

a fair trial, in any cases where either himself or his friends might have an opportunity of using it. Soon afterward I sent him a second letter; but from that day to this I have not received an answer to either the one or the other. His reasons for such conduct are best known to himself. He had previously pretended to be my friend, and, so far as I am aware of, I had never given him the slightest offence either in word or deed.

When the Cholera made its appearance in this metropolis, I did every thing in my power to induce my medical friends who were in practice to try the saline treatment, and some of them did give it a trial in a few instances; but it was either in the most hopeless cases, or in the very last stage of the disease; consequently, the result made no very favorable impression. Others used the saline treatment in milder cases; but they combined it at the same time with opium, brandy, colomel, and other improper agents, consequently, the good that was gained by the one was lost by the others.

About this period, cases were published almost daily in the various journals, stating the successful result of the saline treatment; but still all this made no impression, either on the Board of Health, or on the generality of practitioners. Those who believed that Cholera was produced either by a nervous impression, or a local inflammation, would not try the saline practice, because they could not see on what principle it could possibly do good. Some would not try it because it was too cold for the stomach; and one philosopher of the right old breed, who appears to be ignorant of every improvement that has been made in the profession for the last fifty years, when he was told that in Cholera there is a deficiency of saline matter in the blood, declared that it was all trash,—and even if the fact were true, he could believe it just as possible to make up for a want of the bile by throwing ox-gall into the stomach, as credit even for a moment that salts could be of any use by entering the circulation, and acting on the blood.\* In short, almost every one that I met with had a theory or a practice of his own, which he was determined to support, and was equally ready to throw cold water on every thing like improvement that was proposed by another. There were, however, some brilliant exceptions to this rule.

In the beginning of April, I received a visit from Mr. Pont, a medical gentleman in Albany-street, who called to inform me that the Cholera had broken out in the prison at Cold-Bath Fields, and that he had been requested by Mr. Wakefield, the surgeon who had charge of the prison, to say that he would be glad to show me the cases; and from what he had heard of the saline treatment, he should be very willing to give it a trial—the more so as he had now no longer any faith in the common remedies.

On the receipt of this message, I immediately went to the prison; and after some conversation with Mr. Wakefield on the subject, he not only agreed to adopt the saline treatment, but invited me to attend the cases along with him. He consented also that Mr. Crooke, a young medical gentleman who had lived with me for several years in the West Indies, should be allowed to remain constantly in the prison to see that the medicines were faithfully administered, as well as to take notes of the cases.

\* Such physicians as this are justly entitled to the eulogium which a certain practitioner gives to his son, in Moliere's inimitable comedy of *Le Malade Imaginaire*.—“Mais, sur toute chose, ce qui me plait en lui, et en quoi il suit mon exemple, c'est qu'il s'attache aveuglement aux opinions de nos anciens, et que jamais il n'a voulu comprendre, ni écouter les raisons, et les expériences des prétendus de notre siècle, touchant la circulation du sang, et autres opinions de même farine.”

The following is an outline of the practice which was pursued, not only in the prison, but every where else where I have had an opportunity of treating the disease.

First. The treatment was generally commenced with a Seidlitz powder, which was given with a view of lessening the gastric irritation, and partly for the purpose of removing the diseased secretions from the intestinal canal.

Secondly. When the stomach was irritable, (which it generally was,) a large sinapism was immediately applied to the epigastric region, and where the patients were cramped in the extremities, frictions were used with hot flannel. The pain produced by the spasms in the muscles were not only relieved by the frictions, but by this and the application of sinapisms to various parts of the body, the quantity of animal heat was increased, and this, I need scarcely say, is an object of great importance in the treatment of Cholera.

Thirdly. A powder containing

Carbonate of soda, half a drachm,  
Muriate of soda, one scruple,  
Chlorate of potass, grs. viij.

was dissolved in half a tumbler of water, and given soon after the Seidlitz. In severe cases, the above powder was administered every half hour. In those that were less severe, it was used every hour, and in some malignant cases it was given every fifteen minutes. In short, it was given more or less frequently according to the circumstances of the case, and continued until the circulation was fairly restored; it was then given at longer intervals, and when the reaction was completely established, it was left off by degrees.

Fourthly. Where the stomach was irritable, the use of the above powder was occasionally suspended and common effervescing mixtures, or small doses of the common soda powders, with an excess of the carbonates, were frequently used, until the irritation was lessened, and then the carbonate of soda with larger doses of the chlorate of potass were generally given without the addition of the muriate of soda, and frequently in such cases the chlorate of potass was given by itself, in doses containing ten grains each.

Fifthly. A solution of muriate of soda was also thrown up into the intestines, at as high a temperature as the patients could well bear this saline fluid.

Sixthly. In two very severe cases, which occurred out of the prison, the patients were put into a hot saline bath with evident advantage. It is well known, that a hot saline fluid is a better conductor of heat than fresh water at the same temperature; but, independent of this, a part of the saline ingredients may be absorbed from the skin, and the patients may also be benefitted by respiring the hot saline vapor. It is but fair to state, however, that this means, which was evidently beneficial in the cases in which it was tried, was proposed by Mr. Marsden, one of the surgeons to the Free Hospital in Greville-street.

Seventhly. Seltzer water was allowed *ad libitum*, when the patients expressed a desire for something to drink. A strong infusion of green tea was also occasionally used, in severe cases, apparently with advantage.

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