and a feeling of prostration, sometimes intense. Meantime the temperature is subnormal and the pulse quiet. Probably the symptoms are most marked in cases where, as usually in recurrent catarrh, there are some chronic changes in the nasal passages. In a recent case the theory above stated suggested a means of relief. Acting on Dr. H. G. Sutton’s teaching of helping the lymphatic circulation by free respiration, the patient, though unwilling to leave his bed, was made to go out and walk steadily up hill. The freer play of the lungs seemed to bring marked mental relief; doubtless the directly stimulating effect of fresh air had also a share in the benefit. Of the various abortive treatments for nasal catarrh, I have tried repeatedly aconite in ten minute doses, cubeb cigarettes, and instillation of cocaine. Each of these seemed to cure in some instances; in others the cold pursued its course unchecked. Change of air and Easton’s syrup I find very beneficial.

#### CASE OF PITYRIASIS RUBRA ACUTA.

BY M. J. T. J. BLANCARD,  
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A NATIVE, aged thirty-four, came under my care on Aug. 4th, 1887, complaining of heat and pain about the nape of the neck and the joints of the fingers and toes. The tongue was covered with whitish fur on the dorsum, and was red at the edges. Temperature 99.5°. Great exhaustion and inability to move were complained of on the 6th. The knees were swollen, and fluctuation was distinctly felt on palpation. The knee reflexes were exaggerated, anorexia was obstinate, and in the morning the temperature had increased to 101.5°. The skin over the whole body was covered with copper-coloured patches, slightly raised and smooth, giving a sensation of elasticity to the touch. The bowels were fairly regular. The temperature in the morning reached 102.6°. On the 7th the patches which had appeared the day before had extended excentrically, and crops of minute papules of light colour had now made their appearance on the patches, giving a sensation as if shots had been scattered over the surface and there adhered. These papules did not merge into vesicles, but they increased in size till they coalesced with the other papules and formed elevated islets, which after four days dried up and desquamated in large flakes, leaving the dermis exposed, smooth, and shiny. The scalp was also affected, and loss of hair followed. The nails were all shed on the eighteenth day of the disease, the whole desquamative process taking nearly a month from the papular eruption till the time when the nails and hair

<sup>1</sup> See London Medical Record, Dec., 1887, p. 533.