On the value of medicines as remedies in the treatment of Insanity.

Having of late years devoted considerable attention to Insanity, I have selected its remedial treatment (principally in as far as medicines are concerned) as the subject of the following thesis; it not being my intention to enter minutely upon the various divisions of Insanity, as the following classification, employed by the Commissioners in Lunacy is now generally adopted through the country.

Classification

I. Mania
   1. Acute mania, or raging madness
   2. Ordinary mania, or chronic...
being less acute.

II. Periodical mania or remittent mania, with comparatively lucid intervals.

III. Dementia or decay and obliteraton of the intellectual faculties.

IV. Melancholia

IV. Monomania

V. Moral Insanity

VI. Congenital Idiocy

VII. Congenital Imbecility

VIII. General Paralysis of the Insane, Epilepsy, Delirium Tremens.

For practical purposes it is most important to divide cases of insanity into acute and chronic, the acute being most frequently...
seen in general practice, while the chronic are more usually received into the asylums, and come under the notice of those who specially treat the diseases now under consideration.

In acute cases it is universally admitted that therapeutic agents are of the greatest value, and that the more recent the attack the greater is the probability of a cure, but I shall endeavour to show that even in chronic cases much may be done by remedial agents to remove delusions, to allay excitement, and to procure sleep.

It cannot be doubted that while medicinal agents have been over-estimated by some, they have been greatly under-valued by others, and
And I account for this to a certain extent from the fact of a great number of proprietors of Lunatic Asylums not having been profess-

ually educated. They may be as they often are, highly respect-

table, but still they are too apt to depend solely upon moral
means, they do not look upon disease with a medical eye,
and consequently neither know when
or how to administer therapeutie
agents.

The insane patients brought under
my notice are very seldom in good
health. The secretions are generally
disordered, often most offensive. This
applying to the perspiration, the
urine, and the evacuations, the
Percutaneous membrane indeed often
appears to be specially affected. There is not unfrequently a dry state of the eyes, nose, and mouth, with heat, dryness and tension in the throat; the skin is either dry and harsh, or moist and relaxed; the damp hand being particularly observed in some few cases; and I am here induced to mention these deviations from a healthy state to show the necessity of their obtaining strict attention, for the very first questions put by the medical man to his patient have reference to the state of the secretions. Therefore, why should we, in treating either acute or chronic cases of insanity, deviate from so important a rule?

In my own experience I find purgatives to be of the greatest value
They act upon an extensive membrane and very much relieve congestion of the brain, so often found in insanity, and diaphoretics, diuretics and sometimes emetics are useful, such remedies tending in fact to restore the disordered functions to more natural actions.

In acute cases, general bleeding may be occasionally though rarely required, and even then only in small quantity, more for the purpose of relieving congestion than to produce depression. Of course I am not now speaking of a genuine case of Phrenitis, which must be treated antiphlogistically.
are more generally useful than venesection.

A succession of leeches is required when there is much action, and as is well known produces a very sympatric and composing effect; in second attacks I have often found a few leeches to the temples most beneficial.

Tartar emetic is another powerful means of checking arterial action in acute cases; it is very manageable, remarkably produces uniform effects and does not cause the permanent prostration so often seen when general bleeding has been employed. Many patients become rational under its effect, and the excitement and delusions returning in minute doses it not only quells arterial action but also produces moisture of the skin, and this perspiratory effort is often of
the greatest relief to the patient. Jantar- 
ometric when combined with opium in is often very valuable, and I consider that the extraordinary effect produced by their combination depends on their 
reminishing arterial action in quantity and power, as well as their calming and 
as it were numbing excesses of excitation. This leads me to notice the plan of treating many cases of insanity, both 
acute and chronic, by means of narcotics and sedatives, and I shall endeavor as briefly as possible to touch upon this 
subject. It is not only in Nigglenthal 
that these narcotics and stimulants are useful, but wherever there is increased 
arterial excitement produced by increased 
nerve irritability.

The most recent writer upon this subject*
has detailed several cases showing the importance of giving Morphine, with or without Antimonial or Digitalis, every four or six hours, and he appears to consider that it is the systematic exhibition which is so useful. Morphine was used in primary and secondary, and also in acute cases, as well as in some which had been of six and eight weeks duration. He observed "the delusions" vanish even after two or three doses, and again recur when the Morphine was omitted. He recommends small and repeated doses during the day to be increased at bedtime. Speaking of the theory of this action while testing on the specific effect of Digitalis, he says, page 273, "When exhibited with caution, Digitalis will be found most useful in reducing the number of the pulse, both in cases of irritation and..."
"More particularly of inflammation of the brain; in cases of inflammation generally, how effective is it, how valuable to be able to reduce the pulse in number and in power; instead of the inflamed and irritated organ or surface receiving its supply of blood with impetuous and forcible frequency, 120 times, per minute, we here possess the means of diminishing it immediately and of reducing its power. Let it not be thought I advocate its agency exclusively or alone, but can exhibited by itself it possesses this power, and when combined with antimony, and niter become stably efficacions" and when speaking of the action of Harveian, generally, he says, page 173 "It is well known that during sleep the heart's action is diminished, and thus the brain becomes
less stimulated owing to its supply of blood not being as forcibly or as frequently propelled through it, but this is only one of the advantages in procuring sleep, for when vigilance occurs, not only is the pulse more irritable and more frequent, but the nervous system itself, from prolonged and active thinking and overanxious attention, becomes deranged thereby doubly aggravating the mischief. This thus being increased arterial action, with nervous irritation, and these again mutually acting and reacting on each other, so that the hypnotic not only quiet arterial action, but also diminishes nervous irritation.”

This appears to be the point, the calming irritation, the diminishing arterial action while in acute ethemic cases a more
or less powerful antiphlogistic treatment is required, yet when there is want of power, the soothing and tonic treatment will be the more useful. From my own experience I am induced to place more confidence in the Sig. Opii Solution than in the preparations of Morphia so strongly recommended by various writers on insanity.

In chronic cases I depend more on smaller and more continued doses in some cases giving alternatives, in others chalybeates and tonics, procuring sleep when necessary by opium. Morphia or digitalis, or by the warm. tepid, or foot-bath.

Whenever the head is hot it must be kept cool by ice or by cold applications, however that the temperature taken care of is never depressed too much.
or the cold too long continued

counter instant I have found very useful both in acute and some chronic cases, and I either order mustard poultice to the nape of the neck, or in more severe cases a blister. where there was constipation arising from want of power and tone I have made trial of strychnia with success.

But in two cases I found that although it caused a daily action in the bowels, yet curious enough, it produced incontinence of urine. On withdrawing the strychnia the constipation returned, and the urine was properly retained, but when the strychnia was again given, the patient again suffered from incontinence, and these results occurred repeatedly.
from the Kidney, demands the
momentous investigation. I have before
noticed how offensive it often is in
cases of Insanity, and it is to its
proper and healthy elimination
that our remedies must often
be chiefly directed, and for this
purpose, astringents, diuretics, aper-
ients, alkalies and acids may
each prove specially useful.

Organic chemistry is being resol
onized, and the day is probably
not far distant when the reactions
will be found to afford more
informing tests of particular morbid
changes than we can at present
draw from them.

I have now endeavored to state the
result of my experience with regard
to the necessity of employing medicinal
agents in the cure of Insanity.
In practice I have occasionally found it impossible to administer such remedies in the usual manner, the patient obstinately refusing to take any medicine whatever. In such cases, I endeavor to effect the desired object by means of the enema, in which way bismuth, purgatives, turpentine and other agents may be thrown into the system, and occasionally I have applied belladonna by the endermic method.

In Italy and France medicinal baths are used, there is always some difficulty attending their employment and I believe fatal accidents have occasionally resulted but I have no personal experience of their use.

I recommended the following to be the proper way of treating such cases as those under consideration, when inflammatory action...
tends. Combat it by antiphlogistic measures.

When there is excessive irritability remove it by sedatives; when there is restlessness and vigilante narcothes, and the warm or tepid bath will often be successful in procuring sleep; when the secretions are disordered they must be duly regulated and improved by alterations, by purgatives, by diuretics, or by diaphoretics, as each may be more specially indicated; when there is want of power, this must be supplied by tonics, by stimulants, by a good diet, taking great care to afford pure air, and a proper proportion of exercise, sufficient to slightly fatigue but not to cause actual exhaustion. When the presence of other prodiges, excitement, irritation, or delusion, a temporary or more permanent exclusion.
is to be advised: These remedial measures with cheerful occupation, and a mild conciliatory, and yet firm moral discipline, constitute as I believe the rational plan of treating cases of insanity.

B. linen Horsley

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