

to you, is a membrane which very readily becomes inflamed. *Peritonitis*, as this inflammation is called, may arise from cold, like other internal inflammations, or it may result from other complaints. Occasionally it follows some operation, such as hernia, ovariectomy, &c., and for this reason you should make yourself well acquainted with the symptoms of it.

Peritonitis is characterized by feverish symptoms, and pain in the abdomen, which is not only increased by pressure, but by drawing a long breath, coughing, &c., and also by sitting up; hence the respiration is shallow and hurried. Sometimes the pain occasioned by pressure is so great that a patient cannot even bear the weight of the bedclothes. A Nurse should try to alleviate this by placing over the patient the wire or wicker work contrivance, known in Hospitals as a *cradle*, so as to keep the pressure from him. The pain, which is at *first* confined to particular spots, soon spreads over the whole abdomen. The patient generally remains lying on his back, with his legs drawn up, and you will observe that his respiration is generally peculiar. He never draws a long breath, for the reason that in a full inspiration the inflamed membrane would be pressed upon by the diaphragm as it descended. Therefore, less air being admitted at each inspiration, you will find the breathing necessarily quick, and there are often forty or sixty respirations in a minute.

Acute peritonitis generally sets in with a rigor and some peculiarity of pulse. Often before a fatal termination this becomes very quick and feeble. The abdomen frequently becomes much distended.

Besides the remedies which lie solely with the Physician, peritonitis is generally treated with hot poultices on the abdomen, or with constant hot fomentations. Some Physicians order cold applications in preference to the warm, cold enemata, and cloth dipped in evaporating lotions. Leeches are also often applied in great numbers to the abdomen.

In *enteritis*, or inflammation of the bowels, you will find many of the same symptoms as you have observed in peritonitis, with this amongst others, in addition, that there is impaired function of the intestine. Continued obstructions in the bowels cause inflammation. These obstructions may arise from many reasons. Cold, exposure to which is particularly injurious after a meal, or the impediment may occur *within* the bowel, hardened *feces* or intestinal concretions. Very curious formations sometimes take place in the bowels, which usually have a beginning in something which the patient has swallowed, and which has passed into and never out of the bowel, such as fish bones, cherry stones, and the like. Enteritis resembles gastritis

in being one of those maladies which are so severe that a termination of one kind or another cannot be long delayed.

With the continued costiveness to which I have alluded, there is often violent straining, a dark, very offensive, or bilious matter is vomited, there is a very high temperature, and the pulse is slow, hard, and contracted.

Hot fomentations are generally used to allay the inflammatory action in the bowels, and every effort must be made to overcome constipation.

Nevertheless, the Nurse must, in such a case as this, be most careful not to act on her own responsibility as regards the administration of any medicine, as an inopportune or unsuitable purgative might cause the death of the patient.

Enemas are most generally administered. As long as any obstruction in the bowels exists, no real change for the better can, of course, be expected; but when this has been reduced, a gradual cessation of pain may be hoped for. This is generally accompanied by a comfortable perspiration, a decrease in temperature, and a more natural condition of pulse. The urine also, which will have been previously scanty and high coloured, will be more plentiful, and will deposit a sediment.

The most unfavourable conclusion that enteritis can have is gangrene, which is generally marked by a sudden cessation of pain. The lips and face become livid, the extremities cold. There is often a suppression of urine, hiccup, and twitching of the muscles. Death is generally accompanied by delirium or convulsions.

The disease called *colic* is very often combined with enteritis, but it sometimes exists by itself. When it does so, there is this striking difference between it and enteritis. In colic there is seldom fever, and the pain is mitigated by pressure. You will often have opportunities of seeing persons suffering from colic induced by lead-poisoning. Painters are very subject to it. You will notice in such cases a curious palsied state, or dropping, of the arms and hands, which proceeds from the wasting of the muscles. There is also a thin, bluish line on the gums, just where they meet the teeth. Besides other remedies, electricity has been tried with great success for the relief of this sort of colic.

(To be continued.)

RESIGNATION is an exalted Christian virtue. It is a plant that grows not from nature's soil. It is a grace that must be cultivated like the rose tree, that it may flourish and shed forth its sweet fragrance amid the passing scenes of life.

If you would not have affliction visit you twice, listen at once to what it teaches.

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