

TREATMENT OF CHOLERA WITH SUGAR.

By SAMUEL WOLFF, Esq.

THE number of THE LANCET for April 8th contains an article of intense interest, by Dr. J. I. Mackintosh, of Edinburgh, on the "Treatment of Cholera with Sugar;" yet the caption is such that it might not be generally read, and were it not for the name of the author would excite ridicule before perusal, if perused at all. "What nonsense next? They have tried mustard and salt, and here is somebody trying sugar for cholera!" Such was the remark that drew my attention to the article.

I am not about to write a criticism on Dr. Mackintosh's views. I neither intend to praise nor to criticise, but simply to give four cases which came under my treatment last month in a German family, and the treatment of which has much to do with that article. Dr. Mackintosh will see that he was not the only person using sugar in cholera. The result of the cases I am satisfied will be interesting to Dr. Mackintosh, whilst the manner in which I was forced to use sugar will contrast but in a very sorry manner with the doctor's scientific reasons for doing so.

On the 18th of June cholera broke out in this city with fearful violence; none that were attacked with it for the first two days recovered; the average duration of the disease was about eight hours. On the 23rd of June, I was called to a German, who had been in this country only a short time. On the morning of the 23rd he had driven a cow some distance from the country, and whilst hot drank large quantities of cold water. In the middle of the day he was seized with symptoms of cholera, which increased until I saw him, (about three o'clock P.M.) when I found him vomiting and purging rice-water, almost pulseless, cold, and covered with a clammy sweat, slightly collapsed, but cramping fearfully. I used the customary remedies—small doses of calomel frequently repeated, and mustard plasters to the ankles, wrists, and abdomen; I gave him also small quantities of pounded ice and brandy. His wife was very desirous to give him sugar and water, as she said it was the usual drink in Germany, and he would like it better than anything else. I protested against its use, upon the score that it would be apt to make him vomit more, and could not be persuaded to let him drink any of it, although I was solicited repeatedly by his wife and sister-in-law to give it to him. The man sank gradually until he died, about six o'clock P.M. On the following morning about seven o'clock he was buried.

About ten o'clock on the morning of the burial of the deceased, I received a summons to repair to the same house as in the previous case, that the German's daughter had the cholera. I went with all speed, and found a little girl, about seven years of age, deeply collapsed, purging and vomiting rice-water every three or four minutes, cold and clammy, with very slight pulse, hands shrivelled, and eyes sunken. They had given her several draughts of sugar and water before I arrived, and, as I found all the cases terminating so unfavourably, I resolved to let them use the sugar and water, and followed my usual course of treatment. The child sank gradually until she appeared to be just dying, in which condition she lay for some half hour or so, (I being called away to the case I shall give next,) when her pulse began gradually to rise, which it continued to do, and she recovered.

As I stated just above, I was called away whilst attending the little girl to see her aunt, who had been waiting upon the child during the time she was sick, and finding there was little hope of her niece recovering, she became desponding, felt (as she says since) herself getting weaker, until she could no longer stand. She staggered and fell upon the floor; they carried her to a bed, and I was requested to go to her room. When I saw her I could detect no pulse; body cold; a clammy sweat commencing to break out; cramps very severe in the arms and legs; rice-water discharge pouring away from her, which she was not conscious of, and, with the exception of when the cramps were on her, she showed little signs of life. She would swallow anything that was put in her mouth; her sister-in-law was very attentive in giving the sugar and water. I pursued the course as usual, with the exception of putting a blister over the right side, she having had some signs of congestion a few days before. She is now well and hearty, having made an excellent recovery. As in the previous case, she sank as low as it was possible to do, and remained so for some time, when a change took place; the pulse could be perceived; she urinated freely, and reaction came up until it rose to high fever, from which she suffered for two days.

On the 25th the last woman's husband was taken ill. The

cholera ran its course in spite of all the medicine. He lay as dead for some three hours, at the expiration of which time he commenced to recover, and is now well, but his constitution is greatly shattered. In this case I ordered the sugar and water to be given freely, which was done without much persuasion.

I shall not make any remarks upon these cases, but leave them, trusting that if there are any other practitioners who have used the sugar they will make the result publicly known, as it is important all such cases should be recorded.

Independence, Missouri, United States, July, 1854.

A Mirror

OF THE PRACTICE OF
MEDICINE AND SURGERY
IN THE
HOSPITALS OF LONDON.

Nulla est alia pro certo noscendi via, nisi quam plurimas et morborum et dissectionum historias, tam aliorum proprias, collectas habere et inter se comparare.—MORGAGNI. *De Sed. et Caus. Morb.* lib. 14. Proœmium.

CHARING-CROSS HOSPITAL.

HYDROPHOBIA; DEATH; AUTOPSY.

(Under the care of Dr. ROWLAND.)

(Concluded from page 214.)

State on admission, at twelve A.M., on Monday, July 3rd.—Expression of countenance, anxious and watchful, more like dread of something going to appear; face pale and intelligent. The patient is of spare habit; hair light-brown, fine and long; has been brought up at a Sunday-school; talks distinctly, and has full use of mental powers. Pulse natural; tongue steady and clean; bowels open yesterday morning; pupils dilated; skin hot, dry. Mr. Diamond, the house-surgeon, poured out a little of the tonic mixture kept ready; but when offered to her she refused to taste either this or water. She had at the same time spasmodic action of the muscles of the trunk and upper and lower extremities, accompanied with sobbing and sighing, as when a person unaccustomed to douching has a bucket of cold water thrown over him. Blowing on the face produced the same effects as the showing of water. When the patient was gazed at for some time the anxious look would go away, and break into a smile. The mental powers were preternaturally heightened.

A draught, composed of fifteen minims of chloroform, ten of laudanum, in an ounce of water, was now offered, but the sight of it caused the convulsions to come on again. The house-surgeon at last succeeded, by getting her to close her eyes, open her mouth, and at the same time gently expiring. He placed the fluid suddenly into the mouth with a spoon; but directly it was in the cavity the convulsions came on again more severe than before.

Half-past twelve A.M.—Dr. Rowland saw her, and ordered fifteen minims of chloroform, to be taken every third hour, and at half-past one o'clock he prescribed a small dose of calomel, to be followed by an enema of turpentine and castor oil. The back was also to be rubbed with equal parts of chloroform and tincture of aconite.

Great difficulty was experienced in giving her the calomel. It was tried mixed up with a little sugar in a teaspoon; she took it into her own hand, but when she got it close to her mouth the spasmodic convulsion came on. It was at last tried, at Dr. Chowne's suggestion, placed between bread and butter, and was thus ingested. When she had eaten it all, she asked for more, and thought she could drink a little warm water, but she could not take it when presented. It was tried through a silver tube, but without success, and the attempt to give an enema also failed. The application down the spine directly brought on convulsions, and at the first application she threw herself on all fours, like an animal.

Half-past two P.M.—Prefers sitting up, the thighs flexed, with the elbows resting on the knees, the hands being placed at each side of the head. When requested to lie down, she says she feels easier when in the position just described, and that if she attempted to recline the cold would hurt her back. To remedy this, the sheet was warmed, and with a little persuasion she gently overcame the difficulty, as she is very willing, and attempts to do anything you propose to her. Immediately on