

reason why it should not be attempted. True, great difficulty would be experienced in the performance; but I think, not more risk to the patient than in the operation of ovariotomy.

Selected Papers.

On the Hypodermic Use of Morphia in Diseases of the Heart and Great Vessels.

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(From the Practitioner.)

The present paper is written in the hope that the mode of treatment I am about to propose is one of very high utility, and likely to bring comfort to many sufferers. So strongly, indeed, am I convinced of its importance, that I feel I ought not to delay the publication of my observations, although I now publish them under the pressure of many engagements. Any one of my readers, physician or not, who has watched at the bedsides of those who have died of heart disease or thoracic aneurisms will never lose the painful memory of their sufferings, or forget that of all modes of death these are, perhaps, the most terrible. Is it not rather a common than an uncommon fate to see men and women, otherwise healthy and with promise of life, placed at a fearful disadvantage by some injury in the heart or aorta, and who feel, with the undulled sensibilities of comparative health, how a mechanical fault at the very centre of the loom of life, and against which no bodily strength nor any device of medicine can prevail, is dragging them surely downwards week by week and month by month? I think there is scarcely any extreme illness so distressing as the latter stages of these maladies, when a patient, often with a clear head and a good stomach, can only cling convulsively to a life he would willingly lose, and with gasping breath, a striving heart, and swollen limbs, hardly finds a moment's rest from torment. The inability of most of these patients to lie down, the banishment from their beds, and the dread of night, which comes to other men as a friend, are perhaps the chief of their trials; and, as it would seem, by a wanton cruelty of nature we are forbidden to give to them that great consoler of the sufferings of others—opium. Will it not be a boon to them if there be yet some means by which the peace of an opiate can be given to relieve their anxious watchings? I was myself led by such experience of another's suffering to seek for remedial means in heart and aortic diseases;

and if I have been in any way successful, I am more than rewarded.

My farther experience of the *Prunus Virginiana*, and the gratifying testimony of others—of many strangers, moreover, who came to tell me of it at the British Medical Association—its increasing sale, too, at home and abroad, all convince me still of its utility. But in the latter stages of heart disease, when the wild cherry is either impotent or unequal to much help, I believe we have in the morphia syringe an invaluable ally.

From small and timid beginnings I have gone forward with this marvellous remedy, until I find myself now justified in using it fearlessly in any form and in any stage of heart and aortic disease. No matter how swollen the limbs, no matter how agitated the pulse, no matter how blue and how turgid the face and lips, I now never hesitate to inject morphia, and scarcely ever fail, even up to the time of the dying agonies, to give relief decided enough to earn the warm gratitude of the patient. At such times one feels the blessing of being a physician.

I believe I am right in supposing that the injection is not known in cases of this kind; if I am wrong, I must crave the reader's pardon. In my own consultations, however, I not only find it unknown to, but naturally dreaded by, my professional brethren. I never see it mentioned in the medical journals, and I have spoken of it to many leading physicians in London and elsewhere, who have confessed their own ignorance of the remedy, and have urged me to make it known. My friend and colleague, Mr. Teale, indeed, is quite familiar with this use of morphia, and I have the great advantage of his warm testimony in its favour—a testimony wholly unbiassed by me, for he had hit upon the remedy for heart disease almost or quite as soon as I began it, and he has never gone back from it.* I have found, also, that in every case in which another medical man has used the injection at my instance, so far from being alarmed by it, or dissatisfied, he has thenceforth regarded it as his best friend.

I use the hydrochlorate of morphia in doses varying from one-tenth to one-third of a grain; I seldom use half a grain, except in such a case as intense pain from angina or intrathoracic tumour. I always begin with one-eighth or one-sixth; and in ordinary cases I find a quarter of a grain the proper dose—in a case, say, of mitral regurgitation with pulmonary congestion in an otherwise healthy

*Mr. Teale tells me that he accidentally discovered the remedy when injecting for a painful ulcer a patient who also had heart disease.