

heat is the exaggeration of a normal function rather than a separate and distinct process.

The causes of fever cannot always be determined. Indeed, many cases come under our care, in which this is the only symptom present. Frequently we are unable to discover any cause for the fever. Modern medical thought is in the direction that fever, in the great majority of cases, is due to the invasion of the system by pathogenic bacteria, and that the increased heat is induced by the presence of the bacteria, or their products, in the tissue or fluids of the body. That this has been demonstrated to be true in the greater number of cases does not admit of doubt, but that all fevers are caused in this manner is probably not correct.

In some cases it seems highly probable that fever is due to imperfect elimination; that is, effete material, the result of tissue metabolism circulating in the blood, acts as an irritant to the nerve centers. This theory seems very probable in the case of infants, and will satisfactorily explain many acute cases of fever, because of the immatured cell life and the rapid growth of the tissues, very trivial causes being sufficient to disturb the relation between nutrition and elimination.

It is a curious fact, well established by clinical observation, that mental emotions, as fear, anger, grief and joy, rarely induce fever, but that mental disturbances in those suffering from fever frequently produce an acute exacerbation. Even in infants I am satisfied that the same thing applies. Who has not seen a child suffering from fever made worse by being annoyed by the presence in the sick room of officious friends.

Fever does not always imply the increased production of animal heat, but may be due to decreased elimination. While heat is constantly being elaborated within the various tissues of the body, it is also regularly being dissipated from the body. Undoubtedly, many acute cases of fever are due to the disturbance of this relationship.

With these preliminary remarks we may proceed to the discussion of the subject of treatment of Fevers.

All fevers do not require treatment. Indeed, many are overtreated. Therefore, we may reasonably inquire what are the indications for treatment, when we should interfere and when desist. It is not alone the degree of fever that we should take into consideration, but even more important is the continuance of the fever and the influence of increased temperature upon the nervous system. The injurious effect of fever upon the nervous system is, to my mind, the most important reason for instituting treatment to reduce the temperature.

Infants vary greatly in their immunity to the effect of