child, or provide another nurse, otherwise they cannot expect a cure.

Before we quit this subject, we would earnestly recommend it to all, as they wish to avoid consumptions, to take as much exercise without doors as they can, to avoid unwholesome air, and to study sobriety. Consumptions owe their present increase not a little to the fashion of sitting up late, eating hot suppers, and spending every evening over a bowl of hot punch or other strong liquors. These liquors, when too freely used, not only hurt the digestion, and spoil the appetite, but heat and inflame the blood, and set the whole constitution on fire.

CHAP. XIX.

OF THE SLOW OR NERVOUS FEVER.

NERVOUS fevers have increased greatly of late years in this island, owing doubtless to our different manner of living, and the increase of sedentary employments; as they commonly attack persons of a weak relaxed habit, who neglect exercise, eat little solid food, study hard, or indulge in spiritous liquors.

CAUSES.—Nervous fevers may be occasioned by whatever depresses the spirits, or impoverishes the blood; as grief, fear, anxiety, want of sleep, intense thought, living on poor watery diet, unripe fruits, cucumbers, melons, mushrooms, &c. They may likewise be occasioned by damp, confined, or unwholesome air. Hence they are very common in rainy seasons, and prove most fatal to those who live in dirty low houses, crowded streets, hospitals, jails, or such-like places.

Persons whose constitutions have been broken by excessive venery, frequent salivations, too free an use of purgative medicines, or any other excessive evacuations, are most liable to this disease.

Keeping on wet clothes, lying on the damp ground, excessive fatigue, and whatever obstructs the perspiration, or causes a spasmodic stricture of the solids, may likewise occasion nervous fevers. We shall only add, frequent

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and great irregularities in diet. Too great abstinence, as well as excess, is hurtful. Nothing tends so much to preserve the body in a sound state as a regular diet; nor can any thing contribute more to occasion fevers of the worst kind than its opposite.

SYMPTOMS.—Low spirits, want of appetite, weakness, weariness after motion, watchfulness, deep sighing, and dejection of mind, are generally the fore-runners of this disease. These are succeeded by a quick low pulse, a dry tongue without any considerable thirst, chillness and flushing in turns, &c.

After some time the patient complains of a giddiness and pain of the head, has a nausea, with reachings and vomiting; the pulse is quick, and sometimes intermitting; the urine pale, resembling dead small-beer, and the breathing is difficult, with oppression of the breast, and slight alienations of mind.

If towards the ninth, tenth, or twelfth day, the tongue becomes more moist, with a plentiful spitting, a gentle purging, or a moisture upon the skin; or if a suppuration happens in one or both ears, or large pustules break out about the lips and nose, there is reason to hope for a favourable crisis.

But if there is an excessive looseness, or wasting sweats, with frequent fainting fits; if the tongue, when put out, trembles excessively, and the extremities feel cold, with a fluttering or slow creeping pulse; if there is a starting of the tendons, an almost total loss of sight and hearing, and an involuntary discharge by stool and urine, there is great reason to fear that death is approaching.

REGIMEN.—It is very necessary in this disease to keep the patient cool and quiet. The least motion would fatigue him, and will be apt to occasion weariness, and even faintings. His mind ought not only to be kept easy, but soothed and comforted with the hopes of a speedy recovery. Nothing is more hurtful in low fevers of this kind than presenting to the patient's imagination gloomy or frightful ideas. These of themselves often occasion nervous fevers, and it is not to be doubted but they will likewikese aggravate them.

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The patient must not be kept too low. His strength and spirits ought to be supported by nourishing diet and generous cordials. For this purpose his gruel, panado, or whatever food he takes, must be mixed with wine according as the symptoms may require. Pretty strong wine-whey, or small negus, sharpened with the juice of orange or lemon, will be proper for his ordinary drink. Mustard-whey is likewise a very proper drink in this fever, and may be rendered an excellent cordial medicine by the addition of a proper quantity of white-wine.*

Wine in this disease, if it could be obtained genuine, is almost the only medicine that would be necessary. Good wine possesses all the virtues of the cordial medicines, while it is free from many of their bad qualities. I say good wine; for however common this article of luxury is now become, it is rarely to be obtained genuine, especially by the poor, who are obliged to purchase it in small quantities.

I have often seen patients in low nervous fevers where the pulse could hardly be felt, with a constant delirium, coldness of the extremities, and almost every other mortal symptom, recover by using in whey, gruel, and negus, a bottle or two of strong wine every day. Good old sound claret is the best, and may be made into negus, or given by itself, as circumstances require.

In a word, the great aim in this disease is to support the patient's strength, by giving him frequently small quantities of the above, or other drinks of a warm and cordial nature. He is not however to be over-heated either with liquor or clothes; and his food ought to be light, and given in small quantities.

MEDICINE.—Where a nausea, load, and sickness at stomach, prevail at the beginning of the fever, it will be necessary to give the patient a gentle vomit. Fifteen or twenty grains of the ipecacuanha in fine powder, or a few spoonfuls of the vomiting julep,† will generally answer this purpose very well. This may be repeated any time before the third or fourth day, if the above symptoms continue. Vomits not only clean the stomach, but, by the general

* See Appendix, *Mustard whey.*

† See Appendix, *Vomiting Julep.*

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shock which they give, promote the perspiration, and have many other excellent effects in slow fevers, where there are no signs of inflammation, and nature wants rousing.

Such as dare not venture upon a vomit, may clean the bowels by a small dose of Turkey rhubarb, or an infusion of senna and manna.

In all fevers, the great point is to regulate the symptoms, so as to prevent them from going to either extreme. Thus, in fevers of the inflammatory kind, where the force of the circulation is too great, or the blood dense, and the fibres too rigid, bleeding and other evacuations are necessary. But in nervous fevers, where nature flags, where the blood is vapid and poor, and the solids relaxed, the lancet must be spared, and wine, with other cordials, plentifully administered.

It is the more necessary to caution people against bleeding in this disease, as there is generally at the beginning an universal stricture upon the vessels, and sometimes an oppression and difficulty of breathing, which suggest the idea of a plethora, or too great a quantity of blood. I have known even some of the faculty deceived by their own feelings in this respect, so far as to insist upon being bled, when it was evident from the consequences that the operation was improper.

Though bleeding is generally improper in this disease, yet blistering is highly necessary. Blistering-plasters may be applied at all times of the fever with great advantage. If the patient is delirious, he ought to be blistered on the neck or head, and it will be the safest course, when the insensibility continues, as soon as the discharge occasioned by one blistering plaster abates, to apply another to some other part of the body, and by that means keep up a continual succession of them till he be out of danger.

I have been more sensible of the advantage of blistering in this than in any other disease. Blistering plasters not only stimulate the solids to action, but likewise occasion a continual discharge, which may in some measure supply the want of critical evacuations, which seldom happen in this kind of fever. They are most proper, however, either towards the beginning, or after some degree of stu-

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por has come on, in which last case it will always be proper to blister the head.

If the patient is costive through the course of this disease, it will be necessary to procure a stool, by giving him every other day a clyster of milk and water, with a little sugar, to which may be added a spoonful of common salt, if the above does not operate.

Should a violent looseness come on, it may be checked by small quantities of Venice treacle, or giving the patient for his ordinary drink the white decoction.*

A miliary eruption sometimes breaks out about the ninth or tenth day. As eruptions are often critical, great care should be taken not to retard Nature's operation in this particular. The eruption ought neither to be checked by bleeding nor other evacuations, nor pushed out by a hot regimen; but the patient should be supported by gentle cordials, as wine-whey, small negus, sago-gruel with a little wine in it, and such like. He ought not to be kept too warm; yet a kindly breathing sweat should by no means be checked.

Though blistering and the use of cordial liquors are the chief things to be depended on in this kind of fever; yet, for those who may chuse to use them, we shall mention one or two of the forms of medicine which are commonly prescribed in it.†

In desperate cases, where the hiccup and starting of the tendons have already come on, we have sometimes seen extraordinary effects from large doses of musk frequently repeated. Musk is doubtless an antispasmodic, and may be given to the quantity of a scruple three or four times a-day, or oftener if necessary. Sometimes it may be proper to add to the musk a few grains of

* See Appendix, *White Decoction.*

† When the patient is low, ten grains of Virginian snake-root, and the same quantity of contrayerva-root, with five grains of Russian castor, all in fine powder, may be made into a bolus with a little of the cordial confection or syrup of saffron. One of these may be taken every four or five hours.

The following powder may be used with the same intention: Take wild Valerian-root in powder one scruple, saffron and castor each four grains. Mix these by rubbing them together in a mortar, and give one in a cup of wine-whey, three or four times a-day.

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camphire, and salt of hartshorn, as these tend to promote perspiration and the discharge of urine. Thus fifteen grains of musk, with three grains of camphire, and six grains of salt of hartshorn, may be made into a bolus with a little syrup, and given as above.

If the fever should happen to intermit, which it frequently does towards the decline, or if the patient's strength should be wasted with colliquative sweats, &c. it will be necessary to give him the peruvian bark. Half a drachm, or a whole drachm, if the stomach will bear it, of the bark in fine powder, may be given four or five times a-day in a glass of red port or claret. Should the bark in substance not sit easy on the stomach, an ounce of it in powder may be infused in a bottle of Lisbon or Rhenish wine for two or three days, afterwards it may be strained, and a glass of it taken frequently.*

Some give the bark in this and other fevers, where there are no symptoms of inflammation, without any regard to the remission or intermission of the fever. How far future observations may tend to establish this practice, we will not pretend to say; but we have reason to believe that the bark is a very universal febrifuge, and that it may be administered with advantage in most fevers where bleeding is not necessary, or where there are no symptoms of topical inflammation.

CHAP. XX.

OF THE MALIGNANT, PUTRID, OR SPOTTED FEVER.

THIS may be called the *pestilential fever* of Europe, as in many of its symptoms it bears a great resemblance to that

* The bark may likewise be very properly administered, along with other cordials, in the following manner: Take an ounce of Peruvian bark, orange-peel half an ounce, Virginian snake-root two drachms, saffron one drachm. Let all of them be powdered, and infused in an English pint of the best brandy for three or four days. Afterwards the liquor may be strained, and two tea-spoonfuls of it given three or four times a-day in a glass of small wine or negus.

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