

ART. IX.—*Sloughing Sore Throat.*<sup>a</sup> By FRANCIS PEIRCE, M.D.,  
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"SLOUGHING sore throat," described by Churchill under the name of "putrid sore throat," appears to me to be a disease of more frequent occurrence than is generally thought. During the greater part of last year I had many cases, scattered all over my district. They were characterised by the general symptoms of high temperature (often over 102°), quick pulse, and frequently great prostration of strength; urine sometimes albuminous. At first there was nothing to attract attention locally beyond the appearances of ordinary sore throat, but on the second day or so a white, or rather gray, spot was to be seen—not merely a patch on the fauces or uvula, as the case might be, but the tissues themselves changing colour—becoming, in fact, gangrenous. The sloughs would separate about the sixth day, leaving a sluggish ulcer, with evident loss of tissue. In some of the cases the submaxillary and parotid glands were inflamed, while, on the contrary, in many where the disease assumed the most malignant type, there was no glandular complication whatever.

I am aware that the above disease would be classed as diphtheria by many practitioners, or, if they did not call the affection by that name, they would style it diphtheritic sore throat, which means pretty much the same thing to the general public. I look upon the total absence of false membrane, the very frequent absence of glandular inflammation, and the fact that the disease confined itself, in its malignant form, almost altogether to children, as quite sufficient to absolutely distinguish it from diphtheria.

The above-described infectious disease assumed the form of an epidemic last year in the Upton district of the Hundred of Wirral, Cheshire; and, although many persons were seriously affected, all recovered well and rapidly, till Hoylake became the seat of its operations. There was nothing unusual about the first cases which occurred in the outlying parts of this village; then a child living more in the village was seized with the ordinary symptoms, which rapidly became malignant, and terminated fatally. Within a few weeks eight children died similarly in the only three houses which were infected. After the first fatal case all the children affected died—generally between the fifth and tenth days. The mother of one of the families was the only adult affected, and, although there

<sup>a</sup> Being a Thesis for the Degree of Doctor of Medicine in the University of Dublin.

was a considerable slough in her case, I could not prevail on her to remain in bed more than one day. She made a good recovery. I feel confident the malignant type assumed by the disease was caused by the extremely bad sanitary condition of the locality, which is altogether drained on the dry-well system—in other words, the houses are built on a cesspool covered by a few feet of sand.

The epidemic then passed on to West Kirby, a village about one mile from Hoylake, equally deficient in sewerage, but blessed with many natural advantages. There the mortality was but slight. There were two adults amongst those affected—one, a delicate girl of about eighteen; on the third day nearly the whole of her uvula sloughed away, but she made a fair recovery—the other, a young gentleman in the last stage of consumption, who rapidly succumbed to the disease—this being the only instance proving fatal in the adult.

The treatment I found most efficacious consisted in the administration of plenty of beef tea from the commencement, and, as the sloughs came away, the free use of stimulants. The only internal medicine that appeared to me to do any good was the *tinct. ferri perchloridi*, given in large doses. A gargle containing chlorine gas corrected the unpleasant smell and seemed to improve the condition of the parts.

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#### ARNICA IN BOILS.

DR. PLANAT, of Nice, claims that arnica has the power of aborting an eruption of boils with extraordinary rapidity, except when due to diabetes. His method of employing it is very simple. In order to render its action on the small vessels more energetic, he applies it directly to the inflamed spot, in the form of an ointment, of which the formula is as follows:—Ext. of fresh arnica leaves, ʒiiss; honey, ʒvss. If the mixture is too fluid, he added powdered lycopodium, or some other inert powder, until it acquired the proper consistency. It is then spread pretty thickly on a bit of oiled silk or diachylon plaster, and applied to the boil. It is rarely necessary to renew the dressing more than once in twenty-four hours. As a rule, two or three dressings are enough to make a furuncle abort. A curative action is also obtained by the internal administration of the drug. Dr. Planat gives 3 to 4 drops of the tincture, largely diluted, every two hours; and he has seen the furuncular eruption disappear very rapidly under the treatment.—*St. Louis Med. Jour.*

S. W.