

“ This is a very striking and valuable lesson. The effect of the opium was to cause distention of the bowels, and you see the good results that follow the evacuation of the resulting accumulation. During the epidemic of 1854 I saw more than one case in which the bowels were quite unable to empty themselves in consequence of detension thus caused. Even castor oil did not give the slightest aid, and they all proved fatal.

“ In consequence of the futility of giving drugs by the mouth, some practitioners have given hypodermic injections of morphine. These are peculiarly dangerous, because absorption from the subcutaneous tissue is so very rapid that they prove directly poisonous. I have already pointed out that absorption is suppressed in the alimentary tract, hence drugs requiring to be absorbed are quite inert. Castor oil acts locally, and, therefore, still produces its physiological effects. It is worse than useless to feed patients in collapse; even milk does harm. The only thing to give them is cold water. In extreme cases, when circulation is almost at a standstill, I think it is perfectly justifiable to inject hot saline solutions. Out of twenty patients injected at the London Hospital five recovered, a very good result when one considers that under ordinary circumstances they would probably all have died. Venesection, as I have said, owes its effects to the relief of the cardiac and venous congestion. The cramps are best relieved by fomentation and friction, they rarely occur during reaction, and are probably caused by the presence of the poison in the blood.

“ When a patient dies from cholera muscular movements have often been observed for a considerable time after death. People have supposed from such movements that the patient was put on the table before he was dead, but they are really due to the stimulus of the cholera poison acting on the muscles or nerve centres after death.

“ During reaction it is necessary to be very careful in feeding a patient. The fever is often of considerable severity; the lungs get congested by the intense oxidation which goes on in the blood, resulting in the production of more carbonic acid than can be got rid of. There is a very marked contrast be-