

## Fevers and Fever Nursing.\*

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NOW the time at our disposal is far too short to enter into anything like a detailed consideration of the various symptoms of all these different diseases, besides which the list is so long that the attempt would obviously lead to confusion. I therefore propose to devote the remaining time this evening to putting before you only the most striking and practical points in connection with some of the more important members of the class, leaving others until the next meeting, when I also hope to review those points in their nursing which call for special mention.

Of the first group, viz., Scarlet Fever, Measles, and German Measles, let us first take Scarlet Fever, which is a very important disease. Some idea of the extensive prevalence of this disease may be gathered when I state that during last year, in London alone, over 20,000 cases were notified, more than half of which were admitted into the Fever Hospitals of the Metropolis. There is a very prevalent belief that the name *Scarlatina* represents a mild form of Scarlet Fever, which is neither serious or even infectious, whereas they are really absolutely synonymous terms—*Scarlatina* being merely the Latin name, or medical equivalent, for Scarlet Fever. It prevails in all parts of the world, but is most frequent in temperate climates, such as our own. It mainly affects children, the greatest liability being at the fifth year of life, and second attacks are not common. Although it is always with us, yet it shows an epidemic extension during the late autumn and early winter, October and November being nearly constantly the months of its greatest prevalence. There is little doubt that Scarlet Fever is a disease of considerable antiquity, as cases are reported by the old Grecian Physician, Hippocrates, who you may remember practised about 400 years B.C.

The incubation, or latent period of Scarlet Fever, is about three days usually, that is the interval between the time at which infection occurs and that

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at which the symptoms of the disease manifest themselves—the time in which the disease, as it were, is getting up steam. The period may, however, be as short as 24 hours, and it occasionally extends as long as six days. And it is very important to remember this in view of the fact, that you may be asked by the parents of a patient as to how long it will be before they may consider themselves safe from the chance of the appearance of a second case. The answer would be, that, if the source of infection has been removed, and all infected articles properly disinfected, there will be but little chance of another case arising after the lapse of a week. Now, what are the earliest signs of the attack, that is, the symptoms of onset in Scarlet Fever? There are three such symptoms which stand out prominently above the general signs of febrility we have previously mentioned: they are sore throat, headache and vomiting. Of these, Sore throat and headache are least constant in young children, whilst vomiting is rarely absent. In adults and older children, headache and sore throat are most constant, but the vomiting may be absent, or replaced by a feeling of nausea.

The most striking appearances during the course of an ordinary favourable attack are, in most cases, briefly as follows:—After the signs of onset have been established for 24 hours or less, there appears on the skin a bright red or scarlet rash, which, together with the Sore Throat and elevation of temperature, increases for two or three days, when the attack is usually at its height—that will be about the fourth day of illness; then after remaining so, for perhaps another day, a gradual abatement of these symptoms occurs, and a return to the normal is reached by about the end of the week. A most important and characteristic symptom which must now be considered, is the behaviour of the tongue during this stage. The tongue, which has begun to coat from the very beginning of the illness towards the end of the second day, that is the first day of the rash, begins to clean at the tip and edges, which then become red and raw looking. This cleaning of the tongue is usually complete by the third day of the rash, when the attack is at its height. The stripping of the tongue is so complete that it looks like a piece of raw beef, and constitutes the so-called "strawberry tongue" of Scarlet Fever, from its likeness to a ripe red strawberry. This symptom is the most characteristic of all the other signs of the disease, even more so than the rash itself, which is more subject to variation. There is no other form of Sore Throat whatever which is attended with a clean tongue, much less a raw tongue, but that which occurs in connection

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