

2. It is a much neater and cleaner dressing than the carbolized oil which is so frequently used.

3. It does not stain or rather fix stains, as carbolic acid does; an important consideration where sheets, &c., are of any value.

4. It does not "kill granulations" as carbolic acid does, but stimulates them.

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### Correspondence:

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(For the Canada Medical Record.)

#### TYPHUS; OR SHIP FEVER.

MR. EDITOR,—I apprehend that all young physicians favour the notion that medicine is omnipotent in the treatment of disease generally, of which fatal error, observation and experience thoroughly cure him, if he be a philosopher. He, with becoming contempt for such names as Allopath, Homœopath, Hydropath, &c., and their exclusive systems, does not abandon one figment for another, and flee from the deadly and dangerous system of over drugging, to embrace the less hurtful but effete fiction of infinitesimals. He accepts and adopts, the scientific, safe and successful practice, evolved in the expectant plan of treatment. The experience of a long medical career (my practice having ever been eclectic,) has led me to these principles; the soundness of which I will try to illustrate.

During the year 1847, "Typhus," or so called "ship fever," prevailed extensively in this city and country; carrying death and desolation in its track. The mortality in public hospitals, at the Quarantine Station, and in private practice, was as great as usual under the then ordinary and accepted plan of treatment. One solitary and note-worthy exception, both as to treatment and its results, I am desirous of placing on record, whilst one of the actors in the scene is still on the stage of life. I refer to Dr. Douglas, the Principal in Dr. Douglas' and Racey's "Ship Fever Hospital" at Beauport; where the death rate was the smallest, I have found any record of, during an epidemic.

Having applied to Dr. Douglas for the facts and figures connected with this private hospital, I subjoin the following terse and interesting record, *verbatim et literatim*.

#### EXTRACT FROM MY PRIVATE JOURNAL.

During the winter and spring of 1847 the accounts of the ravages made by the fever in Ireland, the prospect of a vastly increased emigration to Can-

ada, and in my opinion the certainty of a great amount of cases of typhus, among both the cabin and steerage passengers, induced me and my partner Dr. Racey to establish a private hospital for the treatment of masters of vessels and of cabin passengers, who would naturally object to go into a crowded public hospital, and who would as naturally be refused admission into private houses.

We accordingly leased a large house on the beach at Beauport, and awaited the arrival of the shipping. Our prognostics were fully verified; vessels arrived, crowded with cases of typhus. The hospitals and sheds both at Quebec and at Grosse Isle were crowded with emigrants and seamen, and, as was expected, hotels and private houses very prudently refused to receive cases of virulent contagious fever.

Our private hospital was very soon found to be too small, and we leased in addition the large and commodious dwelling-house connected with the old breweries at Beauport. In these two private hospitals we admitted and treated during the summer one hundred and sixty-five cases of Typhus fever, of whom three died of the fever, and one of paralysis after recovery from the immediate danger of the fever.

Our treatment was extremely simple; on admission the patient was placed in a tepid bath, in which he was thoroughly shampooed and scrubbed with soap and a coarse towel, a staff of excellent and well tried nurses, clean sheets and body linen frequently changed, thorough ventilation, diluent drinks, and occasionally medicine were our modes of treatment.

We were very sparing in the use of drugs, for, though not homœopaths, we decidedly preferred administering them with a spoon, instead of a shovel.

J. DOUGLAS.

DR. MARSDEN.

We have here an admirable illustration of the success of the *expectant plan of treatment* nearly thirty years since, which speaks well for the genius and progressive spirit of its promoters. A death rate of less than 2 per cent. (as one of the cases of death could not be said to be from typhus) is almost, if not quite without a parallel.

According to Murchison,\* during fourteen and a-half years, at the London Fever Hospital, the mortality from typhus was 20.89, per cent., and ex-

\* Charles Murchison: Treatise on Continued Fevers of Great Britain in 1862.