A Description

OF THE

MODE OF TREATING CONSTITUTIONAL SYPHILIS BY SYPHILISATION: AND ITS RESULTS.

BY

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OBSERVATION II. Sophie H., 23 years old, was taken into hospital on Sept. 18, 1855.

On both shins there were several sores, deepened into the cellular tissue, and partly covered by layers of thick purulent matter. The margins of these sores were sharp, and appeared as if cut with an instrument. They were circular, or formed segments of circles; so that the larger ulcers were easily seen to be formed by the confluence of several small ones. The skin of the surrounding parts was of a brownish colour, and covered with scars, the remains of previous ulcers. The skin of the rest of the body, and particularly of the anterior part of the thighs, presented an abundance of circular, brownish, elevated spots, varying from one-sixth to one-fourth of an inch in diameter, and covered with adherent white scales. On pressing these elevated spots between two fingers, they gave a sensation of hardness, extending downwards into the deeper tissue like a small knot. These spots stood mostly separate; but in some places several of them were aggregated, and formed elevated patches of about an inch in diameter.

The patient was treated in the hospital from July 17th to October 26th, 1854, for a primary ulcer on the upper lip and ulcers of the throat. There were then administered successively bichloride of mercury, the liquor Bellosti, solution of iodide of potassium, and low-diet, with decoction of sarsaparilla and conium pills.

She was apparently well after this treatment up to the month of April 1855, when the ulcers on the legs began to appear.

Syphilisation was commenced on Sept. 20th, 1855. Matter from artificial chancres, developed on another patient under treatment, was inoculated on both her thighs, in three points on each of them.

On the 23rd, these inoculations had produced characteristic, well developed pustules. The matter of these was inoculated on the thighs and on the right arm. On the left arm, three inoculations were made with dried matter.

On Sept. 26th, no effect was seen from the inoculations on the left arm; but all the other inoculations had produced well developed pustules. The matter of these was now inoculated on both thighs and both arms.

On Sept. 29th, new pustules having formed after the last inoculations, the matter of these was inoculated in the same manner.

On Oct. 2nd, no effect was seen after the last inoculations on the left thigh, but well developed pustules on the right. From these, inoculations were made on both thighs; on the arms was inoculated the matter of the last formed pustules.

Oct. 3rd. The ulcers on the shins were beginning to heal up.

Oct. 5th. Inoculation was made on the arms from the latest pustules. On the thighs, where no effect was observed after the latest inoculations, except one small pustule on the left, new inoculations were made with matter from the pustules of Oct. 3rd; and with the same matter three inoculations were made on one of the squamous patches on the left thigh.

Oct. 8th. Inoculation was made on the arms from the latest pustules. No effect was produced on the squamous patch, and only two small pustules had appeared on the left thigh, and one on the right. Three inoculations were made with matter from one of the older pustules.

Oct. 12th. Inoculation was made on the arms and thighs from the pustules formed after the last inoculations. As these were very small on the right thigh, three inoculations were made in that place with matter from an artificial ulcer on another patient under treatment by syphilisation.

Oct. 15th, 18th, and 21st. Inoculations were made on the thighs and arms from the latest formed pustules.

Oct. 24th. Inoculation was made on the thighs from the latest pustules. On the arms, no effect followed the latest inoculations. Three inoculations were made on both arms with matter from an artificial ulcer on another patient under treatment.

Oct. 27th. Inoculation was made on the arms from the latest formed pustules. No effect being produced on the thighs by the last inoculation, three inoculations were made on both thighs from an artificial ulcer on another patient under treatment.

Oct. 30th, Nov. 2nd, 5th, and 8th. Inoculations were made from the latest formed pustules on the arms and thighs.

Nov. 11th. No effect appeared on the arms and the right thigh. Inoculation was made on both thighs from the pustules formed on the left; and three inoculations on each arm from an artificial ulcer developed on another patient under treatment.

Nov. 14th. Inoculations were made on the arms from the latest formed pustules. On the thighs, no effect being seen, except one small pustule on the left, three inoculations were made from the artificial ulcers of another patient under treatment.

Nov. 17th, 20th, and 23rd. Inoculations were made on the arms and thighs from the latest developed pustules.

Nov. 26th. Inoculation was made on the thighs from the last pustules. No effect being produced on the arms, three inoculations were made on each from the artificial ulcers of another patient under treatment.

Nov. 29th. Inoculation was made from the last formed pustules.

Dec. 2nd. No effect was observed on the arms and on the left thigh. There were large pustules on the right thigh, from which three inoculations were made on each of the arms and thighs.

Dec. 5th. The pustules, after the last inoculations on the thighs and the right arm, were drying up. On the left arm they remained, but were very small; and matter from them was inoculated on the same arm. On the left thigh, inoculations were made from an artificial ulcer on another patient under treatment.

Dec. 8th. Very small pustules were produced on the left arm by the last inoculations; matter from these was inoculated on the same arm. On the left thigh was one large pustule; from that three inoculations were made on each thigh.

Dec. 11th. No effect was produced on the arm, but middle-sized pustules had formed on the thighs. With the matter from these, three inoculations were made on each of the arms and thighs.

Dec. 14th. Inoculations were made from the last. The ulcers on the shins were healing up rapidly.

December 17th and 21st. Inoculations were made from the last.

Dec. 24th. The pustules formed on the arms after the last inoculations were drying up. On the thighs, the pustules remained, but small. From these, three inoculations were made on each thigh.

Dec. 27th. Inoculation was made on the thighs from the last. Some of the ulcers on the right leg had not yet healed up. Solution of iodide of potassium was given.

Dec. 30th. No effect followed the last inoculations. Three inoculations were made in each thigh from an artificial ulcer on another patient, who was under treatment with syphilisation.

Jan. 2nd, 1856. Inoculations were made in the thighs from the last developed pustules in these parts. Three inoculations were made on each arm from the artificial ulcers of another patient under treatment.

Jan. 5th. No effect was produced on the thighs, but tolerably well developed pustules on the arms. From these, three inoculations were made on each of the arms and thighs.

Jan. 8th. Three inoculations were made in each arm and thigh from the latest pustules.

Jan. 11th. No effect was produced on the thighs, but small pustules were found on the arms. Three inoculations were made from these to each arm and thigh.

Jan. 14th, 17th, 20th, 23rd, and 26th. Three inoculations were made on each of these days from the latest pustules on each arm and thigh; the effect the whole time being only small pustules. Menstruation, which had ceased during the first mercurial treatment in 1854, recommenced on the 17th.

Jan. 29th. No effect was produced on the arms and on the right thigh; on the left thigh only were small pustules, from which three inoculations were made on the same place.

February 1st. No effect followed the last inoculations.

Feb. 13th. All sores were healed; the exanthema had completely disappeared; her general health seemed in all respects to be good. She left the hospital this day.

OBSERVATION III. J. T., aged 27, entered the City Hospital in Christiania on November 28th, 1856. He had been treated in the University Hospital five times for syphilis; viz.: 1, for constitutional syphilis, with calomel, from February 11th, 1850, till August 5th in the same year; 2, from August 23rd, 1850, to August 21st, 1851, with Dzondi's treatment, for constitutional syphilis; 3, from October 6th, 1851, to November 10th, 1851, for constitutional syphilis, and this time he was only treated with local means; 4, from February 24th, 1853, to April 6th, 1853, also for constitutional syphilis, with iodide of potassium; 5, from April 2nd, 1856, to August 20th, 1856. He was at that time suffering from pains across the forehead and the nose, with ozæna and dulness of hearing, and was treated with iodide of potassium, blisters, antimonial plasters, leeches, conium pills, and spare diet. He had spent, in all, more than two years in the hospital. He complained of violent pains extending from the back of the head to the forehead, coming on especially in the mornings and evenings, and so violent as to prevent him from working. He was also suffering from whizzing in both ears, especially the

right; and from dulness of hearing, which was not always equally bad. He also spoke through the nose, having an opening, of about an inch in diameter, in the hard palate.

Dec. 1st. Three inoculations were applied to each thigh with matter from another patient who was under treatment with syphilisation.

Dec. 3rd. No effect had followed the last inoculations. New inoculations were, therefore, made in each thigh and each arm, with matter from another patient.

Dec. 6th. There were only two pustules on the right arm, and two on the right thigh. From these, three new inoculations were made on each arm and thigh.

Dec. 9th. After the last inoculations, well developed pustules were formed; and from these, on December 12th, three new inoculations were made on each arm and thigh. The operation was repeated on December 15th, 18th, 21st, 24th, 27th, and 30th.

The pains in the head and the whizzing in the ears were diminishing.

January 3rd and 6th, 1857. Inoculations were made in both arms and both thighs, with matter from the last pustules.

Jan. 9th. After the last inoculations, abortive pustules were produced. Three inoculations were made on each side of the chest, with matter from another patient who was being treated with syphilisation.

Jan. 12th. After the last inoculations, one small pustule appeared on the right and two small pustules on the left side. From these, three inoculations were made in each side.

Jan. 14th. No effect followed the last inoculations. Three inoculations were made in each side from another patient, who was being treated with syphilisation.

Jan. 17th. In the left side was one, in the right side were two small pustules; from which three inoculations were made in each side.

Jan. 20th. Three inoculations were made in each thigh and each side, from the pustules of January 14th.

Jan. 23rd, 27th, 30th, and Feb. 2nd, 5th, 8th, and 11th. Inoculations were made in the thighs and the sides, each time with matter from the last inoculations in the same places.

Feb. 15th. No effect had followed the last inoculations in the sides; on the thighs were small pustules. Three inoculations were made in each thigh and each side, from the last, in the same places.

Feb. 18th. There was only one pustule in the right side. From this one, three inoculations were made in each side; and three were made in each arm and each side from another patient, who was being treated with syphilisation.

Feb. 24th. Inoculation was repeated from the last pustules.

He was by that time attacked with double pneumonia, during which all the ulcers of inoculation were healed. It will generally be seen, contrary to what used to be thought the case, that these ulcers become healed during inflammatory and febrile diseases; and, if one were to make new inoculations under these circumstances, they would not take. Not until March 14th could new inoculations be made on the arms and thighs.

March 18th. On the arms no effect was produced. On the right thigh were two, on the left thigh three pustules, from which three inoculations were made in each thigh and each arm.

March 21st. On the thighs there were pretty well developed pustules, from which three inoculations were made in each thigh. On the arm, the pustules

were too small to give any matter for new inoculations.

March 24th and 27th. Inoculations were made from the last pustules.

March 30th. No effect was produced from the last inoculations.

A fortnight afterwards, he was dismissed from the hospital. The pains in his head and the whizzing in his ears had ceased, and his general health was good. I have seen him several times since. He has been in good health, and very well satisfied with the treatment.

We see in this patient that, at first, the matter would not take, and that afterwards it acted through eleven successive inoculations; that it then again became inactive for some time, and was again applied successfully through eleven successive inoculations. This second series would probably have been even longer than the first one, had not the pneumonia prevented it. After nine successive inoculations, we see the pains in the head diminishing; and on his leaving the hospital he was perfectly well. If I were not afraid of tiring my readers, I might give many more similar instances.

It is, however, not every old syphilitic case that will be cured by syphilisation. If inflammation of the bone or periosteum should have left swellings, syphilisation has not the power of removing these; and should there be paralysis of the extremities of the optic nerve, etc., syphilisation can do nothing against it; but if, beside these phenomena, there is a broken-down organism, syphilisation is capable of so far improving the general health, that the patient will be all the better for having gone through this treatment.

There have been some who have thought that syphilisation ought not to be employed, except in very extreme cases, where everything else has been tried in vain. I must confess, that I do not understand this way of looking at the thing. If we are convinced of being able to cure syphilis by syphilisation (and no one who has watched this curative proceeding will again doubt that), the question will only be this, Which method gives the best results? I have already mentioned, in this JOURNAL, the results of the mercurial treatment, as they are stated in my work *Recherches sur la Syphilis*. I have proved therein, that the relapses after mercurial treatment amount to at least 30 per cent.; and, moreover, I have shown most distinctly how some of the very worst diseases were developed in consequence of treating syphilis with mercury. I will only mention paralysis of all kinds, amyloid degeneration of internal organs, etc. On the other hand, experience has taught us, during thirteen years' practice of syphilisation, that the relapses after this treatment are not nearly so many; that the above mentioned forms of disease very seldom appear after this method; and that the general health, as a rule, is good both during and also after syphilisation.

When the great syphilographers who live and practise in the large towns deny the fact, that there are many relapses and many diseases in consequence of the mercurial treatment, it is only because they have no opportunity of observing their patients in after life. The circle is too large; they must lose sight of them; and, besides, the close connection which exists between syphilis and diseases of the internal organs is not yet generally recognised. The investigation of this question is only in its commencement, and must be carried on principally by medical practitioners in small circles. On the whole, it must be remembered that we who live in small places, and in scantily populated countries, have

thousands of facts to learn from our professional brethren in the large towns, where there is more to be seen in a week than we see perhaps in a year; but, in return, our happily situated colleagues should not forget that there are some things which they may learn even from us; and among these are the facts relating to the spread and the consequences of contagious diseases.

But even if I confine myself to what is acknowledged by the great syphilographers; viz., that there are cases in which the present treatment of syphilis is insufficient; in which the patient constantly sinks from bad to worse, and at last is totally ruined; and even admitting with them that such cases are quite exceptional—I am, nevertheless, at a loss to understand why we should go on using a method under which such cases may occur. I should myself prefer to use a method that would give me no such undesirable exceptions.

Those who have looked upon syphilisation merely from a theoretical point of view, protest that it would not be right to use this method before knowing how to account for its effect. It would have been a blessing, indeed, if there had been some of these severe theorists at hand when mercury was introduced as a cure for syphilis; but, on the other hand, it would have been a pity not to give cinchona for intermittent fever only because its action could not be explained; and it would have been a sad loss if the use of vaccination had been deferred until we had discovered in what way it protects against small-pox. I have heard another objection, however, which is still more remarkably absurd; viz., syphilisation ought not to be used, because we cannot know what effect it may have after some generations!

In England, the profession will soon have the opportunity, through the inoculations now being carried on at the Lock Hospital, of personally judging of the efficacy and value of syphilisation as a cure for syphilis. The only favour I request is, that judgment may be postponed for three or four months.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS IN IRELAND. The fourteenth report of the Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums in Ireland (Drs. Nugent and Hatchell) has lately appeared. The inspectors state that on January 1st, 1864, there were in public asylums 4,672; in poorhouses, between actual lunatics, epileptics, and imbeciles, 2,455; in jails, criminal and dangerous, 389; in private licensed houses, 556; and at Dundrum, or the criminal asylum, 127, besides 73 formerly at the House of Industry, but now maintained by government; making an aggregate of 8,272 human beings labouring under some distinct form of mental affliction. At the corresponding date in January 1865, the relative proportions were as follows:—In public asylums, 4,728; in workhouses, 2,573; in jails, 452; in private licensed houses, 552; at Dundrum, and maintained by government, 188; constituting, on the whole, a surplus difference of 213 in the latter year. As an illustration of hereditary insanity, it is stated that at the Armagh Asylum there was an unmarried female patient whose three sisters and a first cousin died lunatic there; and a widow, whose father, mother, and two sisters had been formerly among its inmates. The most extraordinary was the case of three members of the same family—two sisters—young and intelligent-looking girls—and a brother, being all attacked with acute mania on the same evening, under which they are still labouring in the Cork District Asylum. The occurrence took place some months ago, at the wedding of a brother, who is said to have since then evinced symptoms of insanity.