

warmed oats in bags to be laid upon the stomach and chilled feet, and subsequently two grains of liver of sulphur to be taken. I ordered a warm aromatic tea, as beverage, to relieve the spasms in the chest, and then prescribed,—

℞ *Decoct. althæ*, ʒvi;
Elix. acid. Hallens, ʒss. One table-spoonful to be taken every two hours.

“Profuse perspiration ensued, after two hours the patient changed his bed, and had clean linen; his skin was well rubbed with dry flannel; in eighteen hours he was out of danger, and is now in perfect health. I have rescued as many as four out of five by this mode of treatment.

“The most essential point is the proper medicine being administered without delay. Where severe colic takes place I give one table-spoonful of soap and water every half hour. There is no doubt that soap, liver of sulphur, oil of peppermint with ammonia, and, for the dysentery, the *tinct. opii*, with *ol. menth. pip.*, the *elix. acid. Hallens*, together with some trifling auxiliary means, are the most efficacious remedies.

“In case of violent determination of blood to the head two leeches may be applied to the septum of the nose.

“I give milk to many as beverage, but where the stomach will not digest this, substitute bilberry tea, *vaccinium myrtillus*, which is a refreshing acid. Ammonia is particularly effective against the vomiting.

“Large and too frequent doses of medicine are pernicious, and the intervals should be lengthened upon the first symptoms of improvement.

“Camphor, calomel, emetics, and baths, I have found ineffectual, and the *ol. menth.* far more beneficial than the *ol. cajeput.*

“JENCKEN, M.D.

“St. Petersburg.”

ACCOUNT OF A LATE
EXTRAORDINARY EPIDEMIC
IN STAFFORDSHIRE,

WITH CASES,

By R. AULSEBROOK, Esq., Surgeon.

At the latter end of June last, a very fatal epidemic appeared at Baddeley Green, (a village in the neighbourhood of the Potteries, in Staffordshire,) a report of which I beg respectfully to submit, through the medium of THE LANCET, for the consideration of the profession. It principally affected children and young people, ranging from the age of infancy to that of twenty-one years. Though its most striking symp-

toms marked it as one of the varieties of scarlatina, yet it was so unusually severe, and had, in some cases, so near a relationship to a species of cholera, that I should say it deserves the serious attention of every accurate pathologist in the profession. The reports of this malady arrested the attention of some of the best practitioners in the district of the potteries, one of whom, in particular, Mr. Spark, of Newcastle, accompanied me to the principal scene of its ravages, for the purpose of investigating the causes and the nature of its phenomena, and, after the most careful consideration which he could give, he was unable, as well as myself, to assign any cause for its short of a peculiar miasma in the atmosphere. A short provincial account was given in the *Staffordshire Mercury* paper, and had I not thought it better to wait for the opportunity of obtaining an autopsy or two after death, I should certainly have sent a full statement to THE LANCET ere this. It may not, however, at this period, be ill-timed to lay before its readers a report of some of the cases:—

At the latter end of June last, the whole of the children, sons and daughters, in number eight, of Richard Fallows, boatman, of Baddeley Green, became affected with an alarming disease. The eldest son, aged twenty-one, a daughter aged sixteen, and another thirteen, were taken ill on Saturday, the 24th of June. The eldest girl, early in the morning, with giddiness, great prostration of muscular strength, slight sore throat, and total loss of appetite. At 3 P.M. sickness and purging supervened, the vital powers became more depressed, and on Sunday at noon she died. Girl aged thirteen, taken Saturday afternoon in the same way; she survived the sister three hours. Samuel, the young man, taken also on the Saturday, complained very much of his throat, had a florid eruption all over the body, high fever, sickness and diarrhœa; he lived until Monday evening, when he also died. (This young man was attended by a country medical practitioner, who, however, it appears, confessed he did not know what to make of the disease.) Tuesday morning I was called in (then residing with a medical man at Burslem), I found the above-mentioned three dead in the house, and three others of the poor man's children ill; one, aged four, in an advanced state of scarlatina maligna; a boy, aged eleven, also having scarlatina maligna with tumid abdomen, soreness on pressure, sunken countenance, highly inflamed and ulcerated throat, sickness and diarrhœa. To him I ordered leeches in abundance to the throat externally, the body to be sponged with vinegar and water every half hour, fomentations to the belly, chloride of soda injection for the throat, and nitrous acid and

opium to take every hour; assiduously pursuing this method, he recovered. The child, aged four, died early next morning. William, aged nine, also had scarlatina, but not so virulently as the other. Many cases of a similar description were occurring up and down that and the adjacent village. A week now elapsed before any more of this family were taken ill. At the expiration of that time, another son, aged nineteen, was taken ill on the Wednesday morning at nine o'clock. When I arrived, (some time was unfortunately lost in sending to Burslem, a distance of five miles,) I found him lying on a sofa unable to sit up half a minute; pulse 130 and small; countenance depressed and anxious; a yellow-brown hue over the skin; slight pustular affection of the tonsils; quick and uneasy respiration; no eruption whatever upon the body. Nitrous acid and opium were given at short intervals, and diffusible stimuli administered; the pediluvium was also used. Ordered chicken-broth to be given to drink. Saw him again next morning at six; extremities becoming cold; a little delirium; a congested appearance about the neck and chest, flitting and returning; restless in bed; countenance blanched; pulse scarcely perceptible, intermitting; anticipating death, though not at all hurried at the apprehension. He lived an hour and a half from this, $22\frac{1}{2}$ hours being the term of his existence after the commencement of the attack; could not obtain a post-obit inspection here. In a few days another child, aged two years, was attacked with sickness and purging; congested state of the superficial veins about the neck and chest; excessive debility, ending in death in less than twenty-four hours. Medical aid was deferred in this case, from the state of the collapse into which the minds of the parents of these children had drooped from their accumulated griefs.

At Brown Edge, a village two miles distant from Baddeley Green, several died affected in a similar way, excepting that scarlatina maligna was more the decided character of the disease. The cases were, however, so bad that, from the ingress of the disease, death ensued in thirty-six hours; in some it went on to the forty-eighth hour. Was sent for to William Holdcrofts, Brown Edge, by Mr. Wildig, rector of Norton, clergyman of the parish, to go to make an examination after death in one case. When I arrived I found that the poor man had buried one child, and that two lay dead in the house. Took the girl, aged eleven, for examination. There was considerable ecchymosis about the front of the neck and chest. Made an incision from the glottis down to the pubis; examined the larynx and trachea and the thoracic and abdominal viscera. Upon cutting through the laryngeal

cartilages and opening the trachea, found the mucous membrane lining them having a highly injected appearance, and the posterior part of the larynx larded over with a yellowish-green matter. About an ounce and half of yellow puriform fluid in the trachea springing from out the bifurcations of the bronchi. The parenchyma of the lungs healthy; the pleura costalis adherent in some parts to the pleura pulmonalis (most likely the result of former inflammation); heart and pericardium natural; stomach appearing a little inflamed; duodenum deeply tintured on its external coat with green bile, which had exuded through the coats of the gall-bladder; gall-bladder of an exceedingly dark-green appearance; internal coat of the ileum having besmeared over it a preternatural quantity of mucus, and bearing rather an inflamed appearance. Two of the remaining children were now taken ill, but we were able to save them by prompt and decisive measures; applying leeches to the throat; chloride of soda injections into the fauces; internal exhibition of nitric acid and opium, and by the use of the hot bath. An infant was taken ill at the same house, but the medical directions with regard to it were not properly attended to, and it died. Many other cases occurred in that village from the age of twenty-one years down to five.

Though this was a more malignant scarlatina than I have seen described in any book, and though there was a great deal of biliary disease accompanying it, still, in most of the cases, it is, I think, right to class them under the worst form of scarlatina; yet in the case of the young man, aged nineteen, who had no eruption, nor any appearance of that disease, more than slight pustular affection of the tonsils, I do not know that it would be in accordance with a scientific view of his case to call it any thing short of cholera. Many bad cases of cholera occurred in a few weeks after at Burslem, and we found, in many instances, where the pulse was only occasionally to be faintly felt, the extremities cold, countenance deeply sunken, cramps of the limbs and alarming prostration of the vital powers, that by large doses of opium, the hot-bath almost to scalding, the carbonate of ammonia taken with lemon-juice in a state of effervescence, and mustard poultices applied to the stomach, the nearly-extinguished energies of life rallied from their state of exhaustion, and gradually recovered their wonted vigour. So successful was this plan of treatment, that out of more than twelve bad cases of absolute cholera, we did not lose one patient.

4, Portsmouth-street,
Lincoln's-inn-fields, London,
October 31, 1831.