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FROM THE RICHMOND ENQUIRER.

TYPHUS FEVER.

To the Editors of the Enquirer.

GENTLEMEN—Through the medium of your paper I will offer some remarks on the nature and character of a fever which is now prevailing extensively and fatally in the counties of Mecklenburg, Lunenburg, Nottaway and Brunswick in Va. and Warren, North-Carolina. This fever appears to be travelling from west to east, and some few years back scourged the people west of the Alleghany and Cumberland mountains most severely under the vulgar appellation of cold plague and cold bilious. From the year 1814 to 1818 it occasionally made its appearance in the counties of Mecklenburg and Brunswick, in the form of Typhoid Pneumonia. The diseases for some years preceding 1814, it will be recollected by the older practitioners were more than usually inflammatory and the summers more than usually cold. Since 1814 a change has perceptibly taken place in both these respects, our summers are become warmer and our diseases more violent and more malignant, and yellow fever has shown itself in various parts of the United States. In the month of January 1818, a disease made its appearance in the county of Mecklenburg on the borders of Roanoke in the first instance, & from thence extended over that county and the neighbouring ones. Its attack was ushered in by a chill, a severe fever ensued, attended with a peculiar pungent, rather than intense heat of the skin, pain of the head and side frequently intensely severe, difficulty in breathing, cough, pulse sometimes hard, frequently full & soft and easily yielding to pressure; occasionally a sick stomach, bowels slow, urine high colored, most commonly an expectation of a bilious bloody gelatinous matter; as the season advanced and the weather became warmer, the pains of the head and side were less frequently present, the general symptoms of inflammation were less apparent, the fever was less intense, and about midsummer many attacked complained only of a chill, slight fever, pains of the head and occasionally sick stomach with bilious vomitings and diarrhoeas. After a few paroxysms the fever would entirely subside—a coldness of the hands and feet would come on with cold clammy sweats, and the pulse would scarcely be felt; at other times the patient feeling perfectly well would be suddenly attacked, sometimes in the field at labour and sometimes in the house, and fall as if shot, and lie in a stupid state with cold feet and hands and profuse cold sweat and weak thread-like pulse, but perfectly clear and open in its beats. At other times again a degree of languor and lassitude would precede the attack for a few days, a dull, heavy feeling of the head would be present, the blood vessels of the eyes would appear red and inflamed and the eye would be dull and heavy, frequently watery, and a general yellow tinge observable about the face, neck and whites of the eyes, with occasional sense of fullness of the stomach, flatulence, disturbed sleep, slight tension of the pulse, but often full, soft and yielding—the tongue mostly covered with a thick yellow mucus and fur, urine about natural in appearance, the trunk of the body warm—the extremities cold. These symptoms after continuing a few days would often in a few hours successively grow worse, the coldness of the general surface would rapidly increase with very profuse cold perspiration, and entire prostration of strength and a carelessness as to events follow; subsultus, stupor and profound coma would come on, and the tongue would become black, sometimes red, chopped and dry, and teeth covered with dark sordes and the patient lie with every appearance of immediate dissolution being at hand. The pulse, in every instance where to be felt, was clear and free in its beats but soft and feeble, irregular and much accelerated. In one case of this kind the stupor was periodical, and when absent there was an unusual brilliancy of ideas and of the eye, and when present, the pupil dilated so as to obstruct vision entirely, and occupy the whole of the cornea; in another instance where there was but little fever from the commencement, a green matter was drawn from the breasts instead of milk by the use of the glasses, the lady giving suck at the time. There are few diseases on which the faculty have split more than on the present, strange as it may appear. The one party considering it an inflammatory bilious remittent; the other as

a bilious typhus or typhus ieterodes.— Their practice has been made to correspond with their ideas of the nature of the disease, and it has been fatal in the section of the country where it has prevailed most beyond example, and particularly in the county of Lunenburg. That it owes its origin to those causes which are productive of intermittent and remittent fevers there can be no doubt; favored in all probability by some peculiar and inexplicable state of the atmosphere, and I think on a careful, diligent and impartial view of its symptoms and terminations there can be as little of its typhoid and putrid character. In one instance I saw a patient in which the disease terminated in the abscess of the parotid glands, this was imprudently opened, gangrene ensued, followed by purple spots over the whole body; the flesh sloughed off the jaw on one side, which was left bare and death followed. In another instance general symptoms of putrescence came on, the integuments over the os sacrum sloughed off leaving the rectum for several days exposed to view, the ball of the right eye swelled, projected beyond the lids, burst and sunk before death took place. During this period a cancerous tumor was extracted from a lady's breast small in size, and she in apparent good health, and yet with the utmost difficulty gangrene was prevented from ensuing; in another case a young man laboring under femoral aneurism, in otherwise apparent perfect health, had the aneurismal sack burst, the blood was effused between the muscles, integuments, &c. in less than 48 hours there were appearances of gangrene, purple spots were seen, and the leg became black, cold and insensible; in a few days amputation was resorted to, when purple spots, vellicies, &c. immediately attacked the other leg, which continuing spread until half of the foot sloughed off, when the whole frame shewed the most convincing proofs of general putrescence and the stump began to discharge a bloody saives and death ensued. In very many instances of cases which have terminated fatally, evident symptoms of mortification have preceded, and in a few hours after the death the face and breast were perfectly black and large quantities of blood were discharged from the mouth and nose, and often death accompanied with a swelling of the corpse almost to bursting, with a very offensive smell. That the bilious remittent should assume this type under an inexplicable state of the atmosphere, is not at all remarkable. It is a fact well known amongst all observant medical men, that a disease rarely makes its appearance alike at different seasons, or yields exactly to the same mode of treatment at all times. It is also a well known fact that there is generally some one reigning disease to which all others in some degree assimilate themselves. It is also a well established fact that during the prevalence of putrid diseases wounds heal unkindly and are in an unusual degree fatal, & such has on former occasions been the strong tendency to putrid diseases that bark and wine have been found essential to the cure of erysipelas. Even the common pleurisy, perhaps the most genuinely inflammatory of all diseases, will neither require nor safely bear every year the same free use of the lancet. With these facts before me and a close attentive observation of several hundred cases within the last three years, I can with unhesitating confidence pronounce the fever now ravaging the counties aforesaid, in 18 out of every 20 cases, a genuine typhoid remittent fever. The inexperienced physician as well as the one who is afraid to part from his book, and think for himself, and who labouring under the influence of prejudice and former habits of practice still persists in the free use of the lancet, must and will of necessity continue to lose a large proportion of his patients. A few having a hot skin and tolerable strength of pulse bled in a few days after the attack may survive it; but it is subjecting them to an unnecessary and improper hazard of their lives. Those who are so unfortunate as to have a vein opened in one of the cold cases, or who falls suddenly and is bled freely from a belief that there is depression of the pulse and congestion of the brain or other important organ, must calculate on deaths ensuing in 15 out of every 20 cases, and I believe 19 out of 20; for I have never known but two violent attacks from the commencement where the lancet was freely used but terminated fatally, and those were preserved by the use of stimulants to an extent never before used in any country. I have known many instances even in cases most favorable for the use of the lancet (judging from the pulse) in which its use was succeeded by the most alarming faintings and tedious convalescence, and in two instances where the patient became senseless and speechless in two

hours; and died so in less than forty-eight; and a third in which he fainted away for several hours when but a small quantity of blood was drawn, and died in three to four days afterwards. I have seen many, very many of those cases in which the inexperienced practitioner would have incautiously used the lancet, reduced to such a state of debility by the operation of a single emetic or cathartic as to require support under it; and what would have been their situation had the lancet been premised? Let me ask any impartial candid physician to examine the egesta from the operation of emetics and cathartics, and say after this examination what probability there is of effecting good by the use of the lancet. Every reasonable man must know that the vital principle cannot be sustained in a body so completely filled with corrupt and vitiated bile; every drop of blood that is lost renders the system less able to bear the operation of emetics or cathartics essential for the expulsion of this bile. That if the secretion of this inordinate quantity of bile is dependent on inflammation at all of the liver, it is not an inflammation of the ordinary kind; else it would take in every case of hepatitis:— That it is dependent on causes different from inflammation I take for granted because as far as my observation extends it is neither subdued nor lessened by those means which subdue hepatitis, either in its acute or chronic stage. Also I am further satisfied from the belief that if the fever was in such violent inflammation as to be the cause of such an immense secretion of bile, as I have seen discharged by one patient during one illness, that either death would speedily take place in those not profusely bled or the most obstinate hepatic obstructions would take place in such a vast majority of cases as to leave no doubt of the character of the disease. I attended a gentleman in this disease in 1819 who for 8 days in succession took in the forenoon a dose of tart. ant. and in the afternoon one of jalap and calomel, both of which did their duty, and yet in the intervals between them he would spit out the bile as easily and plentifully as ambler while chewing tobacco; he was supported under their operation with strong mint toddy, and in the intervals with bark and toddy: he recovered and is now living.

Again, in inflammatory diseases, I believe there is not much loss of sensibility or susceptibility to impressions, and particularly from medicines, and every gentleman conversant with the prevailing fever, will admit that if frequently requires 8 and 10 times the usual quantities of medicines, to produce their ordinary effects. I have myself given as high as seventy-five grains tart. ant. before it would puke, and in the summer 1819, 30 and 40 grains was quite a common dose, and cathartics in similar proportions: in one case, I gave 9 drachms of calomel in eight days with a proportionable quantity of jalap, oil and salts, and it never produced any sensible effect either emetic cathartic or salagogue, and the patient recovered by the plentiful use of bark, toddy and camphor. The cases that occurred of pleuritic character in January 1818, were the first 16 treated in the usual way for pleurisy, the first 6 or 8 terminated fatally. As the pain was very severe, and the skin hot, it was conjectured, blood was too sparingly taken in the commencement, and accordingly, the after cases were bled more freely; they also terminated fatally. This did not occur in my own practice, but within the sphere of my observation; but I too bled some with a little want of success. Finding that success did not attend the course pursued, and that as the disease progressed, subsultus and occasionally bilious stools took place, I altered the practice, and when I found a patient with a hard strong pulse I took away a little blood, then blistered the pain and gave an emetic, followed by a dose of jalap and calomel, which produced large discharges of yellow, green and dark bile; the cathartic was repeated according to indication, and wine-whey and camphor julep completed the cure; the same treatment with emetics and cathartics, &c. was followed when bleeding was not premised, all pain of the chest being previously removed by blistering; as an expectorant Barton's brown mixture, leaving out the opiate, was used; the recoveries were almost universal and rapid.—When I was called in to the fever about mid-summer, and found the smallest tension in the pulse, I gave to a male adult 10 grains calomel, 30 of jalap and 2 tart. ant. This generally brought on a severe discharge both upward and downward of yellow, green, and dark bile, sometimes looking like tar, sometimes indigo mud, sometimes chopped spinage, and sometimes spring moss in immense quantities; that from the stomach frequently looking like blueing and

indigo water, but mostly yellow and frequently green. If the strength was sufficient, I repeated the calomel with oil, or salts, sometimes I preferred repeating the emetic, if the discharge from the stomach was large and very vitiated, and in this way I continued the emetics and cathartics as long as the pulse and strength would justify, and it is inconceivable what quantities of bile a single patient would discharge. I verily believe I have seen from 10 to 12 gallons discharged by one patient. In these cases between the emetics and cathartics if there is a fever, I prescribe wine whey every 20 minutes, with five grains camphor, repeated every hour till perspiration comes on, and the fever subsides, when the cure is completed by the aid of bark, colombo and wine or toddy and camphor. In those cases where there is a coldness of the extremities from the commencement, or where the patient falls suddenly from being in apparent health, great care and caution are requisite in the administration of either emetics or cathartics; for by the severe operation of either, the vital stream is like the water of a mill pond with the flood gates open, it is ready to rush out of the body, and nothing but the most prompt, vigorous and decided measures can arrest it.—Here is a field for the exercise of skill and sound discretion.— The physician is aware of the quantity of bile pent up in the stomach and bowels of his patient, he knows it should be discharged, and to effect it safely he must either work off the emetic or cathartic by large drafts of strong toddy after each evacuation or his patient irrevocably sinks under it, and in some few cases such is the extreme debility and prostration present, that the judicious practitioner will defer altogether the administration of the emetic or cathartic for a while, and use freely bark and wine toddy with sinapisms, till watching a favorable opportunity, he will procure the discharge of the bile. In these extreme cold cases it cannot be too strongly impressed on the practitioner, that for the salvation of his patient he must neither weigh out his bark in drachms nor measure his spirits by half pints; if he does, his patient is infallibly lost.— In one of these violent cases no man can take enough by the mouth to preserve his life: the stomach partaking of the general debility of the system ejects what is taken, a profound stupor ensues, universal coldness and sweat come on with subsultus, and life is held only by the tenure of skill in the physician.—Strong mint toddy with bark and camphor must now be taken every half hour, the head is to be covered with a blister, and sinapisms applied to the extremities and breast and changed every hour; one to two ounces bark, with one to two gills of good rum or French brandy, and 60 to 80 drops laudanum thrown up by way of injection every 2, 3 or 4 hours, as the urgency of the symptoms of coldness and sweat may indicate, and continued till there is soreness and fullness complained of in the abdomen, after which the extremities begin to grow warm and the coma to cease.— Injections are now to be administered to procure 2 or 3 stools, when bark injections are again to be used at such intervals as may be necessary to keep off the cold sweat. In this way I have frequently used from 10 to 12 ounces bark in 24 hours with the happiest effect; in the desperate cases 10 grains camphor and 20 grains vol. alkali were thrown up with each injection.—In another 2 table spoon fulls of bark, two of rum and two of a mixture of equal parts spts. harts, sulph. eth. and tinct. camphor were thrown up every hour for 30 hours, with the very best effects. This patient was attacked suddenly, and when I first saw him was to all appearance expiring. An icy coldness with profuse sweat was on him, his pulse imperceptible, his eyes sunk and his countenance haggard in the extreme, with cramp of the arms and legs. In one hour he took 6 drachms paregoric, 80 drops laudanum, 150 drops spirits harts, 1 ounce sulph. eth. 90 grains camphor and a pint of rum. His extremities were covered with sinapisms, also the trunk of the body, and the mustard not drawing readily, cloths rung out of boiling water were applied to him, and the mustard after them, and by the use of bark injections as above, in four days he was out of danger. It will appear incredible to any person who has never been much conversant with the formidable disease, how much bark and spirit are absolutely necessary to preserve life in many instances. With many it is in disrepute, first, because the quantity is unusual; 2d, because the practice is unusual; 3d, because all do not recover under it; 4th, because the proper remedies frequently fail from not being given in sufficient quantities; 5th because they are frequently given before sufficient evacuation are premised, and 6th, because their indiscriminate use is

not suited to every case of the fever. I know one gentleman now living, who for 2 or 3 weeks drank two bottles port wine and a quart of rum every 24 hours, and took from 6 to 8 ounces of bark per 24 hours during the time; and it is not unusual for a man to require from 1 to 2 quarts rum per day in addition to the bark injection, to keep up the pulse, and indeed this must be done without regard to quantity—intoxication is almost impossible. An extensive practice in the fever for the last three years, in which time I have witnessed the result of several hundred cases, induces me to speak with confidence of a line of practice unusual, except with a few, but daily becoming more general from the success attending it. Should its publicity be the means (and I know it will if followed) of preserving the lives of my fellow-citizens, I shall be gratified and content.

One patient drank 7 gallons spirit; in 8 days was fairly convalescent on it, but being reduced by a purge and put to a quart in the absence of this physician, he died from its insufficiency to support him.

MEDICUS.

August 27, 1821.

FOREIGN.

ONE DAY LATER FROM LONDON.

Boston, Sept. 8.

By the General Green, Halifax papers to 29th ult. have been received from our correspondent. They mention the arrival at Halifax of the Sandwich packet from Falmouth, with London dates to the 17th July, being one day later than was received by the Tuscarora at Philadelphia. The final preparations for the Coronation were making, which was to take place on Thursday, 19th July.

LONDON, JULY 17.

THE QUEEN.

The report that the Queen has taken a house in Great George-street seems not to be true.—We were willing to credit it, because, that street being within all the barriers, she might proceed from it, on the morning of the Coronation, to make whatsoever claim of admission she pleases, without hazarding the public tranquility. All that is alleged to be required of her feelings—all that might be held too humble in a voluntary absence from a ceremony, of which the Privy Council has declared that she had no right to form a part—whatsoever might be represented as disadvantageous in so decorous a submission.—All this might be prevented, all her claims might be fully made and formally recorded, with ease to herself and others.

No alteration of the Queen's intention has yet been announced. A former column contains some statements upon this subject. Yesterday, as if the ample Reports, given by the newspapers of Mr. Brougham's argument on her claim to be crowned were not sufficient, what is called "an official publication" of it was made, to which the following precise notice was affixed.

"Her Majesty has been pleased to command that the grounds of her claims to be crowned, as stated by Her Majesty's Attorney-General before the Lords of the Privy Council, should be made public.

(Signed) "HOOD."

Queen's-house, July 10, 1821."

Paris papers of the 13th contain but little intelligence of any interest. The journals of opposite politics have skirmished a little upon the character and fame of Bonaparte. But we find nothing worthy extracting. The cancer controversy is also noticed, and the following medical opinion given upon its character—"Climate has no influence on cancer—its two usual causes are, deep and protracted sorrow and excess of drinking spirituous liquors."

A mail has arrived from Hamburg with papers to the 6th inst. A report is said to have prevailed at Vienna, that Russian troops had entered Moldavia upon the ground of the Turks having violated the existing treaties, by occupying Wallachia without the consent of the Russian government.

Paf's papers of the 14th inst. reached us this day. The King continues to take his airings near St. Cloud. At Brest and Toulon great activity is stated to prevail. Scarcely do any vessels of the royal navy arrive, without being speedily equipped for new expeditions. The Cleopatra frigate has sailed for India and China; the Bacchante galliot is to join the Normande, which is on her voyage for Madagascar. Vice Admiral Halgin has been appointed to the command of the squadron in the Levant.