

Studies in Blackwater Fever

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STUDIES IN BLACKWATER FEVER

II. A SCHEDULE FOR RECORDING CASES OF BLACKWATER FEVER

BY

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In analysing the literature of this subject I prepared for my own purposes a schedule for recording various data contained in case reports. I soon found, however, that it was difficult to fill up a schedule satisfactorily owing to various defects in the reports. These may be classified under the following heads:

(1) *Vagueness*. It was not uncommon to find statements like 'the blackwater came on during the night,' 'in the early morning,' 'a few hours after the rigor,' 'shortly after the quinine,' 'urine passed in large quantities,' 'in small amounts,' the 'drug was pushed,' etc. I think it is evident that no very exact meaning can be applied to any of these expressions, so that they are not of much value.

(2) *Diffuseness*. Frequently case reports are verbose, whereas the essential point could be given in a few words; e.g., we have 'at 11 a.m. the temperature began to rise until at 2 p.m. it reached 104°—the maximum during the illness'; i.e., about eighteen words instead of two entries on the temperature chart.

(3) *Omissions*. Not infrequently no mention is made of any particular symptom, e.g., 'jaundice,' 'pain in the loin,' 'hiccough,' 'dyspnoea,' so that it is often quite impossible to say whether a symptom was really absent or not.

(4) *Lack of arrangement*. Again in order to obtain information on a certain point one often had to read through the whole report before it could be ascertained whether or no the point was mentioned.

As stated above, I devised this schedule for analysing case reports. I could thus record in a very small space compared to that occupied by the original the essential features of a case. I could, on reference to my schedule, see at a glance the point I wished to ascertain, whether positive or negative.

It seemed to me to be desirable, then, that those recording blackwater cases should do so on some fixed system, and I thought that my original schedule could be easily adapted to that purpose. There were several practical difficulties to overcome, an important one being the limitations enforced on one by considerations of space. One object I have constantly borne in mind has been to burden the recorder with as little writing as possible, and although the schedule may at first sight seem rather formidable, further consideration will show that very little writing has actually to be done, far less than in the ordinary rambling descriptions from which the pith is only extracted with difficulty; and moreover, there is still ample room on the back of the schedule for descriptive reports if anyone feels constrained to write such.

I have carefully considered questions of space and other details, and have had in this respect the great advantage of consultation with medical officers who have themselves written reports of blackwater cases. I hope, therefore, that this schedule may be of use to those recording blackwater cases, and I feel sure that it will both save the recorder much writing and save the person who wishes to analyse such reports a vast amount of trouble.

I have partly filled up one schedule as an example and left the other blank.

| DATE | | MORNING | | EVENING | | MORNING | | EVENING | | MORNING | | EVENING | | MORNING | | EVENING | | | |
|--------------------|--|---------|---|---------|---|---------|----|---------|---|---------|---|---------|----|---------|---|---------|---|---|----|
| DAY OF DISEASE | | 3 | 7 | 11 | 3 | 7 | 11 | 3 | 7 | 11 | 3 | 7 | 11 | 3 | 7 | 11 | 3 | 7 | 11 |
| TIME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 42° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| T | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 107° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 106° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 105° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 104° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 103° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 102° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 101° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 100° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 99° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 37° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Normal Temperature | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 98° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 97° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 36° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PULSE. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RESP. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| BOWELS. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

P.M. EXAMINATION

BLACKWATER FEVER: *Colony*.....*No.*.....

| DATE DAY OF DISEASE | MORNING | | EVENING | | MORNING | | EVENING | | MORNING | | EVENING | | MORNING | | EVENING | | MORNING | | EVENING | | |
|------------------------|---------|---|---------|---|---------|----|---------|---|---------|---|---------|----|---------|---|---------|---|---------|----|---------|---|----|
| | 3 | 7 | 11 | 3 | 7 | 11 | 3 | 7 | 11 | 3 | 7 | 11 | 3 | 7 | 11 | 3 | 7 | 11 | 3 | 7 | 11 |
| | TIME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 42° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 41° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 40° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 39° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 38° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 37° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 36° | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PULSE. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RESP. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| BOWELS. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

P.M. EXAMINATION