

ease until, at the end of a fortnight or three weeks, the cough quite ceased. But in some cases the cough returns when the medicine is left off, so it may have to be continued for two or even three months; this, however, is the exception.

The power of ergot upon hooping-cough throws some light on its physiological action. Indeed clinical or therapeutical observation often aids physiological research, though without experimental (vivisectional) investigation the therapist would be in hopeless darkness. Its action in hooping-cough appears to me to favor the theory that the sensory peripheral endings only are affected, as central anemia of the cord from constricted vessels could scarcely account for the *speedy* antispasmodic action of the drug, though later on it may have something to do with the bringing about a cure.

*On the uterus.* On the parturient uterus every one has tried the effects of ergot; yet obstetricians are frequently disappointed in its action, so much so that many say it is useless; and I suppose every one has felt it to be provokingly uncertain, even in a most suitable case—a well-advanced labor, free from mechanical obstruction, a dilated or dilatable os, and a multipara. In vain are large and oft-repeated doses given—the sluggish uterus will not act. Whether it be the only one or not, I know one cause to be inertness of the drug. After a pretty extensive trial of powder, tea, tincture, and liquid extract, I have found the best results from the liquor secale ammoniata, when well prepared. Let one typical case suffice: Mrs. M. in labor with her seventh child; usually *very* quick. Visited patient at eight o'clock in the morning. She had been in labor all night, during which time the membranes ruptured. Pains very feeble; os dilatable and as large as the mouth of a teacup. Went home, returned about twelve o'clock, and found her much in the same condition. I then gave one dram liq. sec. ammon. (Ferris). In thirty-five minutes sharp pains came on, and in another fifteen minutes the child was born. Placenta came away easily. In this case the labor had lasted eighteen hours. In cases where I have given a dram and a half of the secale for a dose, violent uterine contractions have taken place, expelling the child and retaining the placenta for some time by hour-glass contractions. This retention of the placenta I have frequently found after giving large doses, but not with dram or half-dram doses.

Has ergot any action on the unimpregnated uterus, or on the impregnated before parturition has commenced? As far as my experience goes, ergot has no appreciable effect on the impregnated uterus when given in therapeutic doses. On the unimpregnated uterus its action is not very marked, unless it be given for a lengthened period. In subinvolution and in chronic congestion and enlargement the cavity of the uterus—the sound being judge—does not become diminished by the action of secale alone, but, with rest and other remedies, it helps. I have not much faith in its action on uterine fibroids. If they are submucoid, ergot will

assist their enucleation after an incision has been made. But it is too much to expect from a remedy that a tumor of any size will have its blood-supply so cut off as to destroy the growth, or to cause enucleation by contractions. In such cases however, it will assist natural efforts of expulsion when such has commenced.

Theoretically, ergot should have some effect upon all hemorrhages, congestions, and atonic conditions of the system. In hemoptysis it has been highly spoken of, but my experience of it in that disease is small, as I have found such good results from the tincture of hamamelis that I seldom use any other remedy. Again, it is constantly used alone or combined with sulphuric acid in menorrhagia, metrorrhagia, and with more or less success. So also in leucorrhea and galactorrhea, although I have not found it of much use in preventing or cutting short mammary abscess.

In atonic and enfeebled conditions so often met with in women, where anemia is associated with a weak heart, inertia, etc., ergot, combined with tincture of iron, often acts better than strychnine and iron or digitalis and iron. Allbutt has used it with great benefit in men who are worn out from worry, and who need bracing up. So with children, I have found it in some cases a useful adjunct to the compound syrup of the phosphates where the latter is indicated.

In diarrhea several writers have spoken highly of ergot, but in my hands it has invariably failed; indeed it has always increased the diarrhea, and this, from its action upon the muscular fibres of the intestines, is what one would expect. Any theoretical advantage to be gained by contraction of congested vessels in the mucous membrane is more than counterbalanced by the increased peristalsis. In a typical case of chronic diarrhea which I had under my care a short time ago, and which continued for months despite every kind of treatment, I gave some ergot; but the patient could not be persuaded to finish one bottle, as he said it made him "worse than ever." The diarrhea was due to muco-enteritis, and the case did well on large doses of bismuth. In children who have been taking ergot for some time diarrhea frequently sets in. This is the only bad effect I find from its prolonged use—two or three months—in children; and when it is given in ordinary therapeutical doses, five to ten drops every four or six hours, it may be continued for a very long time without doing harm.

The action of ergot upon the spinal cord is well known, but in congestion of the brain in children I have been most unfortunate in its use, even in large doses. In some of my cases, however, there was a suspicion of tubercle.

The following case, which was under my care a few weeks ago, may be looked upon as illustrating the speedy action of ergot upon what appeared to be localized congestion of the chord: A little boy aged four and rather delicate, was suddenly seized with what his mother thought a slight convulsion,