

ing, we may say, the action of the other, and that it may be left to discretion whether any gain may result from combining calomel with sugar; it now remains for us to determine how we may promote its action to a greater degree, and thereby accelerate a speedier return to health.

To obtain this end satisfactorily, I always make it an invariable rule to administer the calomel at night, and the next morning to follow it up with some castor oil, which practice has always resulted by my expectations being realized. Sometimes, on account of the stubbornness of the bowels, owing to neglect, calomel is comparatively powerless as regards its purgative qualities; but it never fails when followed by the castor oil, which seems to stimulate it to fresh exertions, and entirely prevents, in children as well as in adults, the much-dreaded mercurialization.

This mode of treatment is, as the reader may perceive, remarkably simple, and consequently by some may be impugned as being too much so; but simplicity, to my mind, is or should be the goal of all things. Complexity and abstruseness show undeniable and unmistakable ingenuity and tact, and great praise is due to those who can obtain the desired end through the media of such channels; but the great fundamental in the treatment of disease is simplicity, which, if carried out successfully, is the acme of medical science and the perfection of medical skill.

Some seem to have a grudge and a determined ill-will toward calomel; no words and terms are too strong for them to use when they denounce it; in fact, they abuse it with a hearty good-will; and many, I know, would prefer giving no medicine at all than be under the necessity of administering it. Some are truly fearful, and altogether refrain from using it, because so and so may happen; but what catastrophe one cannot without great difficulty elicit from them; and, supposing we are successful in our endeavors, we find their objections and reasons very vague and unsatisfactory. Some will honestly tell you that to a certainty mercurialization will occur, and that is the sole reason why they do not use it.

Assuming, for the sake of argument, the correctness of their objections, I do not see why such a result should necessarily occur if it be given with care. If a man chooses to cut his throat with a razor there is no reason why I should follow his example, for I may use the very same implement for other purposes. If a man chooses to poison himself with opium, the same drug given by me may save another man's life. So it is with calomel; if a man administers it carelessly and injudiciously, evil consequences may result; but I may give the very same drug, and good results will ensue.

This dislike to calomel is sheer prejudice, and in many instances approaches the whimsical. I remember being told by a great enemy to calomel that it should never be given save to a plowman, and then only very gingerly. "Colocynth and hyoscyamus," said he, "for a lady, colocynth and

jalap for a gentleman, but colocynth and calomel for a plowman." This absurd injunction, I need hardly say, I very soon found to be the quintessence of erroneous treatment; besides, it was entirely antagonistic to all common sense; for the intestines of a "plowman" have not as yet been discovered to be dissimilar to the intestines of a "lady" or "gentleman." Perhaps when he made the above remark he was under the impression that there did exist a dissimilarity, and, being of that opinion, considered that a different course of treatment was necessary to meet the various peculiarities of the several intestines.

This digression serves to show what a groundless, illogical abhorrence some have to calomel, for no reason at all except that something prejudicial to the patient may possibly occur, but of what nature they are entirely undetermined upon, unless it be mercurialization, which is the only objection its opponents can reasonably urge against its administration.

In what diseases or morbid conditions of infancy is calomel indicated, and how should it be administered, whether alone or in combination? Infantile diseases are few in number when compared with those which attack the adult, for the following very cogent reasons: The constitution of an infant or child has not gone through the wear and tear of life; the lungs have not yet been irritated through inhalation of infinitesimal carboniferous matter; the digestive powers have not yet been impaired through the ingestion of indigestible food; nor have the coats of the stomach been injured by the destructive properties of alcohol, which is regarded by a great majority as a necessary staple of nourishment, and neither is the liver disorganized by habitual drinking.

The most prevalent of all infantile diseases are convulsions, proceeding from either intestinal or cerebral irritation or from dentition. Those arising from intestinal irritation are sometimes induced primarily from dentition, and in many instances one state is co-existent with the other; and the same may be said regarding those convulsive attacks which owe their origin to cerebral irritation, though the latter condition may exist singly and alone; in other words, we may find one state complicated with the other.

There are two kinds of intestinal irritation—that proceeding from fecal contents and that resulting from the presence of worms (which generally belong to the round variety, though sometimes the thread-worms are also provocative of convulsions, but they are not of so severe a nature, and they are more common among children averaging from two years and upward, but rarely found among infants at the breast). Those convulsions proceeding from irritation produced by the accumulation of fecal matter are easily cured if treated correctly, but are simply aggravated if treated in the usual style, *i. e.*, two or three grains of the hydrargyrum cum creta administered three or four times during the day.