

in severe cases, by sudden loss of consciousness and collapse, followed by difficult breathing and convulsions. Vomiting is a bad sign. If medical aid is not at hand, carry the patient at once to the shadiest and coolest place, pour cold water over the head, dash it in the face, and over the neck and chest. This is the best preliminary treatment until proper assistance can be obtained, and the patient removed.

Fainting.—Fainting may occur through fright, loss of blood, accident, excessive weakness, or other causes. Dr. Ringer says that, in threatened fainting, when the sensation is first felt, it is a good plan to sit down and lean forward and place the head between the legs as low as possible, so that the blood may gravitate to the brain. Strong smelling salts applied to the nostrils will often ward off an attack. If the patient is attacked in a building or room, he should at once be removed into the fresh air. Lay him down on his back, with the head on a level with the rest of the body, *and not raised*. Loosen the collar or anything that is tight round the neck and chest, and dash cold water smartly over the face. Apply ammonia to the nostrils, but, as a general rule, never give brandy or other stimulant, except by a doctor's orders.

Hysterical Fits.—Hysterical fits are usually indulged in by the feminine sex only, especially those of weak nervous temperaments, and may be caused by over excitement. The patient often falls with the eyes partially closed, and laughs and cries alternately. In these cases, quiet and firmness are the best remedies, and a good plan is to make the patient understand you must pour a jug of water over her immediately if she does not control herself. This usually effects a speedy cure.

Hiccough.—There are several common remedies for this annoying ailment, the best thing being the application of some cold object, such as a key, to the spine, or sucking a piece of loaf sugar saturated with vinegar. It may also often be checked by sucking a small piece of ice.

Heartburn.—That peculiar disagreeable and burning sensation along the gullet, commonly called heartburn, may be relieved by taking as much carbonate of magnesia as will cover a shilling in a little water. A bismuth lozenge is also a useful remedy, or a small piece of prepared chalk about the size of a hazel nut will usually give speedy relief to the sufferer.

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CHAPTER 8.—HOW TO USE THE CLINICAL THERMOMETER. — OBSERVATIONS ON FEVERS AND THEIR PREVENTION.

THE condition called fever is always characterised by a high temperature of the body, and not simply by the feeling of heat alone. A patient may feel hot to himself when he is really not so, and may be shivering with cold, as in ague, when he is actually in a fever. This condition may be detected by the clinical thermometer, the use of which every intelligent person should learn and understand. The average normal temperature of the human body is 98·4deg. Fahr., and varies when in health a very little, rarely exceeding 1·5deg. In fever this condition is disturbed, the temperature rising, and is correctly estimated by the thermometer. If the temperature is above 100deg. (and this is not due to local inflammation) the patient has fever. Below a 101deg. the fever is slight, above 104deg. the fever is high. To take the temperature of the body upright, the bulb end of the thermometer may be placed in the mouth, or in the hollow of the arm, where it should be allowed to remain for a few minutes, and when it is removed the temperature should be recorded at once. In cases of fever, medical assistance should be obtained as speedily as possible, the patient being put to bed and isolated.

Malarial fevers, which are peculiar to certain districts, are those fevers produced by marsh poison or malaria. This is supposed to be caused by a peculiar porosity of the soil, or a certain degree of saturation of the soil with water, accompanied by an elevation of temperature. The disease is common in low-lying marshy grounds, the poison most probably being generated by heat and moisture. It usually rises in the evening, and hangs like a thin mist over the surface of the ground. The autumn especially is a dangerous time in such districts. The poison may be disseminated a long way by the wind, but its spread may be stopped by such obstructions as a range of hills, or a belt of trees, and it seems to be also absorbed by passing over lakes or sheets of water. Hence the object of planting trees and plants such as the eucalyptus and sunflower, that absorb large quantities of moisture around damp and low-lying districts. This has been done with advantage in the marshy lands around Rome, where malaria fever is usually prevalent at certain times of the year.

(To be continued.)

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