

<i>Causes</i> - - - - -	315
<i>Cure</i> - - - - -	316
<i>Profuse Menstruation</i> - - - - -	318
<i>Cure</i> - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
<i>Irregular Menstruation of advanced life</i> - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
<i>Cure</i> - - - - -	319
<i>Chorea, or St. Vitus's Dance</i> - - - - -	320
<i>Cure</i> - - - - -	321

CUTANEOUS DISEASES.

<i>Itch; symptoms</i> - - - - -	324
<i>Cure</i> - - - - -	326
<i>Scabby Sores of Adults, distinct</i> - - - - -	328
<i>Cure</i> - - - - -	329
<i>Pustular Eruptions of Children</i> - - - - -	331
<i>Cure</i> - - - - -	332
<i>Lepra, or Scaly Eruptions</i> - - - - -	334
<i>Cure</i> - - - - -	335
<i>Tinea, or Scald Head</i> - - - - -	336
<i>Cure</i> - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
<i>Ulcerated and Sore Legs</i> - - - - -	337
<i>Symptoms</i> - - - - -	339
<i>Cure</i> - - - - -	341
<i>Ringworm; Symptoms</i> - - - - -	343
<i>Cure</i> - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
<i>Dark coloured scaly Blotch</i> - - - - -	344
<i>Cure</i> - - - - -	345
<i>Venercal Eruption; varieties</i> - - - - -	<i>ib.</i>
<i>How to distinguish Venercal Pains</i> - - - - -	348
<i>Cure of Venercal Eruptions and Pains</i> - - - - -	349
<i>White Blisters, or Burnt Holes</i> - - - - -	350
<i>Symptoms</i> - - - - -	351
<i>Persons most subject to this Complaint</i> - - - - -	353
<i>Cure</i> - - - - -	355
<i>Appendix</i> - - - - -	359

Bilious and Hepatic Diseases

OF

DUBLIN.



UNDER this general character, I have included a number of diseases, which in systematic works are far differently arranged; and however objectionable this classification might appear at first sight, I trust, that, upon examination, it will be found at least as consistent with practical observation, and as useful in regulating the mode of treatment, as any of the arrangements commonly adopted. In this class of diseases, it is true, there are some features in which they differ from one another; and consequently there is some variety in the quality of the medicines to be employed; but, throughout the whole class there appears a morbid secretion of the fluids of the abdominal viscera, particularly of the bile: there is a great resemblance between them in their leading symptoms; and the same method of cure in its most prominent outlines is adapted to them all.

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The diseases ranked under this class are: Bilious Fever, Inflammation of the Liver, Jaundice, Cholera, Dyspepsia or Indigestion, and Dysentery or Fluxes.

COMMON SYMPTOMS OF THE BILIOUS AND HEPATIC DISEASES OF DUBLIN.

1. *Pain and fulness of the Hypochondria and Pit of the Stomach, and sometimes of other parts of the Abdomen.*

This pain is most sensibly felt upon the parts being pressed with the hand, especially at the pit of the stomach, and towards the right side; sometimes the pain descends towards the lower part of the belly, and is most sensible there; sometimes it is most severe towards one of the loins; and sometimes there is a general soreness of the whole belly, most painful at the navel.

2. *Flatulence.*

This is often a very distressing symptom, and may be confined to the stomach or any part of the intestines, but it appears most commonly fixed in the arch of the colon.

3. *Bitterness of the Mouth.*

This is a common symptom, and sometimes changes to a putrid offensive taste.

4. *Loaded*

4. *Loaded Tongue.*

The tongue is covered with a dirty load, of a colour varying through all shades from a light yellow to a dark brown or black.

5. *Nausea or loathing.*

This sometimes becomes so great as to end in vomiting, generally of a greenish or yellowish viscid fluid, very bitter and disagreeable.

6. *A sallow or yellowish colour of the Face and whites of the Eyes.*

This is a very common occurrence, and mostly attended with an expression of dulness and languor of the countenance.

7. *Want of Appetite.*

This is more or less constant in bilious diseases.

8. *Irregularity of the Bowels.*

The most common state of the bowels is costiveness; but it sometimes happens that there is a scanty purging, accompanied by straining, and which yet procures little relief for the patient.

9. *Sighing.*

The occurrence of this symptom is most usual where any critical eruption upon the surface is likely to appear, particularly of the miliary kind.

10. *Vertigo.*

Vertigo or swimming of the head occurs in this class of diseases, and in many amounts to head-ache, often very violent and excruciating.

BILIOUS FEVER.

This complaint is known in Dublin throughout the year, but it is most frequent in autumn and winter. There are considerable varieties in its severity and duration. It often attacks with sickness at stomach, and lasts but a day or two, especially if managed judiciously at the commencement. Sometimes it lingers on for several days scarcely attended to by the patient, and then becomes troublesome, and perhaps continues for a fortnight or a longer time, notwithstanding the most skilful treatment. It is however a disease which, unless grossly neglected, never proves fatal, except it be combined with visceral obstructions; and then the termination of the complaint will depend upon the quality and severity of the other disease. There are intermediate degrees both as to duration and danger, in which, though the patient cannot instantly shake off the complaint, yet its progress is so mild that a few purgatives, well chosen, and properly administered, will banish it in the course of six or seven days; the patient during the treatment being enabled to sit up and walk about his room.

SYMPTOMS.

SYMPTOMS.

Bilious Fever begins with impaired appetite; loathing of food; bitter or foul taste of mouth; confined bowels; and frequently cough. These symptoms gradually increase in severity, and are often attended with tension, pain, and heat about the pit of the stomach, which, in different persons extend to different parts of the belly. The tongue is foul and yellow; the head generally giddy or heavy; the patient is distressed by light and noise; the countenance is dull; the face and eyes unusually yellow; sleep interrupted and unrefreshing; the pulse often but little quickened, and never so quick as in common typhus fever, unless in persons of great irritability, whose pulse is apt to increase in frequency from the most trifling causes: the heat of the skin is generally moderate, but always above the healthy standard, and sometimes pungent; the urine high coloured, scanty, and attended in its passage with a sense of increased heat, and in some cases with a scalding: there are often wheals or vibices on the skin, resembling the marks left by the stripes of a whip, which are sometimes of a pale, and sometimes of a red colour. I have sometimes observed small partial dropsical swellings on the thighs, or legs, or face. Several cases have lately occurred in this town of miliary points appearing on the skin, sometimes accompanied by sweats, but mostly without any sweats whatever; these were the red miliary eruption in most instances: but I met with the white miliary

miliary points in a young delicate female, who had been lingering for more than a fortnight in the complaint before I saw her. The continuance of these eruptions was uncertain, but commonly they disappeared before the termination of the disease; and they always marked a more troublesome and tedious complaint. Delirium of the low and muttering kind is common in long protracted cases, especially after sleep. Sometimes there is a remarkable stupor or dulness, in which the patient does not appear sensible of head-ache: this symptom marks a morbid state of the brain, for which I found a large and sharp blister, applied from the forehead backwards as far as the neck, the best remedy. Deafness is sometimes met with; and here, as well as in typhus fever, I consider it a favourable appearance.

CAUSES.

There are some constitutions very much, and others very little subject to bilious fever. The causes which commonly bring it on, are habitual constipation; exposure to cold, wet, or damp weather; sudden changes of temperature, particularly accompanied by wet weather; sedentary habits; depressing passions of the mind; food difficult of digestion.

CURE.

The method of cure in this disease is very simple, and consists in removing the acrid contents of
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the bowels by means of those purgatives which are best calculated to dislodge bilious sordes; in correcting morbid and restoring healthy secretion; in relieving topical distress by appropriate applications; and in supplying the patient with light digestible food, mild diluting drink, cleanliness, and pure air.

The purgatives must be steadily persevered in throughout the complaint; for it is upon them we must principally rely for success: and as the accumulation of foul matter in the alimentary canal is constantly and copiously produced; so there is no disease in which the free and regular use of purgatives causes less distress, or gives more uniform relief. It frequently happens, that from the operation of a purgative, a large quantity of foul excrements comes away; and yet in ten or twelve hours after, there is another large evacuation, so as often to cause great surprise, how so much could be generated in so short a time; and these copious and foul evacuations continue for several successive days without inducing proportionable weakness; but on the contrary they procure great mitigation of the symptoms; even delicate and young females are relieved, without being exhausted, by these evacuations. In the exhibition of medicine to produce those desirable changes, it is proper to observe, that some purgatives will pass through the bowels with the effect
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of causing repeated and liquid stools; but will leave the greatest part of the sordes behind them; (of this I have seen several instances) so that an appropriate cathartic exhibited immediately after this liquid purging, shall bring away copious stools of fetid, dark, and solid excrements. The advantage of selecting the effectual purgatives, and of avoiding that injudicious use of any medicine, because it has the name of a purge, I conceive it necessary to enforce; because I believe the practice of resorting to purgatives indiscriminately has often converted into a lingering disease, that, which might have been cured in three or four days; and has, not unfrequently, been the means of sapping away a large portion of valuable health.

A dose of the medicines, No. 1, 2, or 3, which contain calomel, a purgative of another kind, and an aromatic, is the best for completely dislodging and bringing away the sordes of the intestines; but as these are commonly slow in their operation, the purgative mixture, No. 4, may be taken to co-operate with the others, and to clear the bowels more speedily. In five or six hours after the bolus or pills, two large spoonfuls of the mixture might be taken by a grown person, and repeated every two hours until the stools come away; these stools consist commonly of dark coloured excrements in a solid form, but some-
times

times of small lumps intermixed with a liquid slime, all dark, and of a factor not unlike to that of a slaughter-house: sometimes the first stools have a more natural appearance, and a lighter colour; and it is not until after a few evacuations of this sort, that the dark coloured excrements begin to come away; and it is remarkable that we are disappointed of any substantial improvement in the state of our patient, whilst the dark fæces remain behind, notwithstanding the quantity of the evacuations procured. During the remainder of the day after the effect of the purgatives, the saline mixture, No. 19 or 20, may be used; it settles the stomach, removes loathing, and gently co-operates with the indication of the purgative. The best time for the exhibition of the purgative is the morning early, for then the business of evacuating the bowels and quieting the sickness of the stomach may generally be finished before bed-time, in such a manner that the patient may have the best possible chance for sleep. This observation as to the time of giving purgatives applies generally to all acute diseases; and when we have a complete command of time, and circumstances, it ought to be attended to; but when we are called in at a late hour, and that evacuating medicines of this class cannot be delayed consistently with the comfort and safety of our patient, the purgative must be immediately ordered; all other considerations
yielding

yielding to that of speedily and effectually relieving the patient. If there is pain or uneasiness felt at the pit of the stomach, or in any part of the belly, it may be rubbed with the liniment, No. 16, for a few minutes from time to time, and afterwards covered with dry flannel heated before the fire. Should the pain become very severe, attended with vomiting and threatening inflammation of the bowels, we should without delay bleed freely from the arm, and apply a sharp and large blister to the belly, so as completely to cover the whole of the pain; and occasionally, throw up laxative oily glysters, as in No. 103, every two hours until the bowels are evacuated, and the pain is removed.

As the pain of the bowels generally proceeds from the acrimony of the confined fæces aided perhaps by flatus; upon removing the fæces, the pain gradually subsides; the purging plan must therefore be our main resource in our efforts finally to subdue the pain. It will be proper thus to repeat the purgative treatment, so as to procure at least one free passage every day; and in cases where the belly is swelled abounding with excrementitious sordes and wind, a greater number of stools will be borne by the patient without distress.

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There is sometimes an appearance of loose evacuations, caused by frequent and scanty motions, and accompanied by straining and irritation to go to stool; here it will be necessary to have recourse to the double plan of mitigating this irritation, and of freely evacuating the contents of the bowels: for this purpose a dose of the pills No. 7, consisting of calomel opium, and an aromatic, will be an excellent remedy; in this medicine the opium allays the straining and irritation, without destroying the purgative qualities of the calomel, which in some time passes on through the intestines (though somewhat more slowly in consequence of the opium) and carries off the sordes, upon the presence of which the irritation and straining depended: but as it will be desirable in many cases to remove the foulness of the belly somewhat sooner, the glyster No. 6, might be administered five or six hours after the pills, and repeated every three hours until the effect is attained.

Should instances occur where the medicines already recommended fail to relieve the constipation, we may rely with considerable certainty upon the electuary No. 5, of which a tea-spoonful might be taken five hours after a dose of the medicines No. 1, 2, or 3, and repeated every three hours until a discharge is procured. In cases too where the purgative mixture and pills

fail

fail to produce a sufficient effect; or where from the great fulness of the belly, or any other circumstances we have reason to conclude that a powerful cathartic may be necessary to aid the medicines No. 1, 2, or 3, the electuary No. 5, might be ordered as above directed, with a pretty strong certainty that it shall answer our expectations.

The calomel purgatives had better be repeated for the first four or five days, according to circumstances, and followed up with the medicines already mentioned; afterwards other cathartics will bring away those morbid excretions which might still remain in the intestines, with much greater certainty, than the same cathartics could have dislodged them, if administered without the previous exhibition of the calomel: hence it is manifest that calomel has a more powerful effect in expelling morbid fæces, than any other medicine in ordinary use.

Should there be loathing and foulness of stomach, the calomel purgatives so much relied on will frequently cause vomiting in a short time after being taken, perhaps in less than an hour, and almost to a certainty before they operate by stool; but this is a circumstance at least innocent, for the medicine will, notwithstanding the vomiting, pass off by the bowels in due time (unless
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the vomiting occurs immediately upon taking the purgative) and sometimes the effort of vomiting will give temporary relief by unloading the stomach. In delicate stomachs the saline mixture sometimes gives little relief, then a little burnt brandy will prove a grateful cordial; but the most effectual of all cordials is generally a little ice-cream.

A thinly sliced lemon with some white sugar powdered on it, is a vulgar and yet a grateful remedy for cleaning the tongue and inside of the mouth.

The above treatment, in most instances, completely removes the disease without the necessity of resorting to other medicines. The complexion becomes gradually more clear; the pulse more soft and slow; the tongue cleaner towards the edges, softer, and of a natural colour; the stools lose their dark colour and unnatural morbid fætor; the tension, and pain, and fulness of the belly subside; appetite begins to return; the urine, before scanty and high-coloured, now increases in quantity and deposits a sediment; the eye and countenance assume a natural expression; sleep gradually gains upon the harrassed patient and becomes profound and refreshing; the breathing, before somewhat hurried, now is slow and regular; the speech more firm and articulate,

ticulate; and the train of thoughts more orderly and collected.

After convalescence begins, the cordial mixture No. 18, may be taken twice a day, for at least a week, to strengthen the stomach and to assist in improving appetite. The pills No. 8, will occasionally be useful, and may be taken at bed-time for several days after the disease disappears, in order to guard against the danger of confined bowels.

Some instances occur where untoward symptoms call for more attention and require a greater variety of remedies. The distress of the head will prove obstinate and continue after the treatment abovementioned has been fairly tried; the complaint of the head is sometimes a low muttering delirium, teasing the patient with irregular fancies, and greatly interrupting or entirely banishing sleep: this may be called the low delirium. Sometimes the distress is a stupor, whence the patient continues in a state of drowsiness without getting any refreshing sleep, and if asked about the state of the head, does not appear sensible of pain; but it commonly happens, that if strong light be admitted, there is an aversion expressed sufficiently strong to prove that light is disagreeable. Most of the cases of this sort which I met with, were in young persons under the

the age of puberty. In some instances there is a violent outrageous permanent delirium, accompanied by a shining prominence of the eyes, a throbbing of the temporal arteries, and commonly a turgid fulness of the face, with a pulse full and strong. This may be properly called the phrenitic or violent delirium; all the instances of this sort which I met with, were in persons who were strongly addicted to the immoderate use of spirituous liquors; and most of them were notorious drunkards. In those cases there is sometimes a bleeding from the nose, and sometimes an hæmatemesis or bleeding from the stomach. Those discharges of blood are somewhat critical.

In those three different varieties of disordered brain, the head should be immediately shaved, and occasionally wetted with strong spirits or spirituous embrocations. In the first sort or muttering delirium, if the uneasiness of the head banishes sleep entirely, after clearing the bowels sufficiently, we may try the opiate pill, No. 13, at bed time, and if necessary repeat it in three hours after; it often has the effect of procuring a sound sleep of some hours, and of leaving the patient upon awaking refreshed and free from delirium, or at least with a slighter portion of it than before the opiate was given: blistering and perhaps leeches may be useful too, particularly should there be a throbbing of the temporal arteries, or other indications

cations of encreased vigour of circulation in the vessels of the head.

In the drowsy or torpid state, along with the usual evacuations mentioned already, a large blister should be applied without delay to the whole of the upper part of the head, from the forehead to the nape of the neck; this seldom fails to procure decided relief in the course of twenty four hours; but as the hairy scalp of the head is not easily vesicated, it will always be proper after the blister is spread, to lay over it a thin covering of powdered flies. The discharge from the head may be kept up afterwards if necessary by means of vesicating ointments.

In the phrenitic or violent delirium, accompanied by a strong full pulse, we must without delay bleed freely from the arm. From fourteen to sixteen ounces may be taken away at once and from a large orifice, and repeated if necessary in the course of twenty four hours; and as often as the strength and hardness of the pulse returns, blood must be taken away: here too the blisters with the circumstances of their sharpness &c. and the careful exhibition of purgatives, already pointed out, will be proper.

The various modifications of head-ache, torpor, and delirium, are often accompanied by encreased
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action in the vessels of the head, as the noise in the head, the throbbing of the temporal arteries, and the flushed complexion sufficiently denote; and are frequently accompanied by a quick and feeble pulse: blisters therefore to the head, with topical bleeding, by means of leeches, or by means of cupping and scarifying, must be relied on, without general bleeding from the arm: it is only when the pulse is strong and full that blood-letting from the arm is admissible; but it is in the phrenitic delirium only, that this state of the pulse occurs.

Sometimes we meet with cases of obstinate constipation, incessant vomiting, and severe pain and tension of the belly. Such cases are peculiarly distressing; because the purgatives, which are indispensable to remove the constipation and distress of the belly, cannot be retained by the stomach, but are immediately rejected by vomiting; and enemata are but a very inert substitute on those occasions; such a state is apt to terminate in inflammation and gangrene of the intestines; and even if it be at length relieved before inflammation commences, the long continued tension of the belly induces a state of atony which soon ends in dropsy of the belly: sometimes a dropsy of the belly with general anasarca supervenes; the treatment of which is to be conducted according to the directions pointed out in the cure of dropsy. Where the pain and writhing about the naval
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mark the existence or the approach of inflammation of the intestines, we must bleed freely from the arm, and then perhaps cover the part in pain with a sharp blister. Bleeding here is a melancholy necessity, because the weakness likely to ensue is thereby increased; but if the bleeding is omitted the event is fatal.

The following is the method I had recourse to in those instances, and with flattering success. The opiate draught, No. 14, is exhibited with a view to allay the irritability and straining of the stomach, and repeated every ten minutes until this object is attained; then the pills, No. 11, are taken, and in three or four hours afterwards the electuary No. 10, of which a tea-spoonful is to be taken for a dose, and repeated every two hours afterwards until a stool is procured. As soon as a copious evacuation takes place, the general distress of vomiting, pain, restless, and tension begin to subside; then the subsequent treatment is to be regulated according to the method already described. The general blood-letting is not to be employed in all cases of this kind; it is only where inflammation of the bowels is apprehended, that it must be practised. It will be of great benefit to swathe the belly with a very long flannel roller as soon as convenient, the coiling of which must be continued from the bottom of the abdomen upwards towards the pit of the stomach; the roller seldom

seldom fails to give immediate relief, by its support and warmth. *

In bilious cases it sometimes happens, that after evacuating the contents of the bowels freely, and taking such other steps as the nature of the complaint seems to require, a degree of listlessness remains; the patient recovering but very slowly, and yet having no particular pain or distress: here it will be proper to examine the state of the hypochondria, because in such instances some derangement of the liver is commonly the source of the malady: accordingly we shall find indications

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* I met some time ago with a remarkable instance of the comfort experienced from the roller, in a gentleman who had this complaint to an alarming degree. He had been very judiciously bled, before I saw him, and treated with purgative pills and glysters, but without effect; the incessant vomiting entirely frustrated the benefit of the pills, and the glysters procured but slight relief. His belly was greatly enlarged, and his strength much exhausted when I was called in; the opiates, above mentioned, were directed and followed by the purgative pills and electuary, in consequence of which large and fetid evacuations were procured; a roller was then applied with such immediate and marked relief, that he exclaimed, why was not this done at first!—upon his convalescence from the bowel complaint, he filled with water in the legs and in the belly, for which he was treated according to the principles detailed in the account of dropsy; to which I beg leave to refer. He soon recovered, and is now in good health.

cations of some degree of chronic hepatitis, of which increased fulness in the right hypochondrium is a very common symptom. In those instances we must recommend the gradual and gentle use of mercurial medicines. I have treated such cases successfully by means of the pills, No. 9, persevered in until the mouth became sore, and the system sensibly charged with the medicine. Along with these I recommend a few trials of the warm sea-bath.

The various marks and eruptions on the skin, which sometimes accompany bilious fever, most commonly disappear along with the fever, and require no specific treatment: this remark applies to the miliary eruptions themselves: but in tedious cases, where there is great delicacy and relaxation, and particularly where the eruption consists of the white miliary points, accompanied by a pungent feverish heat of skin, I have given the bitter cordial, No. 17, with considerable benefit: it strengthens the tone of the stomach and bowels; corrects the acrimony and fætor of the excrements; moderates the heat of the skin; and is sometimes gently laxative.

Cough is a common symptom; but it generally disappears along with the others, without the aid of expectorating medicines: even in cases of severe cough in bilious fever, upon removing the

sordes

sordes of the alimentary canal, the cough becomes so mild as to need no particular treatment: of this I met with repeated instances. But if the cough should still continue distressing, in consequence of any peculiar delicacy of the lungs; or of the combination of catarrh with the complaint; the expectorating mixture, No. 15, is commonly sufficient to remove it. In some of the cases in which miliary eruptions appeared, there were severe catarrhal symptoms; and after the bilious symptoms vanished, the complaint required to be treated like a serious catarrhal affection.

The diet throughout should be light, and easy of digestion; the drink light, mild, and diluting.

Roasted apple; flummery; gruel; ripe fruit; sago; tapiocco; arrow root; light broth; a bit of dry toast, and such like, will answer for food: but in long protracted cases, where the strength is much worn down, nourishing broth; an egg; a small bit of chicken, and a little wine, will be proper; and in cases where these can be easily digested, it is usual for the patient to feel a longing for them, which, in convalescence from acute disease, it is always safe to indulge in a cautious manner. The drink might be whey; barley water; buttermilk; milk and water; syrup of raspberry

raspberry vinegar and water ; and such like ; and occasionally wine and water. The patient will sometimes express a liking for a glass of toast-water, or cold water, which it is perfectly safe to indulge.

Where there is such a mass of foul and fetid excrements coming away, it is particularly necessary to keep the apartment clean, well ventilated, and of moderate warmth, without being hot : the cloaths and bed-cloaths must be kept very clean and fresh ; and the vessels for the patient's use, and the furniture of the room, (which should consist of a very few articles) kept very neat and clean also : crowds of visitors should be strictly prohibited, and the patient kept as free as possible from noise, light, and disturbance of every kind.

The patient, when able to walk about a little, should be indulged in an airing in a coach every day, and, if the weather permit, very soon afterwards in an open carriage.

BILIOUS FEVER OF CHILDREN.

Bilious fever often occurs completely formed in children and young persons, with this difference, however, that those symptoms which mark the morbid secretions of the stomach, liver, and intestines, are more strictly and uniformly the pre-

prevailing characters of the disease in young persons : it is in these too that we most commonly meet with that modification of head-ache which may be called stupor, or drowsiness ; the appearance of which often causes well founded apprehensions of dropsy of the brain. This is a powerful reason for immediately adopting the treatment of mercurial purgatives ; for blistering the head, and keeping up the discharge from the blistered parts by means of Savin ointment, or blistering ointment ; and if the blistered parts should heal, for blistering again about the neck, or the ears, or the temples ; and thus keeping up a perpetual drain from the head, or from some part in its neighbourhood, until we perceive unequivocal marks of returning health.

Children will linger on in this complaint sometimes for two, and not unfrequently for three weeks, particularly if injudiciously managed at first, in a state of alarming danger and uncertainty ; and yet recover almost contrary to all hopes.

CURE OF BILIOUS DISEASES IN CHILDREN.

The treatment already detailed in the cases of adults, will apply also in the bilious complaints of children ; but as in these the symptoms are more regular and simple, so the variety of medicines does not require to be equally great. The calomel

mel medicines No. 1, 2, and 3, are applicable to children, with the following limitations. The quantity of the dose must be proportioned to the age and strength of the child. Instead of pills, which children cannot be made easily to swallow, the medicine must be taken in a powder, the unpalatable ingredients being left out; and the calomel, which is a heavy metallic powder, should never be mixed up with any thin liquid, such as milk, tea, whey, &c. for it then generally falls to the bottom of the vessel, and is lost; but it ought to be blended with some viscid and adhesive substance, as honey, currant-jelly, currant-jam, syrup or brown sugar. It is peculiarly fortunate too, that as in children this is more purely a complaint of the bowels, than in grown persons; so likewise in children, repeated and active purgatives will have comparatively a less distressing effect than in adults.

The powder No. 12, composed of calomel, sugar, and ginger, will be a moderate dose for a child six or seven years of age; the dose to be regulated as the child is younger or older; one grain of calomel is a moderate dose for a child one year old; females and delicate frames will not require as large doses as will be necessary for males and robust constitutions. The safest method at first is always to exhibit moderate doses of the calomel purgative, because in a few hours after, we
have

have it in our power to give other medicines which quicken its operation; thus after ordering the medicine No. 12, it will be proper to direct a desert spoonful of castor oil to be taken in four hours after, and to be repeated every three or four hours as long as it may be necessary. By these means we shall evacuate the bowels as satisfactorily as by ordering a larger dose of the calomel in the beginning; and by this cautious method we avoid entirely the danger of severe purging and griping.

Children are remarkable for being able to take calomel for many successive days, without causing a soreness of the mouth.

The saline mixture, No. 19, is a medicine very grateful to children, and may be freely exhibited in the intervals between the purgatives. For a child six years old, a desert spoonful of lemon-juice, with a proper quantity of the saline solution, is a sufficient dose, and may be repeated every four hours until it be taken three or four times.

Where opiates are indicated for children in bilious fevers or any other complaint, they must be administered cautiously and sparingly: in combining opium therefore in pills, or laudanum in mixtures, the proportion of the opiate must be considerably below the standard for grown persons;

persons; the reverse is the case in the exhibition of mercurial purgatives; the doses of which, necessary for a child, must be greatly above the ratio of their age.

In bilious fever it will be advisable to bathe the feet every night in hot water, or to stupe them with cloths wrung out of hot water, or chamomile water, &c. this discipline is useful to adults also.

Though mercury is much more slow in producing a soreness of the mouth in young persons than in adults, yet cases will occur, in which, from severely affected liver, the mercurial medicines must be persevered in until a soreness of the gums and mouth takes place, but this is a trifling inconvenience in itself, and, as far as it is a symptom of mercurial action, it is favourable.

Medical writers remark, that when mercurial medicines, exhibited for the cure of febrile diseases, produce a soreness of the mouth, that soreness might be considered as a sign that the disease has given way, and convalescence begun. I think this observation is generally well founded, at least in bilious diseases. I have frequently known instances of such affections, and I have always observed that the febrile appearances had then begun

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to vanish. Of this fact I would offer the following explanation.

Copious discharges of putrid sordes commonly take place from the intestinal canal, for several successive days, in these complaints, though the patients all the time take no other nourishment but mild drink, and a small portion of food, in a diluted and liquid state. It is obvious that these large masses of fatid excrements cannot be formed of such food and drink; but must be the result of morbid secretion in the stomach, liver, intestines, and perhaps in the pancreas. It is pretty clear that this morbid secretion becomes, at least, a considerable part of the disease, and that the remedies which correct morbid, and restore healthy secretion, are most effectual in removing that disease; but mercury is the remedy whose preparations have the most valuable effects in this way, and those effects are manifest when the system is decidedly under its influence, an event which the soreness of the gums and mouth clearly proves; the occurrence therefore of that soreness is a sign that morbid action has given way to healthy secretion, and that convalescence has begun.

HEPATITIS, OR INFLAMMATION OF THE
LIVER.

The most common symptoms of this disease are a sensation of weight and fulness at the pit of the stomach, stretching across to both sides, but particularly the right side, attended with a constant uneasiness and pain. The pain is sometimes very severe and accompanied by a pain also at the top of the shoulder, but in many instances it is a dull heavy unpleasant sensation rather than a pain; *a bilious colour of the skin; a teasing constant cough; sickness at stomach; often flatulence; impaired appetite; hurried or quick breathing; confined bowels; short and interrupted sleep; the patient generally lyes with most ease on the right side; † the pulse is commonly quick and small,

* The pain is most acute when the inflammation is seated in the upper or convex surface of the liver, and in the membrane which envelops it; but the dull pain is felt when the concave or lower surface of the liver is the seat of the inflammation. The pain of the shoulder is most constant when the inflammation affects the convex surface of the liver, close to the part attached to the diaphragm, and it fixes sometimes in the right, and sometimes in the left shoulder.

† To this however there are exceptions, as in some instances the patients can lye easiest on the left side, or on the back, inclining to the left side; but by much the most usual occurrence is that of lying best on the right side.

small, but in the acute pain it is hard; the urine is high coloured; there is commonly encreased heat and dryness of the skin; thirst; lassitude; and low spirits.

Such is the assemblage of symptoms which generally characterize the complaint in this country; and unless other appearances of a severer nature occur, the patients, if judiciously treated, will in most instances recover. But in the confirmed and dangerous degrees of the disease, there are other symptoms of a more alarming nature to be met with; such as great emaciation; pulse very feeble and irregular; sleep entirely banished, or constantly interrupted by frightful dreams; the trunk of the body bent backwards so that the spine forms an arch; the gums hard and firm; the belly tense and inflated; and often an enlargement and hardness felt at the pit of the stomach; a putrid spontaneous purging; fits of cold shivering, and oppression in breathing, succeeded by encreased heat and profuse perspiration, so as to resemble very exactly the fits of an ague; cough attended by large and purulent expectoration; a leaden colour of the face. The edge or border of the liver is often felt projecting below the ribs, and sometimes stretching downwards large and prominent towards the lower part of the belly, as far as the spine of the ilium.

Hepatitis

Hepatitis most commonly attacks old persons, those of irritable and relaxed constitutions, those who are much addicted to the use of spirituous and fermented liquors, persons of indolent and sedentary habits, and who indulge freely in the use of tea and coffee; hence, women frequently suffer from liver diseases in consequence of their sedentary habits, and of their excessive indulgence in the use of these slow poisons, tea and coffee. They whose constitutions have been much shattered by former diseases, and Europeans who have been long resident in hot climates, are often victims to this complaint.

Hepatitis is best known in these countries since we have had a free and extensive intercourse with tropical climates; it is not confined however entirely to such climates; instances of it are met with frequently in cold and temperate latitudes, and in persons who never visited tropical countries; but even they who most usually suffer from it in temperate and cold climates, are persons who have spent some time in hot countries. Thus it often happens, that Europeans, who visit our remote settlements to acquire large fortunes, return to their native land, enriched 'tis true, but with constitutions so shattered as to be incapable of enjoying the fruits of their industry.*

* It is remarkable that Europeans in hot climates seldom escape the effects of a diseased liver, and it is mentioned that
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In incorrigible drunkards, it is not unusual to find a combination of schirrhous and partly ossified liver, of tubercles and abscesses of the lungs causing pulmonary consumption, and of general dropsy of the belly and of the cellular membrane all at the same time

CURE.

There are few instances of hepatitis, if timely attended to, that may not yield to the judicious use of medicine; and yet it is a melancholy fact that it is often suffered to proceed to that extremity, in which the most able treatment can avail but little. If there are symptoms of acute inflammation, such as quick and hard pulse, sharp and distressing pain of the side preventing full inspiration, increased heat of skin, thirst and anxiety, it will be necessary to bleed freely from the arm; but in order to regulate our judgment as to the propriety of bleeding, we are not to delay it, until all the symptoms here enumerated are met with; it is true they commonly exist together

European dogs get enlarged livers in hot climates. The plague, which is principally confined to hot countries, very constantly produces enlargements of the liver, and frequently of the heart. Intermittent and remittent fevers in hot countries often leave chronic diseases of the liver, and an enlarged spleen, called ague cake.

together in acute inflammation of the liver, but the pain alone is decisive of the necessity of bleeding. After the blood is taken away, we should endeavour to procure a speedy and copious evacuation by stool; this object is commonly attained by means of the medicines No. 1, 2, or 3, which, if necessary, may be followed up in five or six hours by a dose of castor oil, by repeated spoonfuls of the mixture No. 4, or by the electuary No. 5, two table spoonfuls of the mixture, or a tea-spoonful of the electuary may be exhibited in six hours after the pills, and repeated every two hours after until an evacuation is procured. By these means the pain and other distressing symptoms are mitigated; but should there be little improvement still in the state of these symptoms, the venesection should be repeated, and a large sharp blister applied to the side, so as completely to cover the part through which the pain is sensibly felt. The feet should be immersed in baths of hot sea or salt water, or kept for some time wrapped up in hot stupes or hot flannels, &c. The food in the mean time must be light, easy of digestion, and contain but little nourishment in a given bulk; as gruel, flummery, sago, arrow root, roasted apple, and such like: the drink light, subacid, mild, and agreeable, such as two milk whey, vinegar whey, runnet whey, barley water, fresh butter milk, syrup of raspberry vinegar and water, oranges, &c.

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This bold and decisive treatment, consisting of blood-letting, purging, and blistering, should be actively persevered in, and repeated until the pain be subdued; because, if the inflammation be permitted to proceed until suppuration forms, all the exertions of the physician are ineffectual in saving the life of the patient; the marks of suppuration are an increased sense of weight in the affected part; a return from time to time of shivering fits, succeeded by increased heat, anguish, and profuse perspiration; the oppression in breathing rendered more distressing; the cough more laborious; and sometimes (though not always) a copious discharge of a fetid purulent expectoration.

Cases of this sort are often met with, and we not unfrequently have the mortification to be called to patients with those suppurative symptoms completely formed, which point out an abscess of the liver, and yet where the alarm of the patient did not extend beyond the apprehensions of a feverish cold. It is still perhaps a more melancholy reflection, that instances of this kind occur, where, from want of strict and cautious examination, the physician has fixed his attention principally on the pectoral symptoms, has consequently treated it as a pulmonary complaint, and has thus been the cause of allowing

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the disease to proceed to the fatal suppurative process.*

After the symptoms of acute inflammation are subdued by those means, we must have recourse to mercurial medicines, of which perhaps the mercurial ointment is the best; a drachm of the strong ointment might be rubbed to the hypochondria every night, until the mouth is sore, and then intermitted for some time until the soreness begins to heal; it should be then resumed, and thus from time to time resorted to, until the practitioner is satisfied that the complaint is removed, and the sound secretion of the liver restored. It sometimes happens that the delicacy of the patient's constitution cannot bear with safety, at one time, as much mercurial

* I had some time ago an opportunity of seeing a case of this description, in a respectable female in this town, the mother of a large family. She had been visited in the spring by a physician, not now in this country, who, from a hasty examination of her symptoms, decided that her complaint was entirely on her lungs, because she had cough and breathing somewhat hurried: he accordingly sent her some miles out of town, to an inland situation in the country, where she spent six or seven months; her complaint all the time growing worse; I saw her in the course of the ensuing winter with a diseased and enlarged liver, and suppuration formed. I could have no hesitation as to the probable termination of the complaint, and my prognosis was but too soon confirmed by the event.

rial medicines as may be proper for curing the disease. In such instances it will be proper to drop the medicine for the time, if we conclude that a longer perseverance might sink the strength too much, and to defer the prosecution of the mercurial course until the strength be so far recruited as to be fit to bear the farther use of the mercury. In general, we can wait until the following summer, without inconvenience to the patient; and should it be necessary again to intermit the continuance of the cure, it may be put off to the next summer; and thus, the treatment managed in the most delicate constitutions, with caution and perseverance, until the disease disappears. In the intervals the pills No. 9, might be exhibited from time to time; they help to preserve a regular and free state of the bowels, and they often affect the liver, though very gradually and slowly, in such a manner as to answer the end of completing the cure, without any farther use of the ointment. It is only in delicate habits, that it will be prudent to intermit the mercurial treatment, before the symptoms disappear; and even in such habits the disease will frequently be cured by an uninterrupted continuance of the appropriate remedies.

The warm salt bath may be used occasionally with a view to soften the skin, to determine

to the surface, and to mitigate internal pain: it is also useful in moderating the severity of distressing and profuse pyalism. The pills No. 35, composed of soda, ginger, and a chalybeate, or some such medicine, may be taken every morning, after the inflammation is subdued, for the double purpose of restoring the healthful secretion of the liver, and of improving strength and appetite, by their action on the stomach and bowels; they may be washed down with soda water, or with a light infusion of an agreeable bitter, such as an infusion of chamomile, cinchona, ~~quinquina~~, quassia, or columbo: a little ginger added to the infusion will improve its flavour. Soda is a medicine of such acknowledged utility in hepatic complaints, that we sometimes hear of boasted cures in liver diseases from soap pills, the efficacy of which depends upon the soda they contain.

If symptoms of incipient suppuration commence, we must drop the plan of bleeding and blistering, and direct all our efforts to cause the abscess to point outwards, as this is the most desirable termination of the disease when abscess forms; for this purpose a large cataplasm should be applied warm to the side, and repeated three times a day; and the patient remain very quiet and take such nourishing food as the appetite can bear, with a little wine. The cataplasm may consist
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of the ordinary materials, that is, bread and milk, stirrabout, carrot poultice, &c. and if the abscess points outwards it should be opened with a large orifice. When the patient is harassed by want of sleep, opiates must be occasionally allowed; the opiate draught, No. 14, will generally be sufficient; but the laudanum may be increased if necessary, or the draught repeated.

There have been instances of a recovery from abscess of the liver, when the matter was discharged externally; though even in such cases the patient will most commonly sink under an hectic fever; but when the abscess bursts in any other direction, it commonly proves fatal. Sometimes a communication is formed by means of inflammation, between the liver, diaphragm, and lungs, and the matter of the abscess from time to time discharged by coughing, and expectoration, attended by a fatal hectic. Sometimes the connection is between the liver and the stomach, and the contents of the abscess discharged by vomiting: in a few such cases the patient recovers, but the most frequent event here also is a fatal hectic.

Should the symptoms of acute inflammation be absent, such as pain, heat, and fever; and only the others constituting chronic inflammation, be present; the treatment in many respects must differ

differ from that of acute hepatitis. In the chronic hepatitis, we must immediately proceed to the use of mercurial ointment; the medicines, No. 1, 2, or 3, will be proper to co-operate with the indication of the ointment, but particularly to preserve a regular state of the bowels; here too the warm sea bath will be very useful. Should the use of the ointment be resisted by the patient, we might order the pills, No. 36, which must be persevered in for a long time; and during the convalescence, one of the draughts, No. 45, may be taken every morning.

The diet must be more generous in the chronic complaint, than in the acute or inflammatory hepatitis; and may consist of broths, jellies, a moderate allowance of fresh meat, and a little wine; the indulgence in those articles to be regulated by the severity of the disease, by the habits and constitution of the patient, and by the state of the appetite. In general it is proper to remember, that, wherever mercurial medicines are necessary, a more liberal indulgence in diet will be required, because, mercury is known to produce its salutary effects most decisively, where the strength is somewhat supported; because a wasting drain of saliva commonly attends its exhibition; and because in hepatic diseases, mercury, by removing, in a short time, much of the dyspeptic distress of the patient, and restoring
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the healthful secretion of the stomach, liver, and intestines, improves the appetite, whence arises a more keen craving for nourishment; nature pointing out the resources for recruiting the frame, now greatly exhausted, and at the same time manifesting an improvement in the state of the organs destined to digest that nourishment.

Diseases of the liver have sometimes lasted for many years without suspicion; and in some instances, it was only after death that the existence of the disease was discovered: even abscesses and schirrhous enlargements of this organ, have been sometimes found after death, in persons in whom no liver disease was suspected during life. But though in such cases the patients might not have been impelled by any pressing distress through life to resort to medicine, it is not possible they could have enjoyed the comforts of sound and vigorous health. It is more than probable also that the state of the liver was not as carefully examined formerly, as within those late years, nor its diseases so often suspected, and consequently not so much the subject of medical enquiry.

The liver in some persons swells to a great size, unaccompanied by pain, and occassoning no other sensible inconvenience except that of hindering, by it pressure, a sufficient quantity of food from
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being conveyed into the stomach, which cannot now be properly expanded to receive it. The obvious consequences are, impaired appetite, emaciation and weakness; and yet persons in this state will linger on for many years; but as livers greatly enlarged are seldom or never cured, so soon as the increased size begins to appear, even though unattended by any other distress, we should, without delay, have resource to that method of cure, which experience recommends as the most effectual in removing hepatic disease.

In chronic hepatitis we often find, that after the mercurial ointment has produced sensible effects in the system, manifested by soreness of mouth and ptyalism, a sharp pain shoots through the seat of the liver, though there had been no pain previous to the exhibition of the mercury: in such cases a blister laid over the part affected soon dissipates the pain.

In hepatitis, erysipelas will seize upon different parts of the surface; sometimes it fixes on the leg or arm; sometimes it imperfectly encircles the trunk below the hypochondria, in the form called *zona ignea*, and it is then of the papular kind; and sometimes it appears in the form of a spreading vesicular inflammation on or about the face, neck, and head, attended with drowsiness and delirium, and threatening the substance of
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the brain itself. This species is highly dangerous, and not at all unusual; it requires immediate and brisk purging, and a sharp and large blister to be applied to the head, with the exception of the surface immediately inflamed. I met with a few instances of the latter and with two of the former kind of erysipelas in liver disease: should the pulse be hard and the inflammatory symptoms severe, we should bleed freely from the arm without delay, then purge very briskly with calomel and aloetic medicines, assisted, if necessary, with enemata or with strong purgative mixtures which operate speedily. Some inconvenience, it is true, might arise from bleeding under circumstances of weakness and relaxation; and particularly in chronic disease of the liver, which commonly has a tendency to terminate in dropsy: but it deserves to be remembered, that an erysipelas of the face or head is strongly disposed to spread internally, and to end in inflammation and suppuration of the brain, which must inevitably prove fatal, and which therefore must be the worst of all possible alternatives.

The schirrhous liver is always firmer than the liver in its healthy state, often abounds with hardened lumps or tubercles, and is generally much enlarged in size; but in some cases its healthy structure is altered without any morbidly increased bulk; and there are instances even of
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its size being found under the natural standard : sometimes there are ossified spots scattered over its surface, and there are cases of combined disease of the liver and lungs, in which the structure of the two organs is greatly altered together, and throughout full of tubercular concretions : abscesses of the lungs and liver likewise are met with in the same person ; and it may not be improper to observe, that it is in incorrigible drunkards those masses of disease in liver and lungs are mostly found to exist together.

ICTERUS or JAUNDICE.

The presence of jaundice is marked by the following symptoms : a deep yellow colour of the skin, of the nails, and of the whites of the eyes ; urine of a deep saffron colour, which it communicates to white paper, or white linen immersed in it ; clay coloured stools ; costiveness ; lassitude ; bad appetite ; a sensation of weight at the pit of the stomach, stretching along the sides, particularly the right side. These are accompanied by marks of dyspepsia or indigestion, such as flatulence ; rumbling noise in the belly ; sometimes griping pains ; bad taste of mouth ; sickness at stomach ; and frequently the patient is distressed by a troublesome incessant itchiness of the skin. There is sometimes pain felt in the right side, but most frequently the pain is absent altogether, and some-
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times it remits and returns again. The pulse is generally more feeble than the natural pulse, and somewhat quicker. In the advanced stages of the disease, the colour of the skin and of the whites of the eyes become more dark, and in some instances the skin acquires a livid hue ; the disease is then vulgarly called a black jaundice. In the advanced severity of the disease, the breathing becomes hurried ; there is often a troublesome palpitation of the heart, and a tightness felt at the pit of the stomach ; sleep is greatly interrupted or entirely banished ; and the patient sinks under the complaint, worn down by a wasting hectic fever, or by a fatal dropsy, a complaint in which jaundice, especially when neglected or maltreated, is apt to terminate. This is the progress of jaundice when it proceeds through its stages, without any favourable change either induced by an effort of nature, or occasioned by the interposition of medicine.

Instances however frequently occur, where jaundice will disappear even without the assistance of medicine, and return again, and thus proceed returning and spontaneously disappearing through a long course of years. Sometimes too, after being removed by the exhibition of medicines, it will again visit the patient.

CAUSES.

The causes of jaundice are such obstructions as prevent the passage of the bile into the intestines through the biliary ducts. Those diseases of the liver which interrupt or destroy the secretion of the liver, although accompanied by a bilious or sallow colour of the skin and complexion, yet do not occasion jaundice: it is necessary that the bile be actually secreted, and then taken up by the absorbents and conveyed into the circulating mass of fluids, in order to produce this complaint. The most frequent causes of jaundice are biliary calculi impacted in the ducts and thereby preventing the passage of the bile: schirrhous enlargement of the extremity of the pancreas pressing upon the common choledic duct is also sometimes a cause, as I have had an opportunity of observing in a patient who died of a combination of dropsy, jaundice, and schirrhous liver. There are other causes of jaundice enumerated, as spasms of the ducts causing temporary jaundice, and adhesions of the sides of the ducts, the sequela of preceding inflammation.

It is extremely probable that whilst the liver is in a sound state and its secretions healthy, biliary calculi are not formed; perhaps it may be affirmed with confidence, that the formation of biliary calculi is inconsistent with an healthy secretion in the
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the liver; that bile in a natural and pure state is always fluid in the gall-bladder; and that it is only when its secretion departs from its healthy qualities that biliary calculi or gall-stones are deposited: and as those gall-stones, by stopping the current of the bile through the ducts, are most frequently the cause of jaundice, it is pretty evident that we should endeavour to restore the healthy action of the liver, and secretion of the bile, as an important step towards the removal of the complaint.

CURE.

We are not acquainted with any remedy which has the power of restoring natural secretion, and particularly the secretion of the liver, as effectually as mercury; it is therefore the remedy chiefly to be relied on in jaundice. The best method of exhibiting mercury is in the form of ointment, of which a drachm may be rubbed every night to the hypochondria, until the mouth becomes affected: it is afterwards to be regulated as in cases of hepatitis or inflammation of the liver: but the same quantity of ointment which an inflammation of the liver requires, is seldom necessary in cases of jaundice. In consequence of the deficiency of bile in the alimentary canal, which might assist in stimulating the intestines to propel their contents, costiveness is a distressing

distressing occurrence, and therefore purgative medicines will be frequently required. The pills No. 3, consisting of calomel and aloe, are well suited to this state: should the pills operate slowly or imperfectly, the purgative mixture No. 4, or the electuary No. 5, may be taken in four or five hours after the exhibition of the pills, and repeated every two or three hours until they operate; two table-spoonfuls of the mixture, and a tea-spoonful of the electuary, are the doses to be taken at a time.

The deposition of calculous concretions in the gall bladder, as it forms the most common cause of jaundice, so it points out the necessity and advantage of using medicines possessed of resolvent qualities, which might be gradually communicated to the circulating mass of fluids, and thereby at length, to the secretions themselves. The alkalis are the remedies which have these properties in the highest degree, and which ought therefore constantly and regularly to be exhibited for a long time: such as the pills No. 35 and 37, particularly the former, and the alkaline solution No. 31.

Though it cannot be maintained that an alkali passes unchanged from the stomach to the liver, yet we must admit that it neutralizes the redundant acid of the alimentary canal, and thus destroys,

stroys, probably, one of the most prevalent causes of calculous concretion: with this view alone alkali is valuable in preventing the apposition of new matter to the calculus, or, in other words, in checking its growth: alkaline preparations also have the effect of acting as a cordial, and of improving appetite. It is a serious question how far the above method can dissolve the biliary concretions already formed, and thereby facilitate the removal of the obstructions, on the presence of which the disease depends. There cannot be a doubt that one of the most valuable steps is to restore the healthy secretion of the liver, which will prevent the generation and deposition of more gall-stones: the secreted bile will likewise by degrees acquire more alkaliescent and resolvent qualities, and thus probably soften and melt down those gall-stones, so as to make them subject to the action of the absorbents, whereby their bulk is reduced so far, as to facilitate their passage through the biliary ducts into the intestines.

Mercurial and alkaline medicines are the most powerful also in resolving those schirrhous enlargements, which, by their pressure, are sometimes the cause of jaundice.

Where the patient suffers from severe pain of the hypochondria, and from want of sleep, opiates are

are necessary, and must be given in doses proportioned to the severity of the pain. The draught, No. 14, is an agreeable form of an opiate; it might be given at bed-time, and repeated, if necessary, in an hour after; and even once again through the night if the pain still continues. If there is great sickness at stomach, the pills, No. 13, might be given in place of the draught, and repeated every hour until a mitigation of the symptoms is procured. With a view to relieve the pain, warm fomentations, and the warm sea-bath, may be resorted to; and if it should still continue, a blister to the part affected will be useful here, as well as in the internal pains of other hepatic diseases.

When the icterical symptoms are removed, and relaxation and weakness only remain, it will be proper to adopt those general methods of diet, air, and exercise, which are found proper in the convalescence from other hepatic disorders, viz. pure, dry country air; exercise in an open carriage, on foot, but most especially on horseback; digestible food, consisting of broths, jellies, milk, and when the stomach can bear it more generous diet, such as a moderate use of fresh meat, with a little wine.

A course of light bitter infusions, and of chalybeates, will assist to promote convalescence, and
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to restore health. Should irregularities in diet, or in the mode of living, have contributed to bring on the complaint, it will be particularly necessary to guard against those irregularities in future.

JAUNDICE OF INFANTS.

Jaundice sometimes occurs in infants, in consequence of the viscid meconium and bilious sordes retained in the bowels, parts of which are resorbed and mixed with the circulating mass of fluids. Here the obstruction is removed by exhibiting a purgative, to carry off the morbid contents: half a grain of calomel, with a tea-spoonful of castor-oil given in an hour after, will commonly produce this effect.

CHOLERA.

During the summer of last year, 1808, Cholera became epidemic in Dublin and its vicinity; continued to spread until the beginning of autumn; and did not disappear until after the cold weather had set in: but towards the end of autumn it became less frequent; its symptoms assumed a milder character, and approached nearer to the type of other diseases; not unfrequently to that of colic; sometimes to that of dysentery; and in some instances it resembled a bilious purging.

In many cases it was very sudden and severe; and where proper medical attendance could not