

the circuit, fifteen minutes being shared between the two feet.

It will be found that the bodily temperature will be raised from three-quarters to one degree Fahrenheit, and the muscles will grow stronger and rounder as the treatment progresses. In very nervous persons it is safe to begin *very cautiously*. Many have been shocked by electricity at various times, and have a dread of it. It is advisable to start by using electrodes disconnected with the battery, then gradually an imperceptible current, perhaps waiting an entire day before giving any current whatever. A thorough knowledge of the construction and operation of a battery, as well as of the anatomy of the surface of the body, is essential, for difficulties will arise in the best of hands, and when the current stops or goes with sudden starts, or hurts, or the electrodes chill, or the process fatigues, the value of the treatment is largely lost. Of all the elements in the treatment electricity may best be spared. It is decidedly best to entrust it to a physician. I do not advise a Nurse to try it unless specially trained. I do not mean to say that there are not many other kinds of cases where a Nurse can safely use it, but the difficulties that arise in these cases are great and must be promptly met, for it would be humiliating to acknowledge ignorance or defeat.

The difficulties that arise in using a battery are:—

1. In the fluid. This grows weak after ten or twelve hours of use, and the battery gives notice by working irregularly.
2. In the liability of the zinc to come in actual contact with the carbons instead of hanging freely between them.
3. In the connections between the battery and the coil of wire in the interior of the battery.
4. The liability of the various metallic bearings and connections to become corroded by the acid.
5. In a defect in the silk-covered cords so that no current passes through them.
6. In not noticing that the connecting cords have become loosened from their proper attachments. This is very liable to occur, and must be watched.
7. In keeping the absorbent cotton wet enough to moisten the skin, but not so as to drip over the patient.

To illustrate the great advantages of the rest treatment I have shown you photographs of two patients treated in this way; the changes are striking, but hardly more so than in a case now about to be discharged from the Infirmary for Nervous Diseases. The patient is a girl of fourteen, whose life was without doubt saved by these general measures and without the use of any special medication.

Mamie L. was admitted to Dr. Weir Mitchell's ward on November 20th, 1891; a well-marked case

of hysterical starvation. She had excited a great deal of interest in the town in which she lived, and was apparently near the grave. She was absolutely without appetite, would scarcely speak, and was a mere bundle of skin and bones, weighing forty pounds.

She was placed on complete rest in bed, gentle massage, milk diet, and an occasional laxative. House diet was soon added. In ten days she was allowed to sit up in bed; at the end of two weeks she ate of her own accord; in four weeks she commenced sitting up one hour out of bed, and there was no fatigue; in five and a half weeks she was allowed to be up and walk at will. Her appetite and digestion were good, and her bowels were usually regular, although she required an occasional laxative. Her body was much better nourished, and on the thirty-fourth day she showed a gain of thirty-two and a half pounds; on the day of her discharge, January 14, she showed marked improvement; she was bright, obedient, and willing, and she had gained in weight thirty-nine pounds.

On May 9 she was readmitted in somewhat a similar condition, and after forty days of treatment upon the same lines as before she was discharged much improved.

On August 22, 1892, she was admitted for the third time to the Infirmary, with all her symptoms repeated, and at a weight of sixty-two and a half pounds. She was put to bed and placed on the usual house diet, with the addition of eight ounces of milk at and between meals. She was given massage, but, as before, electricity was not given. Her record is as follows:—

August 22.—Weight sixty-two and a half pounds.

August 29.—Weight seventy-two pounds.

September 9.—Weight seventy-nine and a half pounds.

September 11.—Allowed to sit up half an hour and increase ten minutes daily.

September 16.—Weight eighty-one and a half pounds.

September 30.—Weight ninety-eight and a half pounds.

October 18.—Weight one hundred and ten pounds.

October 30.—Weight one hundred and seventeen and a half pounds.

The patient's gain is thus fifty-five pounds in sixty-nine days, and her weight is nearly three times what it was a year ago. We sincerely trust that, since her body has been raised to such a high plane of nourishment, her mind and brain will preserve their normal powers, and forbid in the future any such hysterical demonstrations as we have seen in this remarkable case.

(Concluded.)

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