

serious nature of the symptoms or the rapidity of the fatal termination. The pathological cause of death is therefore uncertain.—It is more than probable that the sudden and extreme vital depression, exhaustion and rapid death, is the result of the malignant nature of the morbid poison which, when introduced into the system operates either by producing a diseased condition of the blood or by otherwise proving a direct and immediate *shock* to the whole nervous system, but more especially to the cerebral portion.

The complication—probably the most common and fatal in scarlet fever—is sloughing or gangrene of the throat, accompanied by suppuration of the cervical glands and in which there would seem to be a subsequent re-inoculation of the system by morbid poison. The case I now submit is but the history of many of those fatal cases, resulting from this serious complication. A girl, æt 16, first complained of sore throat, which on the second day became violently inflamed and swollen. The tongue at first coated with a whitish-gray fur, was now totally denuded of its morbid covering, became exceedingly dry and hard and presented *numerous red prominent papillæ on its surface*. The vital powers became greatly prostrated and the fever assumed a marked asthenic type—suffusion of eyes—no delirium. On the 3rd day the tonsils suppurated, the glands of the neck became swollen and enlarged, accompanied by a slight inflammatory blush on the surface. On the 5th day a large slough separated from the throat, followed by an ichorous discharge from the mouth and nostrils—the latter presenting a peculiar glazed appearance. Diarrhœa followed and all the general symptoms became more aggravated. On the 6th day, the neck became enormously swollen, the skin over it exhibiting a livid, shining aspect as if glazed; the right parotid suppurated and when opened produced a most sanious purulent discharge. At this time a fresh fever was lighted up, the pulse became quicker, smaller and more feeble, the patient more restless and fretful, and a low delirium occurred at intervals. The child lingered on, under the administration of stimulants till the beginning of the ninth day when she died comatose.

This solitary instance proves sufficient to show the malignant nature of the S. F. poison and its specific action upon the throat and glands of the neck. It would also lead us to believe, that towards the latter end, a new poison entered the circulation. The system became re-inoculated by the absorption of malignant purulent matter, adding fuel to the flame and lighting up, as it were anew and materially aggravating the already established fever. *There is another circumstance which tends strongly to validate the probability of purulent absorption in cases of this nature, namely, the fact that the joints sometimes become seriously affected—the affection not being primary but secondary—the result of purulent*