


Medical Matters.

A CASE OF BRASS MOULDERS' AGUE.



In the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Aug. 13, 1904, Dr. Pietrowicz reports the case of a Pole, thirty-three years old, a brass moulder, who came to America fourteen years ago and began working at his occupation, in which he continually inhaled an atmosphere laden with minute particles of brass filings. One year later his symptoms began. He first noticed palpitation of the heart, accompanied by pain in the præcordial region; also a dull pain in the abdomen, sometimes lasting for hours. Numbness and cramps in arms and legs were not infrequent phenomena. A prominent symptom was a fine tremor, well marked in the muscles of the face, hands, and fingers. Distinct chills were frequent. Constipation was obstinate. Appetite became impaired. He had had severe bronchitic symptoms. He was confined to his bed, sometimes for weeks at a time. Recently severe headache, attack of vertigo, dizziness, and a burning sensation in the epigastrium have been noted. His hair is falling out and his memory is failing. Examination shows a tongue heavily coated, with foul breath, and a beautiful green zone or border along the gingival margin of the gums, which cannot be removed by ordinary scraping. Patellar reflexes are exaggerated; ankle-clonus is present. Arteriosclerosis is marked. Iodide of potassium was given until physiological reaction appeared. Milk, given very hot but not boiled, afforded a great deal of relief. It was given with the idea that it would precipitate both zinc and copper into insoluble albuminates. No marked improvement followed the use of bromides and iodides. Large doses of tonics were given. On his entering the hospital it was found that anything hot was soothing to him and relieved his pain. Hot water was then tried to which was added gum camphor, 5 grains to a pint of hot water; he would drink at times two to three pints of this with great relief. Large mustard plasters over the entire abdomen gave him great relief. Total abstinence from all meat was followed by improvement, and he has since been put upon a strictly vegetable diet, with no return of symptoms.

VALIDOL IN SEA-SICKNESS.

Dr. Koepke writes regarding the value of this remedy in sea-sickness in the *Therapeutische*

Monatshefte for June, 1904. He awards the merit of having first described this peculiar action of validol to Scognamiglio, of Naples. Dr. Koepke does not, however, go so far as the latter in claiming specific powers for this remedy; but admits that he has rarely known it to fail after many hundreds of trials. The best results, he says, are got by adopting the following plan of treatment. Patients who are suffering in the initial stage from nervous headache, nauseous taste, excessive flow of saliva, and vertigo are given ten to fifteen drops of validol on a lump of sugar. They then lie down for half an hour, and then they are given a glass of wine with a biscuit. After an hour the patient feels quite refreshed and ready for a meal. If necessary, the treatment is repeated. In severer cases this simple plan may not be sufficient. The patient is ordered at once to bed, and given validol as in the simpler cases. The sight of the sugar may tend to increase the feeling of nausea, and, as a matter of fact, the sugar may be vomited, in which case a second piece should be given, and this will almost certainly be retained. After taking the dose a feeling of pleasant warmth is experienced, while the gastric depression and headache are lessened. In half an hour the patient is given the yolks of two eggs mixed with sherry and ice. In nearly all instances this mixture is tolerated if given in teaspoonfuls at a time.

This process must be repeated several times daily, and after the patient has passed one good night he is put upon a light diet. In no case must the patient's desire as to indiscriminate food be gratified, as instantaneous vomiting generally results. Many patients will subsist on the egg and sherry mixture for weeks, the slightest attempt at any change in this dietary resulting in immediate vomiting. Sometimes there is great aversion displayed to this mixture, and then the patient must be fed on cold oatmeal gruel, after previous administration of validol.

Dr. Koepke believes that sea-sickness is, in the majority of cases, due to cerebral anæmia. The longer the duration of the vomiting, the more affected does the stomach become. In sea-sickness we have, therefore, to combat both gastric disorder and cerebral anæmia. Validol possesses the properties necessary for their counteraction. In conclusion, he regards validol, in conjunction with a suitable dietary, as a specific against sea-sickness in so far as a specific for this malady can be found.

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