

THE TREATMENT OF PUERPERAL SEPTICÆMIA BY
 IODOFORM SUPPOSITORIES.

Dr. Alloway presented the records of six cases of puerperal septicæmia, three of which had been treated by a new method, viz., the introduction into the uterine cavity of iodoform suppositories. He referred to the care and anxiety which these cases caused to the attendant, the frequent visits necessary if the ordinary method of repeated intrauterine injections is followed, as in general practice the assistance obtained is rarely skilled enough for this. The advantages of iodoform in general surgery were now fully recognized, and it occurred to him that they might be extended to the treatment of the raw placental surface, and to the lacerations and bruises of the passages. The site of a separated placenta had been well compared to the stump of a limb after amputation. With this remedy we had the advantages not only of a topical action, but, applied in the manner directed, the effect was continuous, and the vapor, or whatever it was, given off, permeated to all parts. Too often with injections, the superficial parts were cleansed and in an hour or so, unless repeated, the discharges were again fetid. He believed that with the iodoform we could get a more effectual disinfection of the intrauterine cavity in these cases than with the ordinary solutions, and the trouble of constant injections was completely obviated. The author referred to the current views on septicæmia, particularly to the formation of a virus by the bacteria in the decomposing discharges, and suggested that if, as Binz has shown, the iodoform controls the activity of the protoplasm of the colorless blood-corpuscles, it may do the same with the bacteria. In carrying out the treatment he used a Sims' speculum, washed out the uterus first with plain or carbolicized water, and then, with a tent-inserter, passed the suppository far up into the fundus. He used them of the strength of ten, fifteen, or twenty grains, and usually introduced one night and morning. No poisonous effects had been noted.

The author first read the notes of three cases, two of diphtheria of the passages, which were treated successfully with injections of carbolic acid and Condry's fluid; the third, a very severe case of septicæmia, which he had not treated during the entire illness, but which had had no injections, and terminated fatally.

The cases in which he had used the iodoform were as follows: Mrs. B., aged 23, confined June 20, 1882; foetus nearly at full term, but had been dead some time and was decomposed; fluids very dark and offensive. Uterus was washed out immediately with carbolic solution, and the nurse was ordered to syringe the vagina with the same every three hours. Up to the twenty-third the patient did well, but in the afternoon of this day she had a chill, and when seen in the evening the temperature was 104.5° , and the pulse 123. There was no pain, discharge slight, a little offensive. The cavity of the uterus was washed out with warm water, and a fifteen-grain iodoform suppository inserted. On the twenty-third the temperature was 101° , pulse 110. Uterus again washed out and another suppository inserted, and in the evening a third. No further chills; patient doing well. On the twenty-fifth the temperature was 99° ; same treatment followed. She made a good recovery.

Mrs. E., aged 30, fourth pregnancy, confined September 24, 1882. Easy labor; did well until the 26th, when she had intense perimetritic pain and a severe chill; temperature 103.5° , pulse 126; ordered poultices, and gave Battey's solution of opium. Followed same local treatment as in former case. In the evening the temperature was 104° ; introduced another ten-grain suppository. 27th, pain gone, temperature 100° ; same local treatment morning and evening. 28th, better, continued the suppositories. By the 30th the temperature was normal, and she made a good recovery.

Mrs. G., aged 25, third pregnancy, confined December 13, 1882. Dead twins at the sixth month. After-birth came away and seemed entire. Patient has had a series of chills in the past twenty-four hours, and after delivery the temperature was 105° , pulse 100, and she was in a very excited state. A portion of adherent placenta was removed, and grs. xx of quinine were given. On the 14th she was quieter, temperature 103° , pulse 140; uterus was washed out, and two ten-grain suppositories inserted. No tenderness. 15th, temperature 100° , pulse 112; same local treatment. On the 16th, had diarrhoea; had no suppository last evening; discharge this morning a little fetid; temperature 103° , pulse 124; two of ten grains each inserted, and in the evening a third. To the 21st, she had one every morning and evening. On the 22d the treatment was stopped; temperature normal.