

as a poison to the system, and have prescribed Emetics to dislodge it. Without recurring to facts and arguments to prove the fallacy of these premises, the effect of an Emetic only need be considered. Whenever nausea is induced a depressed or diminished action of the heart is sure to follow. In Cholera all acknowledge the dangerous depression in the action of heart. Whatever induces nausea, then, increases the disease, so far as the action of the heart is concerned—and also increases the serous effusion and diarrhœa. Of such importance are these considerations, that with a knowledge of indigestible substances in the stomach, we could not recommend an emetic to eject them, lest more danger be incurred from further sinking the heart's action. The safer course being to excite the nervous energy, and raise what in other circumstances would be considered an undue degree of excitement, when the offending matter could be evacuated without danger—but should it be thought necessary to dislodge indigestible substances, the most safe emetic would be the sulphate of zinc (white vitrol.) Several cases of Cholera, where emetics had been given, have come under our care, and more have come to our knowledge, not one of which survived the disease.

Scarcely less injurious are such cathartics as induce nausea though their hurtful impression is not so suddenly made—yet if the disease is somewhat advanced, they as surely increase the profuse discharges, and their injurious effects are of longer continuance.

To allay the spasms in Cholera a most unfortunate use has been made of *Opium*. Ordinarily, spasmodic action is the result of nervous irritation produced by some irritating substance or matter, remote in situation from the muscles thus spasmodically affected—and the use of *Opium* as an antispasmodic in Cholera, has been predicated upon the supposition that the spasms were produced by an acrimonious or some other poisonous quality of the bilious or other matter acting upon the stomach or other internal parts. But in Cholera cramps are produced by the *direct application* of the irritating matter to the extremities of the spino-cerebral nerves, (see p 35.) At the same time the effect of the poison upon the parts supplied by the sympathetics, are suffering a great diminution of power—or in other words the effect of the poison upon them is that of a *narcotic*. Now if opium be given in sufficient quantity to affect the spasms—the nervous depression—impaired or suppressed secretion, and congestions are all increased. The too common idea then that the quantity of opium may safely be apportioned to the violence of the spasms, is a most gross and dangerous error.