

Hospital Practice and Clinical Memoranda.

DEATH FROM CARBOLIC ACID.

BY D. HOMER BATCHELDER, M. D.

MR. DAVID F., Scotchman, a man of respectable character and habits, fifty-six years of age, whose occupation was that of a designer and engraver. He was employed as such at the print works of A. & W. Sprague Manufacturing Company.

On the morning of the 23d of January last he arose and took his morning meal as usual. He then started to take the street car, which passed about half-past six A. M. The car had got by, and he stepped back into the house to wait ten minutes for the next car. During that time, he said to his wife, he did not feel very well, and would take a little wine before he went. He took what he supposed to be the bottle of wine and drank from it, no one knows how much, and immediately exclaimed in a broken manner, "My G——, what have I taken?"

He was at once thrown into the most excruciating agony. On examining the bottle, it was found that there were two pint bottles standing side by side on the shelf, one containing sherry wine, the other carbolic acid, full strength.

They undertook to administer some remedies themselves, using nearly an hour's time before they called me, although my house stands not over thirty rods from where the accident occurred.

When I reached the house, I found his eyes were rolled upward, cornea not visible, limbs rigid, with a very copious discharge of fibrinated mucous from the mouth, mingled with detached portions of the mucous membrane, while the pulse indicated nothing but a slight flutter or tremor of the heart. In less than fifteen minutes subsequent to my arrival life was extinct.

I am not aware of any specific antidote in cases of this kind of poisoning. This is my second case of poisoning from carbolic acid. Both were fatal, for I did not in either case arrive till the patient was in a state of *articulo mortis*.

My course would be, however, were I there in season, to put into the stomach as large a quantity as possible of either castor or olive oil.

As the effect is immediately destructive to the mucous membranes, I should say that in fifteen minutes after the poison had been taken, the passage to the stomach would be closed, and the only alternative would be to force it by the pump. But I am confident that after the expiration of fifteen or twenty minutes at most, all manipulative means of this kind must certainly fail to save life. The destruction is so immediate, so extensive, involving tissues which are so vastly important to life, that its highway is completely obstructed, and death is the only relief in such cases.

However, if there are any members of the profession who have had such cases to deal with, — I mean cases like these, where persons have drunk down the concentrated carbolic acid in quantity as those I have narrated, — it is to be hoped they will give a synopsis at least of their experience in the premises.

— A crematory for persons dead of infectious diseases is recommended by the grand jury of New Orleans.

Reports of Societies.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE AMERICAN DERMATOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.

SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING, HELD AT THE SAGAMORE HOTEL, LAKE GEORGE, AUGUST 29, 30, AND 31, 1883.

REPORTED BY HENRY WILE, M. D.

MORNING SESSION.

THE meeting was called to order by the president, DR. R. W. TAYLOR, of New York, who, in a short address, welcomed the members assembled.

The first paper, entitled, —

TREATMENT OF ACNE,

was read by DR. PIFFARD, of New York. The writer advocated the internal use of calcium sulphide. In the treatment of the acute papule he advised puncture of the lesions, together with application of hot water, after which some soothing ointment, as of belladonna or stramonium, especially the latter, in the form of the fluid extract made from fresh leaves gathered in the fall. The base of the ointment should be benzoated lard or oxide of zinc. In using the calcium sulphide it should be pushed until additional lesions appear, when it should be stopped. Comedones should be treated by pressure with the finger nails or key. In acne indurata ergot was advised.

DR. ATKINSON, of Baltimore, failed to obtain good results with calcium sulphide or ergot.

DR. VAN HARLINGEN, of Philadelphia, recommended the following paste for the treatment of the comedones: Glycerine three parts, acetic acid (U. S. P.) two parts, kaolin four parts, originally suggested by Nuna.

DR. ALEXANDER, of New York, had good results from the use of calcium sulphide in the pustular variety of acne. Ergot seemed only to diminish the redness.

DR. SHERWELL, of Brooklyn, said that he noticed some benefit follow the use of ergot in the pustular form in the female, where there seemed to be exacerbations at the menstrual periods. He regarded this form as a reflex process, and gave ergot on purely empirical grounds, and with good results.

DR. PIFFARD, of New York, thought that the beneficial results obtained in the treatment of acne depended upon the amount of irritation an agent created in the lesions. In the summary Dr. Piffard described a case which he regarded as one of the worst that ever came under his notice. The patient was treated for uterine disorder by a gynecologist, at the same time was given ergot internally and mercurial ointment externally. She recovered.

DR. TAYLOR, of New York, thought that the local treatment was of paramount importance, the internal treatment subsidiary. He placed great reliance on the use of alkaline salts. Rochelle salts $\mathfrak{z}\text{i}$. to $\mathfrak{z}\text{ij}$., acetate of potash $\mathfrak{z}\text{ss}$., three times a day in a wine-glass of water. In the indurated variety he punctures the lesions and applies acid nitrate of mercury, one part to eight parts of water. Where rosacea is present he advises the following: Chrysarobin $\mathfrak{z}\text{ss}$., flexible colloidion $\mathfrak{z}\text{i}$. He has seen no benefit follow the use of ergot. As valuable agents he recommends mercurial ointment $\mathfrak{z}\text{ss}$., cosmoline $\mathfrak{z}\text{i}$.; also iodide of zinc gr. v. to gr. xv., adipis $\mathfrak{z}\text{i}$.