

# THE CANADA LANCET :

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF

MEDICAL AND SURGICAL SCIENCE.

VOL. VII. TORONTO, SEPTEMBER, 1874. No. 1.

## Original Communications.

### CONTAGIOUSNESS OF ENTERIC FEVER.

BY ARCHIBALD E. MALLOCH, M.D., HAMILTON.

(Read before the Canadian Medical Association,  
August 5th, 1874.)

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—It is still an unsettled question whether or not Enteric Fever is contagious in the strict sense of the term. Dr. Wm. Budd holds that it is, and gives this as one of the proofs of its being a specific fever: whereas, Sir C. Murchison says,\* “Although Enteric Fever is communicable, my experience is entirely opposed to the view that it is contagious in the strict sense of the term. Visiting or contact with the sick is neither sufficient nor necessary to produce it, and it is never propagated by a third person.” Dr. Murchison holds that it is not a specific fever, and that it arises *de novo* from decomposing vegetable or animal matter, hence the term pythogenic which he gives to this fever.

Having had, during 1873, several cases of Enteric Fever which seemed to prove the contagiousness, in the strict sense of the term, of this disease, I thought it might be interesting to detail the cases and the circumstances under which they occurred.

The notes which were taken while waiting for the mercury to rise in the thermometer placed in the axilla, have been abbreviated, but they are sufficient, I hope, to characterise the majority at least of the cases as Enteric. Exception may be taken, however, to the cases Nos. VII. and VIII., but reasons will be given for their being so classified. The temperatures given are those of the morning.

\* Treatise on Continued Fevers, page 465.

CASE I.—July 15th, 1873.—Yesterday I visited Edward W—, æt. 25. Machinist. A history of not having been well for three weeks, but only off work for ten days, and confined to the house for five, was given. He had suffered from “chills and sweats,” with headache; had lost his appetite and been thirsty. To-day he is in as feverish a condition as yesterday, and his bowels have been moved four times without an aperient; there is tenderness in R. Iliac fossa, and several rose colored papules are seen on the abdomen. Pulse, 96; respirations, 28; temperature,  $104\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  F.; cough troublesome; expectoration, white, tough, frothy mucus, streaked with blood. Ronchi heard over chest generally, and a few bubbling râles at bases behind. Milk *ad libitum*, and poultices to chest were ordered along with the use of an acid and quinine mixture given yesterday.

July 16th.—Slept pretty well; three motions, semi-solid and of a pale yellow colour. Pulse, 96; respirations, 32; temperature,  $104^{\circ}$  F.

July 17th.—Slept well; has taken three pints of milk; three motions, the last is like pea soup; spots, at first noticed fading and others appearing. Pulse, 94; respirations, 28; temperature,  $103\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  F.

July 18th.—Six motions like pea soup, for which four pills of lead and opium were taken during the night; vomited once. Pulse, 94; respirations, 26; temperature,  $101\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  F.

July 19th.—Six motions; vomited twice; got three pills of lead and opium. Pulse, 96; respirations, 28; temperature,  $102\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  F. Tongue, dry, brown in centre and red at edges.

July 20th.—Eight loose motions. Pulse, 90; respirations, 24; temperature,  $102^{\circ}$  F.

July 21st.—Slept well; four motions. Pulse, 76; respirations, 24; temperature  $102\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  F. During the night a bloody purulent discharge came from the R. ear, which is to be syringed twice a day with luke-warm water; there had been no complaint of ear-ache.

July 22nd.—Three motions. Pulse, 70; respirations 24; temperature,  $100\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  F. Tongue not so dry, and clearing in centre.

July 24th.—Two motions. Pulse, 72; respirations, 18; temperature,  $99\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  F.

July 26th.—Three motions yesterday and one to-day. Pulse, 72; respirations, 22; temperature,  $100\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  F.

July 27th.—No change.