

Rules for the successful treatment and prevention of the influenza; the prevailing epidemic / By the first editor and originator of The Doctor.

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SUCCESSFUL TREATMENT

RULES

FOR THE

TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

OF THE

INFLUENZA.

BY THE FIRST EDITOR AND ORIGINATOR OF

'THE DOCTOR.'

FIRST EDITOR AND ORIGINATOR

DOCTOR.

R. Greenlaw, Printer, 39, Chichester Place, King's Cross.

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THE
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London :

PUBLISHED BY W. STRANGE, 21, PATERNOSTER ROW ;
C. PENNY, "DOCTOR OFFICE" 110, CHANCERY LANE ;
G. BERGER, 42, HOLYWELL STREET, STRAND ;
PURKISS, 60, OLD COMPTON STREET, SOHO.

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NOTICE.

It is the principal object of the writer of this little tract, to lay down simple, and effectual rules, for the successful treatment of the disease called the Influenza, a complaint now epidemically prevailing in the metropolis. The disease is but an aggravated species of cold, commonly known to medical men by the term "Epidemic Catarrh" of Sydenham. It is not generally fatal except to very young children and persons advanced in life. The peculiar symptoms of the disease as contradistinguished from the ordinary cold, are great depression of the spirits, and excessive weakness, accompanied with considerable fever, hoarseness, cough, headach, and oppression at the chest. The principle inducement for the infliction of this little treatise on the public is the fact that the writer has had during a long course of professional practice great opportunities of investigating, by the bed side, the rational mode of treating this singular disease; that his mode of treatment has been uniformly successful, he will not assert, but he feels it his duty to observe, that when the course of treatment here laid down, is had recourse to at the onset of the disease, a successful cure is almost sure to be quickly obtained.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

A DISEASE called the *Influenza*, in a very aggravated form, is at present prevailing extensively in London and some of the provincial towns. It commences like a common cold, but it is soon discovered to be more serious; the constitutional disturbance being much more considerable than the symptoms of cold would seem to account for. Running at the nose and eyes with racking pains over the brows, are the most frequent local affections; which, however, are accompanied or succeeded by cough, and sometimes by sickness and irritable state of the bowels. The feelings of languor, oppression, and discomfort, are always considerable, and sometimes very distressing; being occasionally attended with anxiety at the chest and tendency to faint. Some have severe muscular pains of a rheumatic character, with tenderness of the skin. This disorder accords exactly with the *tussis epidemica* (epidemic cough) of Sydenham. The last epidemic of this descrip-

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TREATMENT &c.

OF THE

INFLUENZA.

OF THE CAUSES OF THE INFLUENZA.

THE causes of the Influenza has been the subject of much difference of opinion; and all that has been said in respect to them rather tends to prove the difficulty of obtaining a sufficient number of unquestionable facts to found a clear opinion on, than to set the subject at rest. Three different views of the matter are taken by different physicians: 1st, Some attribute the disease solely to the state of the weather, i. e. they believe it to be a common catarrh, occasioned by changes in the sensible qualities of the atmosphere, such as cold weather. 2dly, Others ascribe it to a particular and specific morbid principle totally different from and independent of the sensible qualities of the atmosphere, but resident in and conveyed by the air. 3dly, While the greater number are of opinion, that the influenza was contagious,

in the ordinary acceptation of the word, i. e. is propagated only by contact, or at least by the sufficiently near approach of an infected person. The first opinion, however, that it originates in the state of the air, seems to be untenable; for not only is the peculiarity of the atmospherical temperature, moisture, &c. which in some degree prevails, when the Influenza predominates, different, but the state of the air, preceding and accompanying the same epidemic, varies also in different places. Thus, though in most parts of England, it has been considerably cold and wet, yet in other parts of the world, as in Germany, where the disorder is equally general, it has been very dry. Again, it is observed in several places, that great alterations happen in the weather during its prevalence, without any sensible change of the symptoms of the disorder.

The second opinion, that the cause of the disease, though not connected with the sensible qualities of the atmosphere, is yet resident in it, and thus conveyed from place to place, is supported on the following grounds: 1st, That those who are the most exposed to the air, are generally the first persons attacked. 2ndly, That many have the disorder without having any communication with a diseased person. 3dly, That several escape, though surrounded by persons ill of the disease. 4thly, That whole families are seized at once; and 5thly, That some persons have the disorder a week or a fortnight before it begins to be taken notice of as a general one. Without presuming to decide upon so intricate a question, we may state the following objections to these arguments.

The first argument, that those that are most exposed to the air, are generally the first persons attacked, is, surely, by no means, in favor of the opinion, that the disorder is resident, in the atmosphere; for, if it resides there, what should prevent those who stayed at home from being infected? since the air which they breathe must necessarily be the same as that breathed by those who go out. But, if on the other hand, a communication with some infected person, is necessary to produce the disorder, it is very clear that those who go out of doors, and mix with the world, are more likely, to get it than those who do not stir from home.

Before the second argument, namely, that some are attacked without having any communication with a diseased person, can be allowed to have any weight, it must be clearly proved, not only that the persons themselves have not had such communication, but also that no person, who has been near them, had previously been where the disorder existed; for it is pretty clearly established with respect to other active contagious, such as the small pox, &c. that a person, who has already suffered the disease, may nevertheless convey the contagion from one place to another.

From the third argument, that many escaped though surrounded by persons affected by the disease, no inference of any consequence to the present question can be drawn.

With respect to the fourth argument, that some whole families are seized at once, without having been exposed to infection, it may be remarked, that when we consider what we have said in answer to the second argument, it will be very difficult to prove that they were not exposed to it, and equally difficult to give reasons

why, if the existing cause of the disorder resided in the air, any whole family should have been afflicted by that cause, rather than an equal number of persons in divers families. But if we suppose the disorder to be propagated by personal intercourse, it is very easy to conceive in what manner it may have been communicated to some whole families at the same time. And, in answer to the last argument, that some persons have the disorder a week or a fortnight before any others are known to have it, it may be sufficient to remark, that admitting these cases to be really Influenza, the supposition that the cause of it existed in the air, will not render it more easy to explain why those persons only should at that time be affected by this cause.

These considerations tend to favor the third opinion that the disease is propagated by contagion, in the common acceptation of the term, that is, by the usual communication with the diseased, but they are very far from being decisive of the question. Indeed the question of contagion, as connected with any particular epidemic, in which there is no palpable matter produced, by which the disease can be communicated, is always difficult, and has been agitated even with regard to the plague itself. But it has been satisfactorily demonstrated, that the contagion of all malignant and eruptive fevers cannot be conveyed through the air to any distance from its source. If the contagion of the Influenza, therefore, can be suspended and conveyed through the atmospheric air, so as to spread the disease far and wide, it would form an exception to the general properties of known contagions. Several facts recorded during the epidemic of 1782 militate strongly against such a supposition. It was recorded, for example that

the disease was prevalent in one place a week or two before it appeared in another, only a mile distant from the first. Thus it shewed itself at Edinburgh on May the 20th, was prevalent in Glasgow in the first week of June, yet it did not appear at Musselburgh, a village about five miles south east of Edinburgh, until the 9th or 10th of June. Again it was prevalent at Dartmouth much sooner than at Exeter, and yet it appeared at Exeter much sooner than at Tinmouth, although the last-mentioned place is situated between Dartmouth and Exeter.

The opinion that it is propagated by personal intercourse was also favored by its progress in numerous instances. Thus it is frequently observed that some one individual in a family was first attacked, and that then several more, and sometimes the whole of the same family, were very soon seized with it, and in some instances, all at once, and in others successively. Very recently three families, consisting of seventeen persons, came on the same day to an hotel in the Adelphi Buildings; they were all in perfect health when they arrived, and they were all affected the next day with the symptoms of the disease then reigning in London. In some cases it seems to be propagated, like contagious diseases in general, by cloths and merchandize. One physican, Dr. Meuse of Strabane, in Ireland, says, "I have no shadow of doubt but the disorder is contagious; I am certain, I myself received the infection from a small trunk of wearing apparel, which came from Dublin where it then raged."

SYMPTOMS OF THE INFLUENZA.

The disease commences with the usual symptoms of a common cold, in conjunction with others that are more distressing to the patient and alarming to the physician; such as great languor, lowness and oppression, anxiety, with frequent sighing, sickness, and violent headache. The pulse is peculiarly quick and irregular, and at night there is often delirium. The heat of the body is seldom considerable, particularly when compared with the violence of the other symptoms, the skin is generally moist, with a tendency to profuse perspiration; the tongue moist, but white and yellowish. Sometimes there are severe muscular pains, both general and local. From the onset, for the first twenty four, or forty eight hours, the symptoms are extremely violent, far beyond the danger and duration of the distemper. For the most part it attacks the healthy and robust. Such is the general progress of the Influenza in most of the periods in which it has shown itself. But in every period its symptoms have considerably varied in severity in different individuals. In many instances, they have scarcely exceeded the signs of a common cold, and under these circumstances there is little or no danger attending the disease.

OF THE TREATMENT.

In the treatment of this disease, our principle object is to clear out the bowels, to promote a determination to the surface of the body, to support the strength of the patient, and to alleviate the hoarseness, cough and oppression at the chest which usually accompanies this complaint. The first is to be obtained by giving to the patient, if grown up, the following powder.

Take of Calomel, 3 grains.

Powdered Jalap, 8 grains, mix and make into a powder, which may be taken at bed time in sugar, treacle, or honey. The feet must be put into hot water to promote perspiration previous to going to bed. The following mixture will be found useful in allaying the fever, and at the same time easing the cough;

Liquor of the Acetate of Ammonia, 2 oz.

Sweet Spirits of Nitre, 2 drams.

Vinegar of Squills, 3 drams.

Water eight ounces, mix and make into a mixture; of which two table spoonfuls may be taken every four hours. Should the cough be very troublesome, attended with pain in the chest, and difficulty of breathing it is a sign that there is a slight degree of inflammation going on in the chest. As this disease is generally attended by great weakness, which frequently lasts for a considerable length of time, it is not considered safe by medical men to bleed from the arm, therefore should signs of inflammation of the lungs show themselves, four or five leeches, or a blister must be applied to the chest, bearing in mind at the same time to keep the bowels well

open. After the fever has in some degree subsided, and the cough and oppression of the chest has been alleviated should the patient complain of great weakness the following mixture may be advantageously administered, Pour upon two drams of bruised Calumbo Root a pint of boiling water and after standing till cold the patient may take a wine glassful four times a day. This bitter tonic infusion, the writer has found much more beneficial than any other strengthening medicines which he has exhibited in this complaint. The Influenza when it attacks young and nervous females it frequently give rise to great depression of spirits, for the effectual removal of this symptom the following mixture has been found extremely serviceable.

Aromatic Spirits of Ammonia, 2 drams

Compound Spirits of Lavender, 2 drams.

Mixture of Camphor, 1 oz. and a $\frac{1}{2}$, mix and give a tea spoonful in a wine glassful of camomile tea three or four times a day. In cases where children are attacked, the same treatment must be adopted, but the doses of the medicine must be lessened in proportion to the age of the patient. For a child about four or five years old the following powder may be given at the commencement of the attack,

Calomel, 2 grains.

Powdered Rhubarb, 4 grains, mix and give in treacle or sugar. The child's feet ought to be bathed in hot water and the following fever and cough mixture may be given

Liquor of the Acetate of Ammonia, 1 oz.

Sweet Spirits of Nitre, 1 dram.

Sugar, 2 drams.

Vinegar of Squills, 2 drams, water, 2 oz. mix and

give a desert spoonful every four hours till the cough, and fever are relieved

The patient should be allowed during the period of convalescence, a generous diet. Should the cough continue troublesome as is frequently the case, after the fever and weakness has in a great measure subsided, the following mixture has been used with uniform success.

Take of Almond emulsion, 8oz.
Syrup of Squills, 3 drams.
Syrup of Poppies, 4 drams, mix, and
take a table-spoonful whenever the cough is troublesome.

THE END.