

EDITORIAL NOTES

The past month has been a busy time for the medical profession and nurses in meeting the necessities of the great pandemic of influenza, which has been especially virulent in San Francisco and throughout California. While not differing essentially from previous visits of influenza, the present one unquestionably has given a greater proportion pneumonias and these of severe toxæmic type. So far, every physician is too busy to tabulate results of treatment, but one thing is certain, and that is the superiority of homœopathic medication over all other methods of pharmaco-therapy.

It seems to us that the homœopathic school, with very few exceptions, has missed its great opportunity afforded by the influenza epidemic in not calling attention more publicly through the daily press and to the people at large to the unquestionable value and superiority of homœopathic remedies in meeting all the medicinal requirements of the disease.

Would it not have been wise to follow the course of the older Homœopaths in former epidemics and recommend through the daily press the early use of the "epidemic" remedy, say Gelsemium, obtainable from any drug store in the neighborhood of the patient, with directions for its use until the arrival of a physician, which procedure alone, judging from previous experience in similar epidemics, would have been sufficient in most simple cases and the best first aid treatment in all cases. Such recommendation, in addition to the timely precautionary measures insisted upon by the authorities, by providing a really effective and simple treatment until a physician could attend, would have done much to forestall the hysterical state of fear that was so prevalent, which in itself offered an inviting field for the invasion of the disease. In this connection, it is a pleasure to call attention to the management of the epidemic in New York, where Dr. Copeland, the eminent Homœopathist, is the head of the Health Department, who made no violent changes in the daily life of the community, but restrained his department within sane lines and resisted the temptation to magnify his office to the vast an-

noyance of a great community. There are no greater or more inconsiderate autocratic rulers than medical men when given power over the habits and lives of a community, and we are proud of the record Dr. Copeland has made as expressed editorially in one of the leading New York papers:

“Dr. Copeland’s management of his department throughout the epidemic has been marked by good judgment and common sense. He has neglected no precaution which promised to protect the community, but he has set himself firmly against the schemes of panic breeders who would have used the well nigh unlimited powers of the Health Department in such a way as to produce unnecessary fear. The activities of the authorities headed by him have been ruled by reason. His urgent advice to all to use care in the conservation of their health and the upbuilding of their strength is well timed and well delivered, and by observing it those who have suffered from the epidemic will be speeding their recovery and laying the foundation of complete physical well being in the future.”

Dr. Copeland’s Apologia

The conservatism which refrained from a general closing of the schools and the theaters of New York City, at a time when the health authorities of many small municipalities in the Metropolitan section were taking a different course, has been widely criticized. It is fitting that Health Commissioner Dr. Royal S. Copeland should present his apologia in the form of a communication to the *New York Medical Journal*, thus appealing rather to science than to popular sentiment.

The closing of theaters could not have had logical justification unless department stores, offices, factories and restaurants were also shut down, unless the whole ordinary life and industry of our millions of citizens were to be paralyzed. As for the schools, keeping children off the street, submitting them to careful medical examination every day, using the daily opportunity to impress on their minds the sanitary way to security from the influenza, really appears to have justified itself. Mortality was much greater in children under school age than in older children.

On the whole, Dr. Copeland makes out a good case. The responsibility was his. He accepted it manfully. And when the entire scare has passed away we imagine New York City will be thankful to him for having refused to be panic-stricken, for having restrained his department within sane lines, for having resisted the temptation to magnify his office to the vast annoyance of a great community.

Homœopathy, as a specialty in therapeutics, has been in public evidence for over one hundred years. It is especially adapted to conditions like those prevailing at this time, when an epidemic does more harm and interferes with the community's life more seriously by the hysterical fear that is engendered than by its own baneful results. Homœopathy possesses a knowledge of medicines obtained by strictly scientific investigation, observation and experiment that can be utilized by every intelligent layman during an epidemic, and for the first signs of its invasion and in the hands of the qualified physician it offers the very best means of meeting all the most serious forms, such as pneumonia, where the death rate in all hospitals and institutions under homœopathic treatment has been markedly below that of any other treatment.

To fail at this time to boldly uphold this record, to fail by those in authority to make use of their power and influence in giving the laity the benefit of these unquestioned advantages is to be derelict of our plain duty and remiss in the loyalty to a beneficent cause that we have a right to expect. What right have we to claim for our school any consideration when in time of special need it fails to show up and claim its rightful position as the best known medicinal treatment of all forms of disease.

In a recent editorial in the *New England Medical Gazette*, on the Teaching of Pharmacology, that journal emphasizes what we always stood for, namely, the inadvisability of separating pharmacology into two practically distinct chairs, one

homœopathic and the other non-homœopathic. And the mischief is accentuated when it is left to the student to decide which he will take up to the exclusion of the other: "Homœopathy is merely one form of pharmaco-*therapy* and should, therefore, be taught as a part of it. In no other way can students gain a clear perspective of the limits of applicability and the relative merits of various modes of drug action.

"The majority of drugs have apparently two distinct expressions of their action upon the animal body; according to Arndt these are stimulation and depression. Both are due to the pathogenic or poisonous or, as Dr. Sutherland often expresses it, the sick-making power of drugs, the difference in effects being the result of difference in sizes of doses. Small (not necessarily minute) amounts stimulate; that is, their toxic action is not pronounced and is overshadowed by the reaction of the irritated cells; large doses, on the contrary, depress; that is, their powerful action overwhelms the cells, who are then incapable of reaction, and as a result the direct effects of the drug predominate in the symptomatic picture produced.

"So that merely by varying the dose of a drug we may produce two diametrically opposed symptom groups, an indirect cellular reaction and a direct drug action, but both ultimately due to the same sick-making power of the drug in question."

As an explanation of the "downward progress" of food and of the peculiarities of the intestinal activity, have led Dr. W. C. Alvarez, of the University of California Medical School, to emphasize the unlike irritability of different parts of the small intestine as a possible explanation. He is convinced from extensive comparative studies of the irritability, tone, latent period, susceptibility to anemia and toxins, reactions to drugs, etc., of segments from different parts of the intestine, that in the different regions there exist different muscles suited to different functions. In the latest researches, not only gradients of irritability and rhythmicity, but measurable

differences in metabolism have been demonstrated in the intestinal muscle from the duodenum to the colon. These gradients are believed to determine the direction of peristalsis. Thus the feces could not lie quietly in the cecum or colon if the muscle there were as active and as responsive to stimuli as they are in the duodenum.—*American Journal of Physiology*.

Here is an extract from a letter of a Philadelphia physician of large experience and practice: "And then, old, reliable Homœopathy, rigid abstention from alluring yet truculent palliatives, is the sole cause of my enviable good fortune. Indubitably, many deaths, especially in the fold of the old school medicos, are due to the smug, ultra-scientific vaccines and anodynes, and divers nostrums, befuddling the sanity of the 'moderns.' *Pax vobiscum* to their lamentable myopia! And ineffable gratitude to the shade and memory of our master—Hahnemann."

PROTECTION AGAINST BRONCHIAL INFLAMMATIONS

With many, cod liver oil offers a certain degree of protection against the bronchial inflammations of cold and changeable weather, and when we recall that it not only increases bodily resistance, but exerts a definitely selective action on the bronchial mucosa, the reason for its value as a protecting agent against bronchial inflammations becomes quite obvious. An objection that obtains with plain cod liver oil, its lack of palatability, cannot be held against Cord. Ext. Ol. Morrhuæ Comp. (Hagee), a fact that gives this cordial the greatest popularity among experienced clinicians. Cord. Ext. Ol. Morrhuæ Comp. (Hagee) contains every virtue that the plain oil has, and furthermore, is palatable and well tolerated over long periods. It may be given indefinitely without causing any distress to the patient. Give it to those of your patients who are subject to bronchial inflammations, and help them escape these winter evils.