

FATALITY IN TYPHOID FEVER.

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Attention was called at a recent meeting of the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Montreal by the learned President, Dr. R. P. Howard, to the fact that fatality in typhoid fever depends largely on neglect in regard to proper treatment in the early period of the disease, especially with reference to *confinement of patients to bed*. Dr. Bell, the physician in residence of the Montreal General Hospital, stated that the experience of their hospital confirmed the President's views. The purport of this brief communication is to still further strengthen, if it were possible, this important statement, by illustrating its application in the cases admitted to the Hamilton City Hospital during the past year. During the year 1878 there was only one death in our hospital from typhoid fever, and in this case the fatal issue could be traced almost entirely to well-marked cardiac disease of old standing; death occurring about the time fatty degeneration of the heart is established.

During 1879 there has been in our institution a mortality of nearly 70 per cent. among typhoid cases. The same line of treatment exactly has been pursued, while the nursing has been incomparably better than during the previous year. The diet of patients has been restricted to liquids, mostly milk, with beef-tea when the condition of the bowels permitted; cold spongings—the patient always retaining the recumbent posture from the period of admission till all unfavorable symptoms had passed away. The medication was directed almost entirely to combating pyrexia by quinine, &c.

Notwithstanding these precautions, most carefully observed, the fatality during 1879 was alarmingly high, amounting, as before stated, to about 70 per cent. Now unless there has been something peculiarly fatal about the fever of 1879, we must find the explanation in the peculiar *circumstances* connected with the cases themselves: This explanation I conceived could be