

skin deprived of its epidermis infects the body of a healthy individual; this is called the direct contagion. The microbe of variola enclosed in the organic particles which fall from the skin during the period of desquamation is closely connected to this organic debris; it has an extreme vitality and can thus live for years. Owing to the mobility of these particles and their being almost infinitely divisible, the microbe can be carried a great distance and contaminate persons who have never been in contact with those afflicted with smallpox. This is the indirect contagion. There is no spontaneous evolution for variola, nor for any other contagious disease. Variola always comes from an infected individual and the strength and effects of its poison varies according to the susceptibility of person and the nature of the epidemic. Both sexes and every age are apt to catch the disease, only those vaccinated being beyond the reach of this terrible plague. Anything that lowers vitality in the human system can be considered as a predisposing cause.

We have had at the Civic Hospital from October, 1901, to October, 1902, 503 patients affected with smallpox; 270 male and 233 female. Adults, 306, children, 152, and 45 babies, of which two had contracted the disease before their birth. We have had also an old man over eighty years of age and about ten persons of over forty years, a fact that shows that smallpox does not spare old age more than infancy. This epidemic was particularly mild, 58 had a serious attack, 143 an attack of medium intensity and 302 a very slight one. The rate of mortality was 2.7 per cent, yet I have here the temperature charts of very serious attacks contracted from persons having had a mild one, a fact that proves that a mild epidemic such as we have had for over a year is not without its dangers.

*Symptoms.*—From the first the symptoms show that the disease is in full activity. In variola, fever has a particular character which is very interesting to study. In the beginning there is a slight elevation of temperature,—about one degree—which lasts but a few hours (from 6 to 12) and is not constant. Twenty-four hours after there comes a marked chill or repeated chills, followed by vertigo, a feeling of lassitude and drowsiness, and painful constriction of the throat, nausea, vomiting, lumbar pains and violent headache. By twenty-four hours later, the temperature rises as high as 104°, 105° and even 106°, showing a slight diminution in the morning, but a considerable elevation in the evening. The skin is hot and dry and gives a disagreeable sensation to the one touching the hand of a person affected with smallpox. This disagreeable sensation cannot be well defined, but I call your attention to this fact and if ever you come in contact with a patient having smallpox, you will not only feel it easily but