

TREATMENT OF TYPHOID FEVER.

With so many specialties being developed, one of the few remaining diseases of importance left to the family physician to treat is typhoid fever. As the disease is due to the planting of vegetable spas in the small intestine near the ileo cœcal valve, it is quite impossible by any means yet known to cut the disease short until these plants have run the natural course of their existence, which occupies about three weeks from the time the patient takes to the bed.

The treatment which we recommend may be summed up, in the words of Cullen: "Obviate the tendency to death." Let us inquire then to what accidents death may be due.

1. Hemorrhage of the bowels.
2. Perforation of the intestines.
3. Failure of the heart's action.
4. Pulmonary or bronchial complications.
5. Hyperpyrexia.

For the first complication Dr. C. G. Comegys, of Cincinnati, says (*Pacif. Med. Jour., March*) that he knows of nothing superior to the use of castor oil in small doses every half hour, till the oil appears in the passages. To this may be added to cold applications to the abdomen.

Since the importance of a strictly milk diet has been understood, deaths from perforation are becoming rare. Too much stress cannot be laid on the rule of giving no solid food. In order to impress this regulation upon the patient and all the numerous friends from whom it is our duty to save him, we have been in the habit of hanging up at the head and foot of the bed a card inscribed as follows:—

NO FRUIT.	NO VEGETABLES.
NO SOLID FOOD.	
ONLY MILK AND WATER!	
NO-BREAD.	NO MEAT.

As we have had five deaths in nearly one hundred and fifty cases, and four of them were directly traced to the breaking of this rule, we speak feelingly on the subject. On the above card beef tea is not mentioned. The omission is intentional. A hospital nurse once called our attention to the fact that the temperature nearly always goes up one degree if beef tea enters the diet list, and, with few exceptions, we have found the observation correct.

As failure of the heart's action is probably one of the commonest causes of death, and as we possess in digitalis the most powerful of cardiac tonics, we consider the drug to be of the greatest value, during the third week especially, and sometimes after defervescence has set in. Alcohol is also nearly always useful, if properly handled; that is to say, if it is given in small but often repeated and gradually increasing doses.

The pulmonary complications, bronchitis and hypostatic congestion at the bases of the lungs at the back, may be diminished by attention to the position of the patient, taking care to have the patient frequently turned over on to the sides and face, instead of leaving him for days motionless on the back.

We have placed hyperpyrexia as the last among the causes of death because, in our opinion, temperature which is fatal *per se* is rarely reached. It must be admitted, however, that typhoid patients appear better and more comfortable when the temperature can be kept down. The way to do this, which seems most grateful to the patient, is to sponge him by sections, under the clothing, with some evaporating liquid, such as whiskey and water, or even soap and water, and allowing the moisture to evaporate instead of drying it off. Another means is to allow the patient to drink an unlimited quantity of iced milk and water. The temperature of the total mass of the body is lowered by just so much as it takes to heat so many quarts of liquid at 32 de-