His treatment, as is well known, consists of:

Firstly, removing the patient to a new environment and enforcing complete seclusion under the care of a firm but sympathetic nurse.

Secondly, rest in bed for six weeks or two months.

Thirdly, massage and electrical treatment practised daily to take the place of exercise, and to induce appetite and sleep.

Lastly, the diet is generally increased until the body weight of the patient is restored to the normal.

In conclusion, to return to the point from which we started, even in organic disease many of the most distressing symptoms are of the same nature. The degree of suffering of a patient with heart disease, for example, is largely determined by the acuteness of his sensations. The blunted stolid labourer will feel little; others, more delicate, will be nervous, depressed, and miserable, so that opium, which quiets their apprehensions, is at times a more useful drug than digitalis, which increases the power of the heart beat. It is for this reason that nursing can never be mere mechanical work; the nurse, who is the constant companion of the patient, is more important than the doctor with his drugs and stethescope, for she must coax and entice the patient back to health.

ZYMOTIC ENTERITIS.

Its Symptoms and Treatment.

In the third lecture on The Care of Infants, delivered at the Infants' Hospital, Vincent Square, S.W., on Tuesday, May 17, Dr. Ralph Vincent took for his subject Zymotic Enteritis, its Symptoms and Treatment. He opened his lecture by referring to the different light which the study of bacteriology and the discoveries by Lister, Pasteur, Koch, and others had thrown on disease of all kinds. He said that in the past week only, an interesting discovery had been made by Dr. R. W. Allen, that it was possible to grow rapidly the tubercle bacillus from the toxin it produced. This organism, as a rule, was difficult to stain, and slow to grow, tending to show that the whole question of tuberculosis turned on the degree of the resistance that it met, as other infective bacilli actually prepared the way for it.

These discoveries were gradually altering our whole ideas, and instead of being at the end of discovery we are only at the beginning of it.

He pointed out in negation of the idea that zymotic enteritis is infective, the points of dissimilarity between it and other infectious diseases. In the latter one suddenly heard of a large number of cases in one town or place. It would, perhaps, extend consecutively to the next place and so on. In epidemic (so called) diarrhœa the disease attacks infants simultaneously in many towns far apart where obviously contact could not explain it, and infants were found to be immune in the dirtiest and most crowded parts. In the hospital these cases are never isolated, as transference is impossible. Next, organisms in this complaint are never found in the blood or spleen (as, for instance, in enteric), because it is an organism that never gets into the tissues or superficial mucous membranes. But the albuminoid toxins it produces get into the blood stream and produce a state of absolute intoxication. In its worst form it will probably kill the infant whatever is done for it.

The organisms when prepared from putrefying milk closely resemble snake venom, and the prognosis is collapse and rapid death.

The disease very seldom starts in a healthy infant, and something like a revolution must take place in the intestinal tract before it can occur.

It is tremendously associated with acidity and alkalinity, and must be produced by the gradual neutralisation of acid in the alimentary canal. When this becomes alkaline the infant is prepared for the worst type of zymotic enteritis. In the early stages a certain amount of acid is still being made, though there is some sickness and diarrhœa. Suddenly acute symptoms set in, vomiting and diarrhœa. Motions are offensive, and of a rice water character. The child is an ashy grey colour, and suffers from intense thirst. In this state very little can be done. The poison has so thoroughly taken hold that the organs are no longer capable of being stimulated, though at first they appear to respond.

No food at all should be given, as it would be quite impossible for the infant to digest it until in an altogether different condition. Sugar and water is about the best thing, as sugar maintains something like energy, and gives the heart muscle some sort of food, though it does not create structure. Plenty of water to satisfy the thirst, and for the purpose of bathing the tissues to eliminate the poison. The colon may be irrigated with salt water of the strength of ordinary saline solution.

If albumen water is given it should be of the strength of one egg to the pint. Milk should be very carefully edged in between feeds of albumen water and sugar water. Fat, 0.50; whey proteids, 0.25; caseinogen, nil; alkalinity, 10.00. This is supplied by lime water which should be freed of chloride of calcium by washing the lime in three waters, and then thoroughly shaking it up.

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