

Our Foreign Letter from Syria.

AN INTERESTING CASE OF NEPHRITIS.



eleven years of age, who made a splendid recovery. His father is a natour or watchman, and he and the boy, Moosa, kept guard by night over a biarra, or orange grove. It was during the rainy season that Moosa caught a severe chill, and the day he arrived at the Hospital his poor little body was simply water-logged. He was very cold, and so swollen that his eyes were barely visible; he was put to bed at once in a warm flannel shirt between blankets, and hot water bottles were put to his feet and the sides of bed; a good drink of hot milk was also given; but in spite of all these efforts Moosa remained very cold, so a hot pack was ordered, and this had a very good effect; the patient perspired freely, and told us he felt "queteer tyeeb" now, by which he meant he felt warm and comfortable. The hot pack was repeated every morning, and a sitz bath given each evening; the diet consisted of four pints of milk daily, no solid food was given for three weeks, at the end of which time the boy begged so hard for "nitfit khrubsy" (a little piece of bread) that we gave him bread and milk for breakfast and supper, and a piece of bread with a few olives and cheese made of goat's milk for dinner, and, of course, he still took milk between these light repasts; gradually we put him on to a more liberal diet, and at the end of six weeks he was perfectly well. He is the best case of nephritis I have ever nursed, and was such a good cheery little patient, I believe if the doctor had ordered him he would have been content to drink milk only to the end of his life, and so anxious was he to remain well that when he came to bid me good-bye, he took my hand and raised it to his lips and said, "Lady, I thank you with all my heart for healing me, and will you write on a paper all I must do and what I must eat and drink for the future, that I may never become fat and swollen again?" I did not write a prescription, but told him to go on drinking all the milk that might come in his way, and give up his night work in the biarra, to avoid the miasma, of which there is so much in this country, and which is the cause of so much nephritis, malaria, and pneumonia out here. Moosa has plenty of grit, and I have no doubt this good little patient will make himself useful in some other way, and so earn his daily bread. How one wishes that all the patients would come to Hospital at an early stage of their malady! So many arrive when there is not the slightest chance of recovery.

SALHA AND FATMEH.

The day after Moosa left us a woman and her little girl were admitted. The mother, Salha by name, was suffering from Bright's disease, and Fatmeh from marasmus. They arrived on a camel from a distant village, and both were in a very exhausted condition. Poor Salha was so glad to be put into a nice warm bed with little Fatmeh in a cot beside her. On trying to get the history of these two cases, always most difficult with Arab patients, I found Salha's was a case of long standing, and that Fatmeh, then three years old, had been a sickly little thing from birth. Salha received the same treatment Moosa had undergone, but one could not expect the same results; he had youth on his side, the disease was taken at the acute stage. Salha was between thirty and forty and had had repeated attacks of malaria, and was altogether in a wretched condition. During the first week she had several uræmic fits, and the hot packs were given more frequently, $\frac{1}{4}$ grain of nitrate of pilocarpine was injected subcutaneously once a day, but with very small result, and the doctors pronounced her case to be quite hopeless, so there was nothing left for us nurses to do but to make her as comfortable and happy as we could, and to let her feel that we loved her. She was such an unselfish patient, and all she really cared about was that her husband should not know how ill she was, as she did not want him to be worried, and when he came to see his wife and child, Salha would say, "Don't tell my man that I have had a fit; tell him I'm just a little cold to-day, and that is why I have all these blankets over me." What she enjoyed most was to lie and watch little Fatmeh being washed morning and evening, and afterwards rubbed with warm cod liver oil; this treatment, so beneficial in many cases of rickets and marasmus, was of no use in Fatmeh's case, and one could see that this little one was nearly at the end of her short life.

Mohammed appeared to be a very devoted husband; he lived a long distance from the hospital, but he and his little boy walked from their village every day to see Salha and Fatmeh, and they never seemed to realise how ill both of them were. We all got so fond of poor Salha, she was so contented and grateful for every little attention. When going the round of my wards each night to see if each patient were happy and "comfy," Salha would always say to me just before I turned down the lights, "Come and see me last of all, Sister, then you'll stay longer," and as I sat beside her each night for a little while when many of the patients had gone to sleep, she would take my hand and hold it and say, "You see, he'll miss me so when I die, but all is according to the will of God, then there is my little boy too, he is only six, he and his father will be all alone, with no one to bake the bread for them or wash their clothes or mind the house, and must my little Fatmeh die too? Yes, it is better so that she goes with me. Ah, well, it will all be just as God wills." I was glad the lights were low that Salha could not see the tears that filled my eyes. The end was very near for both mother and child.

One evening, just before sunset, Mohammed

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)