

while nothing is more common among the rich and affluent. The inhabitants of every country are prolific in proportion to their poverty; and it would be an easy matter to adduce many instances of women, who by being reduced to live entirely upon a milk and vegetable diet, have conceived and brought forth children; though they never had any, before. Would the rich use the same sort of food and exercise as the better sort of peasants, they would seldom have cause to envy their poor vassals and dependants the blessing of a numerous and healthy offspring, while they pine in sorrow for the want of even a single heir to their extensive domains.

Affluence begets indolence, which not only vitiates the humours, but induces a general relaxation of the solids; a state highly unfavourable to procreation. To remove this, we would recommend the following course; First, sufficient exercise in the open air; secondly, a diet consisting chiefly of milk and vegetables; thirdly, the use of astringent medicines, as steel, alum, dragon's blood, elixir of vitriol, the Spa or Tunbridge waters, Peruvian bark, &c.; and lastly, above all, the cold bath.

Barrenness is often the consequence of grief, sudden fear, anxiety, or any of the passions which tend to obstruct the menstrual flux. When barrenness is suspected to proceed from affections of the mind, the person ought to be kept as easy and cheerful as possible; all disagreeable objects are to be avoided, and every method taken to amuse and entertain the fancy.

Dr. Cheyne avers, that want of children is oftener the fault of the male than of the female, and strongly recommends a milk and vegetable diet to the former as well as the latter; adding, that his friend Dr. Taylor, whom he calls the Milk-doctor of Croydon, had brought sundry opulent families in his neighbourhood, who had continued some years after marriage without progeny, to have several fine children, by keeping both parents, for a considerable time, to a milk and vegetable diet.

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CHAP. XLIX.

*DISEASES OF CHILDREN*

MISERABLE indeed is the lot of man in the state of infancy! He comes into the world more helpless than any other animal, and stands much longer in need of the protection and care of his parents; but, alas! this care is not always bestowed upon him; and when it is, often suffers as much from improper management as he would have done from neglect. Hence the officious care of parents, nurses, and midwives, become one of the most fruitful sources of the disorders of infants.

Of the officious and ill-judged care of midwives we shall adduce only one instance, viz. the common practice of torturing infants by squeezing

their breasts, to draw off the milk, as they call it. Though a small quantity of moisture is generally found in the breasts of infants, yet, as they are certainly not intended to give suck, this ought never to be drawn off. I have seen this cruel operation bring on hardness, inflammation, and suppuration of the breasts, but never knew any ill consequences from its being omitted. When the breasts are hard, the only application that we would recommend is a soft poultice, or a little of the diachylon plaster spread thin upon a bit of soft leather, about the size of half a crown, and applied over each nipple. These may be suffered to continue till the hardness disappears.

It must be obvious to every attentive person, that the first diseases of infants arise chiefly from their bowels. Nor is this in the least to be wondered at, as they are in a manner poisoned with indigestible drugs and improper diet as soon as they come into the world. Every thing that the stomach cannot digest may be considered as a poison; and unless it can be thrown up, or voided by stool, it must occasion sickness, gripes, spasmodic affections of the bowels, or what the good women call inward fits, and at last convulsions and death.

As these symptoms evidently arise from somewhat that irritates the intestines, doubtless the proper method of cure must be to expel it as soon as possible. The most safe and effectual method of doing this is by gentle vomits. Five or six grains of the powder of ipecacuanha may be mixed in two table-spoonfuls of water, and sweetened with a little sugar. A tea-spoonful of this may be given to the infant every quarter of an hour till it operates; or, what will more certainly answer the purpose, a grain of emetic tartar may be dissolved in three ounces of water sweetened with a little syrup, and given as above. Those who are unwilling to use the TARTARISED ANTIMONY, may give six or seven drops of antimonial wine in a tea-spoonful of water or thin gruel. Small doses of the ipecacuanha wine will be found more gentle than any of the above, and ought to be preferred.

These medicines will not only cleanse the stomach, but will generally likewise open the body. Should this however not happen, and if the child be costive, some gentle purge will be necessary; for this purpose, some manna and pulp of cassia may be dissolved in boiling water, and given in small quantities till it operates; or, what will answer rather better, a few grains of magnesia alba may be mixed in any kind of food that is given to the child, and continued till it has the desired effect. If these medicines be properly administered, and the child's belly and limbs frequently rubbed with a warm hand before the fire, they will seldom fail to relieve those affections of the stomach and bowels from which infants suffer so much.

These general directions include most of what can be done for relieving the internal disorders of infants. They will likewise go a considerable way in alleviating those which appear externally, as the rash, gum, or fellon, &c. These, as was formerly observed, are principally owing to too hot a regimen, and consequently will be most effectually relieved by gentle evacuations. Indeed, evacuations of one kind or other constitute a principal part of the medicine of infants, and will seldom, if administered with prudence, in any of their diseases, fail to give relief

## OF THE MECONIUM.

THE stomach and bowels of a new-born infant are filled with a blackish coloured matter of the consistence of syrup, commonly called the meconium. This is generally passed soon after the birth, by the mere effort of Nature; in which case it is not necessary to give the infant any kind of medicine. But if it should be retained, or not sufficiently carried off, a little manna or magnesia alba may be given, as mentioned above; or, if these should not be at hand, a common spoonful of whey, sweetened with a little honey or raw sugar; or oil of sweet almonds and syrup of roses of each six drachms, mixed, and a tea-spoonful given as often as occasion may require.

The most proper medicine for expelling the meconium is the mother's milk, which is always at first of a purgative quality. Were children allowed to suck as soon as they shew an inclination for the breast, they would seldom have occasion for medicines to discharge the meconium; but even where this is not allowed, they ought never to have daubs of syrup, oils, and indigestible stuff, crammed down their throats, whereby their tender organs are injured, the circulating fluids heated and thrown into irregular commotions, that sometimes occasion obstructions, at other times, irritations in the bowels, and convulsions that cause "THOUSANDS TO RETIRE FROM YET UNTASTED LIFE."

## OF THE APHTHÆ, OR THRUSH.

THE aphthæ are little whitish or yellow ulcers affecting the whole inside of the mouth, tongue, throat and stomach of infants. Sometimes they reach through the whole intestinal canal, in which case they are very dangerous, and often put an end to the infant's life.

If the aphthæ are of a pale colour, pellucid, few in number, soft, superficial, and fall easily off, they are not dangerous; but if opaque, yellow, brown, black, thick, or running together, they ought to be dreaded.

It is generally thought that the aphthæ owe their origin to acid humours; we have reason however to believe they are more frequently owing to too hot a regimen both of the mother and child. It is a rare thing to find a child who is not dosed with wine, punch, or some other hot and inflaming liquors, almost as soon as it is born. It is well known that these will occasion inflammatory disorders even in adults: is it any wonder, then, that they should heat and inflame the tender bodies of infants, and set as it were the whole constitution on a blaze?

The most proper medicines for the aphthæ are vomits, such as have been already recommended, and gentle laxatives. Five grains of rhubarb and half a drachm of MAGNESIA ALBA may be rubbed together and divided into six doses, one of which may be given to the infant

every four or five hours till they operate. These powders may either be given in the child's food, or a little of the syrup of pale roses, and may be repeated as often as is found necessary to keep the body open. It is common in this case to administer calomel; but as that medicine sometimes occasions gripes, it ought always to be given to infants with caution.

Many things have been recommended for gargling the mouth and throat in this disease, but it is not easy to apply these in very young children; we would therefore recommend to the nurse the use of topical applications, such as either the expressed juice of roasted turnips, mulberries, raspberries, or black currants, sweetened with honey or sugar-candy, or to rub the child's mouth frequently with a little borax and honey; or with the following mixture: Take fine honey an ounce, borax a drachm, burnt alum half a drachm, rose water two drachms; mix them together. A very proper application in this case is a solution of ten or twelve grains of VITRIOLATED ZINC in eight ounces of barley-water. These may be applied with the finger, a camel's hair pencil, or by means of a bit of soft rag tied to the end of a probe.

The acid and watery purgings in this complaint may be relieved by clysters of barley-water with a little magnesia and syrup of white poppies.

## OF ACIDITIES

THE food of children being for the most part of an acescent nature, it readily turns sour upon the stomach, especially if the body be any way disordered. Hence most diseases of children are accompanied with evident signs of acidity, as green stools, gripes, &c. These appearances have induced many to believe that all the diseases of children were owing to an acid abounding in the stomach and bowels; but whoever considers the matter attentively, will find that these symptoms of acidity are oftener the effect than the cause of their disease.

Nature evidently intended that the food of children should be acescent; and unless the body be disordered, or the digestion hurt, from some other cause, we will venture to say that the acescent quality of their food is seldom injurious to them. Acidity, however, is often a symptom of disorders in children, and, as it is sometimes a troublesome one, we shall point out the method of relieving it.

When green stools, gripes, purging, sour smells, &c. shew that the bowels abound with an acid, the child should have a little small broth, with light white bread in it; and should have sufficient exercise in order to promote the digestion. It has been customary in this case to give the chalk, crabs eyes, and other testaceous powders. These, indeed, by their absorbent quality, may correct the acidity; but they are attended with this inconvenience, that they are apt to lodge in the bowels, and occasion costiveness, which may prove very hurtful to the infant. For this reason they should never be given unless mixed with purgative medicines; as rhubarb, manna, or such like.

The best medicine which we know, in all cases of acidity, is that fine insipid powder called MAGNESIA ALBA. It purges, and at the same

time corrects the acidity: by which means it not only removes the disease, but carries off its cause. It may be given in any kind of food, or in a LAXATIVE ABSORBENT MIXTURE, as recommended in the Appendix.

When an infant is troubled with gripes, it ought not at first to be dosed with brandy, spiceries, and other hot things; but should have its body opened with an emollient clyster, or the medicine mentioned above; and at the same time a little brandy may be rubbed on its belly with a warm hand before the fire. If it should happen, however, not to succeed, a little brandy or other spirits may be mixed with thrice the quantity of warm water, and a tea-spoonful of it given frequently till the infant be easier. Sometimes a little peppermint-water will answer this purpose very well.

#### OF GALLING AND EXCORIATION

THESE are very troublesome to children. They happen chiefly about the groin and wrinkles of the neck, under the arms, behind the ears, and in other parts that are moistened by the sweat or urine.

As these complaints are, in a great measure, owing to want of cleanliness, the most effectual means of preventing them are, to wash the parts frequently with cold water, to change the linen often, and in a word, to keep the child in all respects thoroughly clean. When this is not sufficient, the excoriated parts may be sprinkled with absorbent or drying powders; as burnt hartshorn, tutty, chalk, crab's claws prepared, and the like. When the parts affected are very sore, and tend to a real ulceration, it will be proper to anoint the place with the ointment of spermaceti, or with the white liniment mentioned in the Appendix. If the parts be washed with spring-water, in which a little vitriolated zinc (twelve grains to eight ounces of water) has been dissolved, it will dry and heal them very powerfully. One of the best applications for this purpose is to dissolve some fuller's earth, in a sufficient quantity of hot water, and after it has stood till it is cold, to rub it gently upon the galled parts once or twice a-day.

#### OF STOPPAGE OF THE NOSE.

THE nostrils of infants are often plugged up with a gross MUCUS which prevents their breathing freely, and likewise renders it difficult for them to suck or swallow.

Some in this case order, after a suitable purge, two or three grains of white vitriol dissolved in half an ounce of marjoram-water, and filtered, to be applied now and then to the nostrils with a linen rag. Wedellus says, if two grains of white vitriol, and the same quantity of elaterium, be dissolved in half an ounce of marjoram-water, and applied to the nose, as above directed, that it brings away the mucus without sneezing.

In obstinate cases these medicines may be tried; but I have never found any thing necessary besides rubbing the nose at bed-time with

a little sweet oil, or fresh butter. This resolves the filth, and renders the breathing more free.

## OF VOMITING.

FROM the delicate state of children, and the great sensibility of their organs, a vomiting or looseness may be induced by any thing that irritates the nerves of the stomach or intestines. Hence these disorders are much more common in childhood than in the more advanced periods of life. They are seldom however dangerous, and ought never to be considered as diseases, unless when they are violent, or continue so long as to exhaust the strength of the patient.

Vomiting may be excited by an over-quantity of food; by food that is of such a nature as to irritate the nerves of the stomach too much; or by the sensibility of the nerves being so much increased as to render them unable to bear the stimulus of even the mildest aliment.

When vomiting is occasioned by too much food, it ought to be promoted, as the cure will depend upon cleansing the stomach. This may be done either by a few grains of ipecacuanha, or a weak solution of tartarized antimony, as mentioned before. When it is owing to food of an acrid or irritating quality, the diet ought to be changed, and aliment of a milder nature substituted in its stead.

When vomiting proceeds from an increased degree of sensibility, or too great an irritability of the nerves of the stomach, such medicines as have a tendency to brace and strengthen that organ, and to abate its sensibility, must be used. The first of these intentions may be answered by a slight infusion of the Peruvian bark, with the addition of a little rhubarb and orange-peel; and the second by the saline draught, to which a few drops of tincture of opium may occasionally be added.

In obstinate vomitings the operation of internal medicines may be assisted by aromatic fomentations made with wine, applied warm to the pit of the stomach; or the use of the laudanum-plaster, with the addition of a little theriaca, or Venice treacle.

## OF A LOOSENESS.

A LOOSENESS may generally be reckoned salutary when the stools are sour, slimy, green, or curdled. It is not the discharge, but the production of such stools, which ought to be remedied. Even where the purging is thin and watery, it ought not to be checked too suddenly, as it often proves critical, especially when the child has caught cold, or an eruption on the skin has disappeared. Sometimes an evacuation of this kind succeeds a humid state of the atmosphere, in which case it may also prove of advantage, by carrying off a quantity of watery humours which would tend to relax the habit.

As the principal intention of the cure of a looseness is to evacuate the offending matter, it is customary to give the patient a gentle vomit

of ipecacaanna, and afterwards to exhibit small and frequent doses of rhubarb; interposing absorbent medicines to mitigate the acrimony of the humours. The best purge, however, in this case, is magnesia alba. It is at the same time absorbent and laxative, and operates without exciting gripes.

The wine of antimony, which acts both as an emetic and purge is also an excellent medicine in this case. By being diluted with water, it may be proportioned to the weakest constitution; and, not being disagreeable to the palate, it may be repeated as often as occasion requires. Even one dose will frequently mitigate the disease, and pave the way for the use of absorbents. If, however, the patient's strength will permit, the medicine ought to be repeated every six or eight hours, till the stools begin to assume a more natural appearance; afterwards a longer space may be allowed to intervene between the doses. When it is necessary to repeat the medicine frequently, the dose ought always to be a little increased, as its efficacy is generally diminished by use.

Some, upon the first appearance of a looseness, fly immediately to the use of absorbent medicines and astringents. If these be administered before the offending humours are discharged, though the disease may appear to be mitigated for a little time, it soon afterwards breaks forth with greater violence, and often proves fatal. After proper evacuations, however, these medicines may be administered with considerable advantage.

Should any gripings or restlessness remain after the stomach and bowels have been cleansed, a tea-spoonful of the syrup of poppies may be given in a little simple cinnamon-water three or four times a-day till these symptoms have ceased; or the following mixture may be given with advantage: Take of crab's claws prepared three drachms, gum-arabic in powder two drachms, cinnamon-water and mint-water each six table-spoonfuls; refined sugar three drachms; mix, and after shaking the phial, give a pap-spoonful or more, frequently. If the discharge still continue by reason of the great irritability of the intestines, three or four drops of the tincture of opium, or a tea-spoonful of the syrup of white poppies, may be given with this mixture every four hours.

#### OF ERUPTIONS.

CHILDREN, while on the breast, are seldom free from eruptions of one kind or other. These, however, are not often dangerous, and ought never to be dried up but with the greatest caution. They tend to free the bodies of infants from hurtful humours, which, if retained, might produce fatal disorders.

The eruptions of children are chiefly owing to improper food and neglect of cleanliness. If a child be stuffed at all hours with food that its stomach is not able to digest, such food, not being properly assimilated, instead of nourishing the body, fills it with gross humours. These must either break out in form of eruptions upon the skin, or remain in the body, and occasion fevers and other internal disorders. That neglect of cleanliness is a very general cause of eruptive disorders, must be obvious to every one. The children of the poor, and of all who despise

cleanliness, are almost constantly found to swarm with ermin, and are generally covered with the scab, itch, and other eruptions.

When eruptions are the effect of improper food, or want of cleanliness a proper attention to these alone will generally be sufficient to remove them. If this should not be the case, some drying medicines will be necessary. When they are applied, the body ought at the same time to be kept open, and cold is carefully to be avoided. We know no medicine that is more safe for drying up cutaneous eruptions than sulphur, provided it be prudently used. A little of the flowers of sulphur may be mixed with fresh butter, oil, or hog's lard, and the parts affected frequently touched with it.

The most obstinate of all the eruptions incident to children are the *TINEA CAPITIS*, or scabbed head, and chilblains. The scabbed head is often exceeding difficult to cure, and sometimes indeed the cure proves worse than the disease. I have frequently known children seized with internal disorders, of which they died soon after their scabbed heads had been healed by application of drying medicines. The cure ought always first to be attempted by keeping the head very clean, cutting off the hair, combing and brushing away the scabs, &c. If this is not sufficient, let the head be shaved once a-week; prevent the access of air to the sores by a bladder properly fitted to the head; wash it daily with soap suds, or salt and water, or a solution of three drachms of *SULPHURATED KALI* in a pint of lime-water, and gently anoint with either the ointment of tar, or the ointment of sulphur. And if there be proud flesh, it should be touched with a bit of blue vitriol, or sprinkled with a little burnt alum. While these things are doing, the patient must be confined to a regular light diet; the body should be kept gently open by the flowers of sulphur, or by small doses of calomel, and cold, as far as possible, ought to be avoided. To prevent any bad consequences from stopping this discharge, it will be proper, especially in children of a gross habit, to make an issue in the neck or arm, which may be kept open till the patient becomes more strong, and the constitution be somewhat mended.

Chilblains commonly attack children in cold weather. They are generally occasioned by the feet or hands being kept long wet or cold, and afterwards suddenly heated. When children are cold, instead of taking exercise to warm themselves gradually, they run to the fire. This occasions a sudden rarefaction of the humours, and an infarction of the vessels; which, being often repeated, the vessels are at last over distended, and forced to give way.

To prevent it, violent cold and sudden heat must be equally avoided. When the parts begin to look red and swell, the patient ought to be purged, and to have the affected parts frequently rubbed with oil of rypentine, mustard and brandy, or something of a warming nature. They ought likewise to be covered with flannel, and kept warm and dry. Some apply warm ashes between cloths to the swelled parts, which frequently helps to reduce them. The following embrocation generally proves a remedy for this irksome complaint: dissolve two drachms of alum in half a pint of vinegar, to which add half a pint of spirits of wine; apply it by means of linen rags kept wet on the diseased parts. When there is a sore, it must be dressed with *CALAMINE CERATE*,

the ointment of tutty, or the OINTMENT OF ACETATED CERUSE. These sores are indeed troublesome, but seldom danger us. They generally heal as soon as the warm weather sets in.

## OF THE CROUP.

THIS disease first appeared, about half a century ago, on the north-east coast of England: it is an inflammation of the TRACHEA, or wind-pipe, the tube through which the air passes to and from the lungs. It happens only to children, and rarely occurs till after they are weaned: the younger they are after this period, they are the more liable to this disease, which is often violent in its attack, and frequently, by a preternatural secretion of matter and mucus, produces such an obstruction of the passage of the air, as suffocates and proves suddenly fatal to the patient. But if it terminates favourably, the inflammation is resolved, as is likewise the spasm or cramp at the top of the wind-pipe, sometimes with a considerable discharge of phlegm from the throat, and sometimes with little more than happens in a common cold. The croup seems to be a species of spasmodic asthma, attended with very acute and violent catarrhal symptoms; it generally prevails in cold and wet seasons, is most common near the sea coast, and in low marshy countries. Children of a gross and lax habit are most liable to it: its attacks are frequently repeated on the same child, and it mostly assails the patient in the night, after he has been much exposed to damp and cold, or to easterly winds, the preceding day. Damp houses, wet feet, thin shoes, wet clothes, or whatever obstructs the perspiration, may occasion the croup, which has not been known to attack children above ten or twelve years of age. It is attended with hoarseness, wheezing, and a dry cough, though sometimes it is accompanied with purulent expectoration, and a pulse hard, full, and strong; the breathing is laborious, and performed with a peculiar kind of croaking noise that may be heard a considerable distance; the voice is sharp and shrill. It often happens that this disease puts on for some days the appearance of a common catarrh, but in which the difficulty of breathing increases generally in the evening, and a sense of suffocation is perceptible, attended with a small quick pulse often 130, or 150 in a minute. Slight rigors, succeeded by heat and flushing in the face, are frequent.

When the child is seized with these symptoms, immediate application should be made for medical assistance: the most active remedies must be promptly employed, for the disease often completes its course in three or four days. His feet should immediately be immersed in warm water. If he is of a plethoric habit, as is mostly the case, he must be bled. Upon the first attack of the disease, vomiting, immediately after bleeding, seems to be of considerable use, and sometimes suddenly removes the disease. It is advisable to have recourse to those medicines which operate most expeditiously, such as VITRIOLATED ZINC, even in large doses. When a tasteless emetic is preferred, vomit with the solution of tartarized antimony: it may be made more detergent and expectorant by adding to it a proper quantity of the oxymel of squills. To assist in

resolving and destroying the purulent matter, or tubular membranous substance that cause spasms and often suffocates the patient, let him drink frequently a cupful of broth, gruel, or barley-water, in every pint of which a drachm and a half or two drachms of the salt of tartar or PREPARED KALI has been dissolved, which may be dulcified a little by honey or the syrup of marsh-mallows.

After bleeding and vomiting, give three to six grains of calomel mixed with as much ginger, and half a drachm of powdered sugar; let this be wallowed slowly, and worked off by drinking broth or gruel, &c. medicated by the fixed alkaline salt above mentioned. He should likewise be made to inhale the steams of warm water and vinegar. Topical bleeding, by the application of three to six leeches, according to the age or strength of the patient, applied to the throat, is of considerable service. As soon as the leeches fall off, the patient may be laid, with his head raised high in bed, between blankets, and supplied with warm barley-water, mixed with the acetated water of ammonia, to excite perspiration. When the bleeding ceases, cover the front of the neck with the compound cerate of galbanum, mentioned in the chapter on Hydrophobia. If in twelve hours the characteristic symptoms of the disease do not abate, a blistering-plaster must be applied round the neck or between the shoulders, and the child may frequently take a table-spoonful of the following mixture: milk of gum ammoniacum three ounces, hyssop or pennyroyal water two ounces, oxymel of squills three drachms, syrup of marsh-mallows and of white poppies of each an ounce mix them together.

At the commencement, and throughout the whole course of the disease, the antiphlogistic regimen is necessary; and calomel, in doses of one to three grains, may be administered two or three times in the course of twenty-four hours. Cataplasms of camphor, garlic, and Venice treacle, should be applied to the feet; laxative clysters are also said to be serviceable, especially if they are mixed with a few spoonfuls of the expressed juice of garlic; and it is certain, that, as often as an increased difficulty of breathing indicates a fresh accumulation of the inspissated lymph, it should be dislodged if possible, by emetics once or twice a day.

Such is the treatment of the disease when it is purely inflammatory; but when it is almost entirely spasmodic, proceeding, as it were, from a cramp of the throat, asafetida has a good effect. It may be both given in form of clyster, and taken by the mouth. Two drachms of asafetida may be dissolved in one ounce of the acetated water of ammonia, and three ounces of hyssop or of pennyroyal water. A table-spoonful of this mixture may be given every hour, or oftener, if the patient's stomach be able to bear it. If the child cannot be brought to take this medicine, two drachms of asafetida may be dissolved in a common clyster, and administered every six or eight hours till the violence of the disease abates.

Tincture of opium, in doses of five, six, to eight drops, given every two hours until sleep, or a remission of the stricture and spasms of the muscles of the glottis was procured, appears to have averted the fatal issue of the croup, which has lately been successfully treated by giving five drops of the tincture of fox-glove every four hours.

After the disease is subdued, the decoction of cinchona three parts, mixed with infusion of liquorice one part, may be given to the patient, who, to prevent a relapse, must carefully avoid cold and damp, and easterly winds. Children who have been attacked with this disease, or whose constitutions seem to dispose them to it, should have their diet properly regulated. All food that is viscid or hard of digestion, and all crude, raw, trashy fruits, are to be avoided. Sometimes a Burgundy pitch plaster, worn continually between the shoulders for several years, has been thought to prevent the return of this dangerous disorder.

## OF TEETHING.

DR. ABOUTNOT observes, that above a tenth part of infants die in teething, by symptoms proceeding from the irritation of the tender nervous part of the jaws, occasioning inflammations, fevers, convulsions, gangrenes, &c. These symptoms are in a great measure owing to the great delicacy and exquisite sensibility of the nervous system at this time of life, which is too often increased by an effeminate education. Hence it comes to pass that children who are delicately brought up, always suffer most in teething, and often fall by convulsive disorders.

About the sixth or seventh month the teething generally begin to make their appearance; first, the incisores, or fore-teeth; next the canini, or dog-teeth; and lastly, the molares, or grinders. About the seventh year, there comes a new set; and about the twentieth, the two inner grinders, called *dentes sapientiæ*, the teeth of wisdom.

Children about the time of cutting their teeth slaver much, and have generally looseness. An increased secretion of saliva is considered as a favourable symptom, and costiveness, fever, vomiting, &c. as unfavourable ones. When the teething is difficult, especially when the dog-teeth begin to make their way through the gums, the child has startings in his sleep, tumors of the gums, watchings, gripes, green stools, the thrush, fever, difficult breathing, and convulsions.

Difficult teething requires nearly the same treatment as an inflammatory disease. If the infant is wet nursed, its mother or nurse should live a little lower than usual, and occasionally take a little cooling physic. If the body be bound, it must be opened either by erollient clysters or gentle purgatives; as manna, magnesia alba, rhubarb, senna, or the like. The food should be light, and in small quantity; the drink plentiful, but weak and diluting, as infusions of balm or of the lime-tree flowers, to which about a third or fourth part of milk may be added.

If the fever be high, bleeding will be necessary; but this in very young children ought always to be sparingly performed. It is an evacuation which they bear the worst of any. Purgings, vomiting, or sweating, agree much better with them, and are generally more beneficial. Harris, however, observes, that, when an inflammation appears, the physician will labour in vain if the *CURE* be not begun with applying a leech under each ear. If the child be seized with convulsion fits, a

blistering-plaster may be applied between the shoulders, or one behind each ear.

Sydenham says, that, in fevers occasioned by teething, he never found any remedy so effectual as two, three, or four drops of spirits of harts-horn in a spoonful of simple water, or other convenient vehicle, given every four hours. The number of doses may be four, five, or six. I have often prescribed this medicine with success, but always found a large dose necessary. It may be given from five drops to fifteen or twenty, according to the age of the child; and when costiveness does not forbid it, three or four drops of laudanum may be added to each dose.

In Scotland, it is very common, when children are cutting their teeth, to put a small Burgundy pitch plaster between their shoulders. This generally eases the tickling cough which attends teething, and is by no means an useless application. When the teeth are cut with difficulty, it ought to be kept on during the whole time of teething. It may be enlarged as occasion requires, and ought to be renewed at least once a fortnight.

Several things have been recommended for rubbing the gums, as oils, mucilages, &c.; but from these much is not to be expected. If any thing of this kind is to be used we would recommend a little fine honey, which may be rubbed on with the finger three or four times a-day. Children are generally at this time disposed to chew whatever they get into their hands. For this reason they ought never to be without something that will yield a little to the pressure of their gums, as a crust of bread, a wax candle, a bit of liquorice or orris root, or such like.

With regard to cutting the gums we have seldom known it of any great benefit. In obstinate cases, however, it ought to be tried. It may be performed by the finger nail, the edge of a sixpenny piece that is worn thin, or any sharp body that can be with safety introduced into the mouth; but the lancet, in a skilful hand, is certainly the most proper.

In order to render the teething less difficult, parents ought to take care that their children's food be light and wholesome, and that their nerves be braced by sufficient exercise without doors, the use of the cold bath, &c. The bowels ought always to be kept in a laxative state, as nothing tends to increase children's complaints of every kind, especially such as are inflammatory, so much as costiveness. Were these things duly regarded, they would have a much better effect than teething necklaces, or other nonsensical amulets worn for that purpose.

#### OF THE RICKETS.

THIS disease generally attacks children between the age of six months and two years. The rickets first appeared in Britain between 1612 and 1620. We are indebted to Dr. Glisson, an English physician for the first history of this malady. That skilful anatomist and accurate observer published an account of the rickets, wherein he shewed how the viscera of such as had died of that disorder were affected. This was the more acceptable to the medical philosophers of that day, as the

rickets had then but lately appeared in England, being first discovered in Dorset and Somersetshire, about the time when luxury began to increase and manufactures to flourish; and this distemper still prevails most in towns where the inhabitants follow sedentary employments, by which means they neglect either to take pure air and proper exercise themselves, or to give it to their children. The residents in low marshy countries are also peculiarly liable to the depredations of this disease.

**CAUSES.**—One cause of the rickets is diseased parents. Mothers of a weak and relaxed habit, who neglect exercise, and live upon weak watery diet, can neither be expected to bring forth strong and healthy children, or to be able to nurse them. Accordingly we find that the children of such women generally die of the rickets, the scrophula, consumptions, or such like diseases. Children begotten by men in the decline of life, who are subject to the gout, the gravel, or other chronic diseases, or who have been often afflicted with the venereal disease in their youth, are likewise very liable to the rickets.

Any disorder that weakens the constitution, or relaxes the habit of children, as the small-pox, measles, teething, the whooping-cough, &c. disposes them to this disease. It may likewise be occasioned by improper diet, as food that is either too weak or watery, or so viscid that the stomach cannot digest it.

Bad nursing is the chief cause of this disease. When the nurse is either diseased, or has not enough of milk to nourish the child, it cannot thrive. But children suffer oftener by want of care in nurses than want of food. Allowing an infant to lie or set too much, or not keeping it thoroughly clean in its clothes, has the most pernicious effects.

The want of free air is likewise very hurtful to children in this respect. When a nurse lives in a close small house, where the air is damp, cold, and confined, and is too indolent to carry her child abroad into the open air, it will hardly escape this disease. A healthy child should always be in motion, unless when asleep: if it be suffered to lie, or set, instead of being tossed and dandled about, it will not thrive.

**SYMPTOMS.**—At the beginning of this disease the child's flesh grows soft and flabby; its strength is diminished; it loses its wonted cheerfulness; looks more grave and composed than is natural for its age, and does not choose to be moved. The head and belly become too large in proportion to the other parts; the face appears full, and the complexion florid. Afterward the bones begin to be affected, especially in the more soft and spongy parts. Hence the wrist and ankles become thicker than usual; the spine or back-bone puts on an unnatural shape; the breast is likewise often deformed; and the bones of the arms and legs grow crooked. All these symptoms vary according to the violence of the disease. The pulse is generally quick, but feeble; the appetite and digestion for the most part very indifferent; the teeth come slowly and with difficulty, and they often rot and fall out afterwards. Rickety children have generally great acuteness of mind, and an understanding above their years. Whether this is owing to their being more in the company of adults than other children, or to the preternatural enlargement of the brain, is not material.

**REGIMEN.**—As this disease is always attended with evident signs of weakness and relaxation, our chief aim in the cure must be to brace and strengthen the solids, and to promote digestion and the due preparation of the fluids. These important ends will be best answered by wholesome nourishing diet, suited to the age and strength of the patient, open dry air, and sufficient exercise. If the child has a bad nurse, who either neglects her duty, or does not understand it, she should be changed. If the season be cold, the child ought to be kept warm; and when the weather is hot, it ought to be kept cool; as sweating is apt to weaken it, and too great a degree of cold has the same effect. The limbs should be rubbed frequently with a warm hand, the flesh-brush, or with flannel impregnated with the fumes of mastich, frankincense, and myrrh, and the child kept as cheerful as possible.

The diet ought to be dry and nourishing, as good bread, roasted flesh, &c. Biscuit is generally reckoned the best bread; and pigeons, pullets, veal, rabbits, or mutton roasted or minced, are the most proper flesh. If the child be too young for flesh meats, he may have beef-tea, rice, arrow-root, or pearl-barley, boiled with raisins, to which may be added a little wine and spice. His drink may be good claret, mixed with an equal quantity of water. Those who cannot afford claret may give the child now and then a wine-glass of mild ale or good porter.

**MEDICINE.**—Medicines here are of little avail. The disease may often be cured by the nurse, but seldom by the physician. In children of a gross habit, gentle vomits and repeated purges of calomel or rhu-barb may sometimes be of use, but they will seldom carry off the disease; that must depend chiefly upon such things as strengthen the system: for which purpose, besides the regimen mentioned above, we would recommend the cold bath, especially in the warm season. It must, however, be used with prudence, as some rickety children cannot bear it. The best time for using the cold bath is in the morning, and the child should be well rubbed with a dry cloth immediately after he comes out of it.

To counteract the chilling effect of this process, give as soon as he is taken out of the bath, a dose of the following medicine: Compound tincture of cinchona and tincture of columba each one ounce, wine or iron two ounces; mix them. From one to four tea-spoonfuls may be taken in a table-spoonful or two of the decoction or infusion of cinchona, which, if he is not purged, may be acidulated with a little of the diluted acid of vitriol. Or give twenty to sixty drops of the ammoniated tincture of iron in the vehicle just mentioned, or in pure water; or in the following solution, which even taken alone is serviceable in this and in scrophulous cases. Take prepared natron three drachms; dissolve it in a pint of distilled water (or in river water that has boiled a few minutes and stood to cool); Dose, two or three table-spoonfuls two or three times a-day.

An infusion of cinchona (Peruvian bark,) with a little orange-peel, in wine or ale, would be of service, not only to quicken the moving powers after bathing, but as a remedy for this disease were it possible to prevail on children to take it.

If the child should be weakened by the cold bath, it must be discontinued, and wash the surface of the body with a solution of com.

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mon potash in the proportion of half an ounce to a pint of spring water morning and evening, taking care however to wipe the skin perfectly dry with a piece of fine flannel. The back should be well rubbed every night with camphorated spirit; and if, for internal use, a powder is preferred, take prepared iron and powdered rhubarb of each five grains, white sugar ten grains; mix and give the patient this dose every morning fasting, and every evening an hour before supper. The iron may be gradually increased to ten grains for a dose; but if considerable looseness prevail, persist at first only in the use of one powder every day, giving the patient, then or at any other time, lime water rendered palatable by the addition of a little milk, or the decoction of hartshorn, for his ordinary drink.

Sometimes issues have been found beneficial in this disease. They are generally necessary for children who abound with gross humours.

### OF CONVULSIONS.

THOUGH more children are said to die of convulsions than of any other disease, yet they are for the most part only a symptom of some other malady. Whatever greatly irritates or stimulates the nerves may occasion convulsions; hence infants, whose nerves are easily affected, are often thrown into convulsions by any thing that irritates the alimentary canal: likewise by teething, strait clothes, the approach of the mall-pox, measles, or other eruptive diseases. Convulsions have also been fatal to thousands of infants, occasioned by confined impure air and the want of cleanliness.

When convulsions proceed from an irritation of the stomach or bowels, whatever clears them of their acrid contents, or renders these mild and inoffensive, will generally perform a cure: wherefore, if the child be costive, the best way will be to begin with a clyster, and afterwards to give a gentle vomit, which may be repeated occasionally, and the body in the mean time kept open by gentle doses of magnesia alba, or small quantities of rhubarb mixed with the powder of crabs claws.

Convulsions which precede the eruption of the small-pox or measles generally go off upon these making their appearance. The principal danger in this case arises from the fears and apprehensions of those who have the care of the patient. Convulsions are very alarming, and something must be done to appease the affrighted parents, nurses, &c. Hence the unhappy infant often undergoes bleeding, blistering, and several other operations, to the great danger of its life, when a little time, bathing the feet in warm water, or immersing the child in a warm bath, and throwing in a mild clyster, would have set all to rights.

BELLOSTE recommends mercury, in convulsions, to be given along with testaceous powders, which the Editor has seen attended with beneficial effects; therefore, when costiveness has preceded pain in the bowels, especially if there be an evident hardness and tension of the belly, a grain or two of calomel, with a few grains of ginger, and five to eight grains of jalap, may be given; and also a clyster should be exhibited of thin gruel and castor oil, which may be repeated every hour till stools

are obtained. But if the child has been reduced by a long continued looseness, the distention of the bowels may be attributed to confined air; and in the gruel of which the clysters are formed, caraway or aniseeds may be boiled; or the powder of those seeds may be mixed with the victuals of the infant: or take juniper-berries and caraway-seeds of each one drachm; after bruising them, add four ounces of boiling water: let them simmer over a gentle heat for ten minutes; and, when cold, strain off the liquor, and add of prepared crabs eyes or magnesia one drachm, COMPOUND TINCTURE OF CARDAMOMS half an ounce, honey sufficient to make it palatable. A pap-spoonful may be given when the child is very restless and troubled with wind. Or the belly may be fomented with a strong decoction of camomile-flowers; or let camomile-flowers, wetted with gin or other spirits made hot, be applied in a flannel bag to the belly, employing also friction with a warm hand, and gentle pressure.

When there is reason to believe that worms occasion convulsions, a grain or two of calomel may be given at bed-time, and thirty drops to a drachm of the COMPOUND TINCTURE OF ALOES; or a clyster may be injected made of a strong decoction of camomile-flowers, mixed with a few grains of aloes, or two to four drachms of the tincture of asafetida.

Children bear the operation of calomel as well as an adult: to a child of one year old, one, and not more than two, grains may be given; increasing one grain for every year to the age of five.

When convulsion fits arise from the cutting of the teeth, besides gentle evacuations, we would recommend blistering, and the use of antispasmodic medicines, as the tincture of asafetida, galbanum, or castor. A few drops of any of these may be mixed in a cup of white wine whey, and given occasionally.

When convulsions proceed from any external cause, as the pressure occasioned by strait clothes or bandages, &c. these ought immediately to be removed: though in this case taking away the cause will not always remove the effect, yet it ought to be done. It is not likely that the patient will recover as long as the cause which first gave rise to the disorder continues to act.

When a child is seized with convulsions without having any complaint in the bowels, or symptoms of teething, or any rash or other discharge which has been suddenly dried up, we have reason to conclude that it is a primary disease, and proceeds immediately from the brain. Cases of this kind, however, happen but seldom, which is very fortunate, as little can be done to relieve the unhappy patient. When a disease proceeds from an original fault in the formation or structure of the brain itself, we cannot expect that it should yield to medicine. But as this is not always the cause, even of convulsions which proceed immediately from the brain, some attempts should be made to remove them. The chief intention to be pursued for this purpose is to make some derivation from the head, by blistering, purging, and the like. Should these fail, issues or setons may be put in the neck, or between the shoulders.

## OF WATER IN THE HEAD.

**THOUGH** water in the head, or a dropsy of the brain, may affect adults as well as children, yet, as the latter are more peculiarly liable to it between two and ten years of age, we have thought it would be most proper to place it among the diseases of infants.

**CAUSES.**—A dropsy of the brain may proceed from injuries done to the brain itself by falls, blows, or the like; it may likewise proceed from an original laxity or weakness of the brain; from schirrous tumors or excrescences within the skull; a thin watery state of the blood; a diminished secretion of urine; a sudden check of the perspiration; and, lastly, from tedious and lingering diseases, which waste and consume the patient.

**SYMPTOMS.**—This disease has at first the appearance of a slow fever; the patient complains of pains in the limbs, of a pain in the crown of his head, or over his eyes; he shuns the light; is sick, and sometimes vomits; his pulse is irregular and generally low; he is not only costive, but it is with difficulty that stools are procured, which are generally of a dark greenish colour, with an oiliness, or glassy bile: though he seems heavy and dull, yet he does not sleep: he is sometimes delirious, and frequently sees objects double. Towards the end of this commonly fatal disease, the pulse becomes more frequent, the pupils are generally dilated, the cheeks flushed, the patient becomes comatose, and convulsions ensue.

**MEDICINE.**—No medicine has hitherto been found sufficient to carry off a dropsy of the brain. It is laudable, however, to make some attempts, as time or chance may bring many things to light of which at present we have no idea. The medicines generally used are, purges of rhubarb or jalap, with calomel, and blistering-plasters applied to the neck or back part of the head. To which we would beg leave to add diuretics, or medicines which promote the secretion of urine, such as are recommended in the common dropsy. A discharge from the nose ought likewise to be promoted by causing the patient to snuff the powder of asarum, white hellebore, or the like. Very sudden relief, it is said, has been sometimes obtained by bleeding; and the tincture of fox-glove, being one of the most powerful diuretic remedies with which we are acquainted, seems to be a very proper one in this disease.

Some practitioners have of late pretended to cure this disease by the use of the preparations of quicksilver. I have not been so happy as to see any instances of a cure being performed in a confirmed dropsy of the brain; but in so desperate a malady every thing that can possibly be of service to the patient deserves a trial.