

they are of the least service, and ought never to be used unless where suppuration is inevitable.

An absorbent, which takes up the moisture and cools the skin, answers the purpose much better. What I generally use is starch powder, spread upon a soft rag, and laid over the parts affected. This may be renewed twice or thrice a-day; and it is not to be imagined what ease and comfort it gives to the patient every time.

As the erysipelas resembles the gout in many respects, it ought not to be rashly tampered with. Should it be driven from the part affected, it may fix upon a more dangerous one. The alarm is generally greatest when it removes to or attacks the face. I have, however, known it seize upon the knee, and after laying the bones bare, prove fatal.*

For the erysipelas appearing in children, see *Infantine Erysipelas*.

CHAP. XVIII.

INFLAMMATION OF THE BRAIN. (*Phrenitis*.)

This is sometimes a primary disease, but oftener only a symptom of some other malady, as the inflammatory, eruptive, or spotted fever, &c. It is very common, however, as a primary disease in warm climates, and is most incident to persons about the prime or vigour of life. The passionate, the studious, and those whose nervous system is irritable in a high degree, are most liable to it.

CAUSES.—This disease is often occasioned by night-watching, especially when joined with hard study; it may likewise proceed from hard drinking, anger, grief, or anxiety. It is often occasioned by the stoppage of usual evacuations; as the bleeding piles in men, the customary discharges of women, &c. Such as imprudently expose themselves to the heat of the sun, especially by sleeping without doors in a hot season, with their heads uncovered, are often suddenly seized with an inflammation of the brain, so as

* There is a peculiar species of Erysipelas in this country termed Shingles, (*Erysipelas phlyctanodes*) and by the antients Zona or Zoster, from surrounding the trunk of the body like a belt. It consists of an aggregation of vesicles filled with a limpid or yellowish coloured fluid. The eruption makes its first appearance on some spot of the chest, and gradually extends literally both ways. It is a vulgar, but unfounded opinion, that if the extremities of the eruption meet so as completely to surround the body, the patient must die. As this complaint seems often to be critical, we should not be too eager to repel it by externals. If the eruption suddenly subside, or be driven in by external applications, a paroxysm of asthma is not unfrequently the consequence. To remove this metastasis, stimulant applications are requisite, such as the ointment of yellow resin with an eighth part of the red precipitate, or the citrine ointment, by which the inflammation of the skin is reproduced, and the discharge kept up. The general treatment of this complaint consists in keeping the patient moderately warm, and giving tepid diluent fluids, till the vesicles begin spontaneously to dry. Their desiccation may be promoted by a lotion composed of a dram of white vitriol dissolved in eight ounces of rose water. The common people are in the habit of applying to the shingles, writing ink diluted with water. After the eruption is scaled off, the patient should take a few doses of some cooling purgative. A. P. B.

to awake quite delirious. When repellents are imprudently used in an erysipelas, an inflammation of the brain is sometimes the consequence. It may likewise be occasioned by external injuries, as blows or bruises upon the head, &c.

SYMPTOMS.—The symptoms which usually precede a true inflammation of the brain are, pain of the head, redness of the eyes, a violent flushing of the face, disturbed sleep, or a total want of it, great dryness of the skin, costiveness, a retention of urine, a small dropping of blood from the nose, ringing of the ears, and extreme sensibility of the nervous system.

When the inflammation is formed, the symptoms in general are similar to those of the inflammatory fever. The pulse, indeed, is often weak, irregular, and trembling; but sometimes it is hard and contracted. When the brain itself is inflamed, the pulse is always soft and low; but when the inflammation only affects the integuments of the brain, viz. the dura and pia mater, it is hard. A remarkable quickness of hearing is a common symptom of this disease; but that seldom continues long. Another usual symptom, is a great throbbing or pulsation in the arteries of the neck and temples. Though the tongue is often black and dry, yet the patient seldom complains of thirst, and even refuses drink. The mind chiefly runs upon such objects as have before made a deep impression on it; and sometimes, from a sullen silence, the patient becomes all of a sudden quite outrageous.

A constant trembling and starting of the tendons is an unfavourable symptom, as are also a suppression of urine, a total want of sleep, a constant spitting, a grinding of the teeth, which last may be considered as a kind of convulsion. When a phrenitis succeeds an inflammation of the lungs, of the intestines, or of the throat, &c. it is owing to a translation of the disease from these parts to the brain, and generally proves fatal. This shows the necessity of proper evacuations, and the danger of repellents in all inflammatory diseases.

The favourable symptoms are, a free perspiration, a copious discharge of blood from the nose, the bleeding piles, a plentiful discharge of urine, which lets fall a copious sediment. Sometimes the disease is carried off by a looseness, and in women by an excessive flow of the menses.

As this disease often proves fatal in a few days, it requires the most speedy applications. When it is prolonged or improperly treated, it sometimes ends in madness, or a kind of stupidity which continues for life.

In the cure, two things are chiefly to be attended to, viz. to lessen the quantity of blood in the brain, and to retard the circulation towards the head.

REGIMEN.—The patient ought to be kept very quiet. Company, noise, and every thing that affects the senses, or disturbs the imagination, increases the disease. Even too much light is hurtful; for which reason the patient's chamber ought to be a little darkened, and he should neither be kept too hot nor cold. It is not, however, necessary to exclude the company of an agreeable friend, as

this has a tendency to soothe and quiet the mind. Neither ought the patient to be kept too much in the dark, lest it should occasion a gloomy melancholy, which is too often the consequence of this disease.

The patient must, as far as possible, be soothed and humoured in every thing. Contradiction will ruffle his mind, and increase his malady. Even when he calls for things which are not to be obtained, or which might prove hurtful, he is not to be positively denied them, but rather put off with the promise of having them as soon as they can be procured, or by some other excuse. A little of any thing that the mind is set upon, though not quite proper, will hurt the patient less than a positive refusal. In a word, whatever he was fond of, or used to be delighted with, when in health, may here be tried; as pleasing stories, soft music, or whatever has a tendency to soothe the passions, and compose the mind. Boerhaave proposes several mechanical experiments for this purpose; as the soft noise of water distilling by drops into a bason, and the patient trying to reckon them, &c. Any uniform sound, if low, and continued, has a tendency to procure sleep, and consequently may be of service.

The aliment ought to be light, consisting chiefly of farinaceous substances; as panado, and water-gruel, sharpened with jelly of currants or juice of lemons, ripe fruits roasted or boiled, jellies, preserves, &c. The drink small, diluting and cooling; as whey, barley-water, or decoctions of barley and tamarinds, which latter not only renders the liquor more palatable, but likewise more beneficial, as they are of an opening nature.

TREATMENT.—In an inflammation of the brain, nothing more certainly relieves the patient than a free discharge of blood from the nose. When this comes of its own accord, it is by no means to be stopped, but rather promoted, by applying cloths dipped in warm water to the part. When bleeding at the nose does not happen spontaneously, it may be provoked, by putting a straw, or any other sharp body up the nostril.

Bleeding from the temporal arteries greatly relieves the head; but as this operation cannot always be performed, we would recommend in its stead bleeding in the jugular veins. When the patient's pulse and spirits are so low that he cannot bear bleeding with the lancet, leeches may be applied to the temples. These not only draw off the blood more gradually, but, by being applied nearer to the part affected, generally give more immediate relief.

The next step will be to direct the head to be shaved, and to apply a large blister over it. Linen cloths wetted with vinegar and water, cold spirituous lotions, diluted æther, or iced-water, may likewise be kept constantly to the temples and forehead; renewing them as they become dry. Cold applied over the seat of the brain by means of a wet towel, or other similar medium, will indeed in many cases, prove more efficacious than the application of a blister, as this has been observed occasionally not only to accelerate the pulse, but also render the patient more ungovernable. The feet should be frequently placed in warm water; and to assist in diminishing the determination of blood to the head, the

patient should be kept as near as possible in the erect posture as can conveniently be borne.

A discharge of blood from the hæmorrhoidal veins is likewise of great service, and ought by all means to be promoted. If the patient has been subject to the bleeding piles, and that discharge has been stopped, every method must be tried to restore it; as the application of leeches to the parts, sitting over the steams of warm water, sharp clysters, or suppositories made of honey, aloes, and rock-salt.

If the inflammation of the brain be occasioned by the stoppage of evacuations either natural or artificial, as the menses, issues, setons, or such like, all means must be used to restore them as soon as possible, or to substitute others in their stead.

The patient's body must be kept open by stimulating clysters or smart purges,* and small quantities of nitre ought frequently to be mixed with his drink. Two or three drachms, or more, if the case be dangerous, may be used in the space of twenty-four hours.

The feet ought frequently to be bathed in lukewarm water, and soft poultices of bread and milk may be kept constantly applied to them.

I must further observe, that, though this species of inflammation ought to be treated nearly as other inflammatory disorders are, yet more than ordinary care should be used to keep the patient in a state of as much ease, composure, and tranquillity as possible. A strict attention to my former hints on this head will often do more good than the best medicines. It should be considered that a sore will not bear the touch of a feather, and that the nerves of an inflamed brain are still more unfit to endure the least irritation, without torture, and without danger. Even light, sound, or whatever may make a strong impression on the senses, is carried with such rapidity and force to the brain, as to increase the inflammation, and disorder the very organs by which it was conveyed. A docile and sensible nurse is, in such cases, of as much service, as the most enlightened physician.

When inflammation of the brain is a symptom of some other disease, it will not require our using active purgatives; on the contrary, the body should be kept open with gentle aperients, or laxative clysters, administered from time to time as occasion may require. In most cases the application of a blister to the neck, or between the shoulders, will be proper. As a medicine, the patient may take, in both species of this inflammation, a diaphoretic bolus†

* Take Submuriate of Mercury, 2 grs.
Extract. of Colocynth, 6 grs.
Make three pills for a dose.

or
Take Submuriate of Mercury, 6 grs.
Powdered Jalap, 1 sple.
Make a cathartic powder.

or
Take Sulphate of Soda, 1 oz.
Distilled Water, 6 oz.
Syrup of Buckthorn, 2 drs.
Make a mixture, of which let four table-spoonsful be taken every two hours until the bowel copiously respond.

or
Take Tartrate of Potass, 3 drs.
Powdered Rhubarb, 1 dr.
Infusion of Senna, 6 oz.
Syrup of Orange-peel, 1 oz.
Make a mixture, and let four table-spoonsful be taken every two hours, &c.

† Take Camphor, 3 grs.
Antimonial Powder, 5 grs.
Confection of Roses, enough to make a small bolus.

every three hours, washing it down with three table-spoonsful of some febrifuge mixture.*

CHAP. XIX.

OPHTHALMIA, OR INFLAMMATION OF THE EYES

THIS disease may be occasioned by external injuries; as blows, burns, bruises, and the like. It may likewise proceed from dust, quick-lime, or other substances, getting into the eyes. It is often caused by the stoppage of customary evacuations; as the healing of old sores, drying up of issues, the suppressing of gentle morning sweats, or of the sweating of the feet, &c. Long exposure to the night air, especially in cold northerly winds, or whatever suddenly checks the perspiration, especially after the body has been much heated, is very apt to cause an inflammation of the eyes. Viewing snow, or other white bodies, for a long time, or looking steadfastly at the sun, a clear fire, or any bright object, will likewise occasion this malady. A sudden transition from darkness to very bright light will often have the same effect.

Nothing more certainly occasions an inflammation of the eyes than night-watching, especially reading or writing by candle-light. Drinking spirituous liquors, and excess of venery, are likewise very hurtful to the eyes. The acrid fumes of metals, and of several kinds of fuel, are also pernicious. Sometimes an inflammation of the eyes proceeds from a venereal taint, and often from a scrophulous or gouty habit. It may likewise be occasioned by hairs in the eye-lids turning inwards, and hurting the eyes. Sometimes the disease is epidemic, especially after wet seasons; and I have frequently known it prove infectious, particularly to those who lived in the same house with the patient. It may be occasioned by moist air, or living in low damp houses, especially in persons who are not accustomed to such situations. In children it often proceeds from imprudently drying up of scabbed heads, a running behind the ears, or any other discharge of that kind. Inflammations of the eyes often succeed the small-pox or measles, especially in children of a scrophulous habit.

SYMPTOMS.—An inflammation of the eyes is attended with acute pain, heat, redness, and swelling. The patient is not able to bear the light, and sometimes he feels a pricking pain, as if his eyes were pierced with a thorn. Sometimes he imagines his eyes are full of motes, or thinks he sees flies dancing before him. The eyes are filled with a scalding rheum, which rushes forth in great quantities, whenever the patient attempts to look up. The pulse

* Take Lemon Juice, $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz.
Subcarbonate of Ammonia $\frac{1}{2}$ dr.
Mint Water, 1 oz.
Pure Water, 4 oz.

Nitrate of Potash, 1 dr.
Syrup of Roses, 2 dra.
Make a mixture. To be taken as above