

11. To prevent or control diarrhoea. Whether the diarrhoeal flux be due to bacilli or irritant matter in the intestine or is the physiological result of toxic substances in the system, in either case the action of purgatives would be beneficial. In the one case the irritants, whatever their nature, are removed; in the other the systemic toxæmia is lessened.

12. By keeping toxæmia at the lowest possible point, the functions of digestion and assimilation are less interfered with and nutrition is better maintained.

Dr. Osler will have it that the advocates of the use of purgatives and antiseptics look upon typhoid fever as a disease of the intestines, while he himself would be with those who have learned within the last few years that it is an infection of the system generally. Such an assumption is entirely unwarranted. My own position has always been that typhoid fever is a disease primarily of the intestines, the bacilli first invading the tissue in the intestinal wall and afterward reaching all parts of the body. Although primarily a disease of the intestine, it quickly becomes a general infection. So great an authority as Prof. Sydney Martin adheres to that view of the question, and considers that "the arguments advanced in support of the belief that typhoid fever is a general infection with a secondary intestinal lesion, are not very satisfactory."¹¹

He considers that, "from our knowledge of other intestinal infections, the view that the infection in enteric fever is primarily intestinal is the more logical."

That intestinal ulceration is not an essential or necessary feature in typhoid fever I fully believe. I advanced that view in my paper published in the *Medical Record* of March 1, 1894, and pointed out that if the intestine be thoroughly cleared the process of infection is interrupted, the local infection of the gland to some degree limited, and as a result the glandular tissues are more likely successfully to resist the bacilli already located in them and to escape necrosis and ulceration.

Coming now to the contention that it is not likely that the bacilli in the intestinal contents multiply and produce their poison there to any extent, at the outset I desire to point out that the presence of specific bacilli in the intestinal contents is not essential to the theory of eliminative treatment. In their entire absence the effect of purgatives would still be to carry out of the body the poison-laden bile and the serous exudate containing its quota of toxin. However, the objection does not appear to be well taken. There are many reasons that make it extremely likely that the specific bacilli do multiply and produce their poison in the intestinal contents themselves.

Presumptive evidence of their multiplication in the intestines is furnished by the fact that the infection is carried by the intestinal contents. The simultaneous infection of several feet of the intestinal mucosa I have before advanced as a reason for believing in a previous multiplication in the intestinal contents.¹²