

insurance companies of considering the presence of a pronounced vaccinal scar upon the body of an applicant as all-sufficient proof against small-pox is not good insurance protection.—Health.

### CHOREA TREATED AS A RHEUMATIC AFFECTION.

By Dr. Chas. H. Brown, Washington, D. C.

October, 10, 1895, a girl aged 10 years, came under my care and treatment, with the following history:—

A little over a year ago she commenced to become very nervous and irritable, and the muscles of the face and hands began to jerk and twitch. This soon became apparent in her legs and feet, most in the right side, the clonic spasms rapidly increasing until the previously bright sunny face of this intelligent child became twisted into the oddest grimaces, almost constantly, and were so changed as to give an idiotic expression. She complained of pain in her back and limbs, though there was no swelling or redness.

Her physician gave her the usual treatment recommended for the disease, and in spite of all that was done she gradually grew worse, until at the end of three months she was helpless and could not dress or undress herself, and was obliged to be waited upon and fed like an infant. During sleep was the only time she was free from the clonic spasms for a moment. Her appetite was variable and constipation was very troublesome, and could not be overcome by any amount of cathartic remedies, so enemas had to be given daily. When she first came under my care she could not walk without assistance and seemed to have but little control over her legs and was so weak she could scarcely stand.

The nervous symptoms were as described above, and she had become very much discouraged. The action of the heart was irregular and weak, with mitral systolic murmur.

Her principal complaint was pain in her back and legs, occasionally sharp, cutting pains in her forearms and hands.

Recognizing the fact, from experience, that a great majority of cases of chorea have rheumatic diathesis acting as a powerful predisposing cause,

I was led to prescribe elixir salicylic comp. She was taking several remedies when she came to me, all of which were discontinued, and the elixir given in teaspoonful doses four times a day. I saw her again two days later, and a very marked improvement was manifest; all the muscular movements were less severe, and her mother declared that she had not been so quiet or felt so well in the past eleven months. The treatment was continued, and at the end of one week she could walk about unaided, the muscles of the face had become perfectly quiet and there were but slight spasmodic movements of the hands, and that only occasionally. Twenty-two days from commencement she had no indications whatever of chorea, and the pains have all disappeared.

Dr. Hughes, at Guy's Hospital, ascertained that "out of 104 cases in which special inquiries were made respecting rheumatic and heart affections, there were only fifteen in which the patients were free from cardiac murmur, and had not suffered from a previous attack of rheumatism."

Nor is it possible to get over this fact by imagining that the pains of the supposed rheumatism may have been simply neuralgic and the cardiac murmur merely anemic, for in eleven out of fourteen cases of death from chorea recorded in the paper there were actual vegetations upon the cardiac valves.

The child affected with rheumatism is, after a longer or shorter interval, threatened with chorea, and the child affected with chorea is sooner or later affected with rheumatism. It may be explained, as Dr. Tuckwell points out, that in adults rheumatism and chorea do not go together as they do in earlier life; that in earlier life rheumatism is far more frequently complicated with heart disease. "The younger the patient," as Dr. Hillier remarks, "the more frequently is rheumatism accompanied by endocarditis." Cardiac disease is also very common in chorea.

For many years it has been my custom to treat chorea with an infusion of cimicifuga, and usually the results were all that could be desired, but in a few cases recovery was somewhat slow. The cimicifuga given in form of infusion always had a more beneficial effect in the treatment of chorea than all other remedies which I have used,