

into the matter. The evidence to be collected, pathological as well as clinical, is all in favor of the proposition that by a generous diet will the tendency to phlegmasia dolens—supposing it to exist—be likely to be counteracted.

If, for the sake of argument, we admit that these puerperal accidents are inflammatory, the utility of a low diet cannot be maintained in face of the great alteration which has come over the professional mind in reference to the treatment of inflammation. The practice of bleeding has very largely gone out; mercury and antimony are far less relied on than formerly. There is certainly much doubt as to their efficacy in these cases. The absolute dietary formerly insisted on has equally fallen into disfavor.

It may be urged that I am arguing on theoretical grounds; but I can state as the result of very careful personal observation, that the conclusions I have enumerated as to the bad effects of the low-diet system in the prevention and treatment of the puerperal diseases alluded to are amply borne out by the facts in my possession. I have also—and this is perhaps more to the point—abundant evidence of the most practical kind of the value of a generous sustaining and supporting diet and regimen, both in cutting short puerperal mischief of the worst kind, and in preventing its occurrence under circumstances most threatening to the patient. What I have seen of puerperal fever and allied disorders has, indeed, induced me to regard with the utmost horror all remedies of a depressing, lowering character. In the treatment of these affections, large quantities of food and brandy, or an equivalent, I have employed most successfully. It is rational to suppose, and it is consistent with my experience, that this gives a clue to the prophylaxis of these diseases. I say nothing of cleanliness, ventilation, separation from contagious influences, &c.; the necessity for these it must be superfluous for me to expatiate upon.

3. *Puerperal mania* is another affection here to be alluded to in connection with the subject of the diet of child-bed. It will be sufficient perhaps, for me to state in reference to this disease, that a generous diet with opium in large quantities, and absolute rest, mental and bodily, form the essential elements in the treatment. Here, also, the clue to the prophylaxis is offered by the treatment. The disease generally results from the combined action of excitement and weakness, however induced.

4. *Sudden death during the puerperal state.*—This is an occurrence rare, but of great interest. In the cases which have been investigated the accident has been found to be connected with coagulation in the veins and obstruction to the circulation produced by the coagula in question. This form of death is one of the results of what is known as “embolism.” What I