

On one point I have reason to congratulate myself, and that is the liberal tone which the medical press, with few exceptions, has observed towards me. Our science, theoretic and practical, is an organism every part of which shares the life of the whole. Isolate any portion of it from the general circulation, and that portion is doomed to atrophy and death. That the physician and the physicist are mutually helpful units in this organism, will become more and more evident as time moves on.

Though the apparatus is now in disarray, I should willingly, if it were thought desirable, make arrangements to enable medical men to see my infusions, protected and unprotected. Words can scarcely convey a clear notion of the contrast between the hyaline purity of the one and the muddy turbidity of the other.

SEQUEL TO A NOTE ON MALTA FEVER.

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SOME months ago, I addressed some observations to the JOURNAL on this remarkable form of fever, and referred to the case of a young medical officer at that time under treatment at Netley, suffering severely from some of the protean sequels of the disease. My young friend left Netley in the first days of October, and was removed to Edinburgh in an invalid carriage; and, although the neuralgic and rheumatic symptoms had much abated, he was terribly prostrated, incapable of locomotion, and quite anæmic. A few days ago, I received a letter from him, giving the history of his very sad suffering from the date of his leaving Netley to the present time. From this I give a few extracts, which will not only illustrate what I said before, but show how strongly the malarial element developed itself after he left Netley. While with us, he had a superabundance of febrile attacks; but they were not at all paroxysmal.

The patient has been advised to go to Karlsbad in May, advice strongly seconded by me, and afterwards to take a chalybeate course, which will, I have no doubt, as in many other instances, restore him to health. "Thinking you may be interested to hear of the progress of my somewhat unusual fever, I take the opportunity afforded by an intermission to tell you about it. I daresay you heard that, on reaching Edinburgh in October, I was attacked by a severe pleurisy, which well-nigh finished my history. I completely recovered from that, and began to pick up with wonderful rapidity, the fever having left me entirely. I soon regained the use of my legs, which you may remember was completely in abeyance at the time I was at Netley, and was able to go out walking a little. About November 30th, I was suddenly seized with a very severe attack of lumbago, the acute symptoms of which gave way in a few days to an attack of distinctly paroxysmal fever. This was utterly unlike anything I had ever suffered from in Malta or at Netley. Every day, about 4 P.M., I was seized with a cold stage, sometimes with marked rigors, sometimes only sensations of chilliness, lasting for twenty minutes to an hour, or an hour and a half. This was followed by great heat of skin, utter prostration, and frontal headache, with mental confusion, amounting sometimes to actual delirium. Sweating generally began at 9 P.M. At its first approach, I fell into a sudden quiet sleep, and awoke feeling calm and comfortable about the head, and almost free from fever. There were no actual intermissions, but very distinct remissions. The attack lasted about a week, and left me much pulled down. I soon regained strength, and was nearly quite myself again, when, on January 25th, I had a slight return of sciatica, quickly followed by fever; that is to say, I was feverish that night and on the following morning. At 1 P.M. on the 26th, I was seized with a very severe rigor, or rather, a regular ague, which lasted with considerable violence for about twenty minutes, followed by a short but severe hot stage. The paroxysm returned at 9 o'clock of the same night, and was also short but severe. On the following day, the usual paroxysm, slightly modified by quinine, came on at 4 o'clock, but was not repeated that day. Next day, the 4 P.M. paroxysm was slight. Yesterday, there was none, and to-day (January 29th) I enjoy a complete intermission. My spleen, which, if I remember aright, was little or not at all enlarged on landing from Malta, is now distinctly so, and has been ever since my last attack in November. My appetite is good, and I satisfy it well; but I am shockingly anæmic."

The history of this case, which is only a particularly severe example of many such sent from Malta, well bears out the remark of my colleague Mr. Webb, quoted in my last notice of "Malta Fever", that invalids from Malta are admitted into the Royal Victoria Hospital, as a rule, in a more shattered condition than those sent from India.

CASE OF ACCIDENTAL POISONING BY TINCTURE OF CANTHARIDES.

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CASES of poisoning, especially of an accidental nature, from cantharides, are very rare. Such a case has just occurred in my neighbourhood, and proved fatal to the unfortunate person. I beg to furnish the following particulars, in the hope that they may be of interest to members of the profession.

I was asked lately to visit Margaret Green, a pauper lunatic, who, I was informed, had gone into the druggist's shop here with the intention of stealing some laudanum. She had effectually done so on a former occasion; but this time she, from some unexplained cause, seized upon the wrong bottle; viz., one containing tincture of cantharides, of which she partook freely. On investigation, it was elicited that she must have taken three fluid ounces from the bottle.

When I saw the poor woman about two hours and a half after the accident, she was quite sensible of what had happened; and, when asked by me where she got the poison, she said, in the presence of witnesses, that she got it at the apothecary's; and, when further asked why she took it, she said that the lads (apprentices) in charge told her to take it.

I may here mention that the deceased was a lunatic, living in a private dwelling, under the care of her mother (sanctioned by the Lunacy Board); she had been in a weak state of mind for about twenty years, and subject to epileptic fits: all attributed to a fright. At each menstrual period, she became more excitable than usual, and had a series of fits; after the menstrual period was over, she became quiet, and almost quite rational, performing all the duties of her mother's house. She had never shown any suicidal or homicidal tendencies; and, although she was fond of drinking laudanum, she was never really known to take a poisonous dose, although she had frequent opportunities of doing so had she desired.

On the day she took the poison, I met her about noon, and spoke to her, and observed nothing excitable about her manner. Her mother informed me that she had menstruated about ten days previously, and that she was not unwell at the time of the accident. When I saw her after she had taken the poison, she was suffering much from a burning pain and constriction in the throat; her eyeballs were prominent; her lips and mouth were parched and bleached (blistered). She was salivating, retching, and vomiting a glairy tenacious mucus; her tongue was also bleached along the sides and tip, but was blackish-brown in the centre, and much swollen. The breathing was very irregular and imperfect, sometimes quick, sometimes slow, and at great intervals. The pulse at the wrist was full and bounding; the vessels of the head and neck were much congested. The poor creature appeared to be suffering great agony, as was indicated by her expression of countenance and the throwing about of her arms and body in her endeavours to obtain relief.

Vomiting being free, and the patient complaining much of pain in the gullet and great difficulty in swallowing, and considering the length of time since the poison had been swallowed, and the very soluble form of the drug, I was of opinion that emetics were unnecessary, and the use of the stomach-pump would have been fraught with danger (through mechanical injury to the weakened, and probably blistered, condition of the gullet and stomach). I, therefore, administered a draught of white of eggs, olive-oil, and warm milk, and encouraged the continued use of warm diluent drinks, with warm poultices to the throat, neck, breast, and stomach.

I again visited the patient in a few hours, and found her somewhat easier, so far as the burning pain in the throat went; and her mental condition was more composed. She was vomiting a coffee-ground-like substance, and complained of pain over the bladder, uterus, and kidneys, especially severe over the hypogastrium; she also appeared to have greater difficulty in swallowing: when fluids were given to her to drink, she kept them in her mouth for a while, and then allowed them to escape over her lips again. When persuaded to make an effort to swallow, she choked and spurted the whole out again. This was seven hours after swallowing the poison.

I prescribed a continuance of the remedies already in use, and the further use of fomentations over the bladder and kidneys. On the following morning, I found her no better, having passed a restless night. On inquiring whether she had passed urine or not, her attendants informed me that she had frequently tried to do so, but ineffectually, only passing a little blood instead of urine. The bowels had slightly acted,