

## LA GRIPPE."

The New York World of April 5th contains the following interesting and sensible communication from a physician of learning and repute:

As a rule I do not believe in giving medical matters to the press, but in this case, involving as it does the interest and welfare of the community at large, I do not hesitate to give the desired information; in fact, I consider it my duty to do so.

The disease which was so epidemic in the Eastern cities last winter, and has so much increased the death rate in Chicago and Pittsburg in particularly this year, is not what is described and known as "influenza" or "la grippe," but is a disease of the nervous system which effects that part of the human organism primarily and quickly spreads to other organs, particularly the mucous membranes throughout the body.

I have observed the peculiarities of this hitherto unknown affection for over five years, and have noted its widespread geographical distribution in this country, having received answers to inquiries made as to its presence simultaneously from the most eastern part of Maine; from Brownsville, Texas; from Tampa, Fla., and from Seattle, Wash.

The first publication of the peculiarities of this malady was made by me through an interview published April 1st, 1889. Not knowing the causation and character of the disease, I called it "it," and still prefer this appellation to the misleading names "grippe" and "influenza."

I then read a paper before the American Medical Association at Newport, on June 27, 1889, giving all the symptoms, peculiarities and vagaries of the disease, as well as the specific treatment which still is not surpassed by any other at the present time.

This paper was published in the *Medical and Surgical Reporter*, Aug. 9, 1880. Another paper published in the same medical journal in January, 1890, gives the symptoms of "it" as compared with the different diseases for which it might be, and frequently has been, mistaken. In that paper I again reiterate the specific action of "benzoate of soda" in alleviating promptly all the symptoms better than any other drug that has ever been administered.

The symptoms as outlined in the article in the *Medical and Surgical Reporter* and its vagaries are: That "it" may closely resemble typhoid fever, pneumonia, diphtheria, aggravated dyspepsia, spinal meningitis, inflammation of the brain, measles, scarlet fever, various skin diseases (such as eczema, hives, lichen, &c.), nervous prostration, auricular rheumatism and a number of other afflictions too numerous to mention.

"It" is, however, easily recognized by the fact that no matter what the other symptoms may be, the symptoms I have described, namely, low pulse rate, high temperature between 2 and 3 a. m., a lightly coated but moist tongue, absence of thirst, and more or less profuse perspiration called forth by the slightest mental or physical exertion, are present. Furthermore, the specific remedy above mentioned, that is, benzoate of soda,

will, if "it" is the cause of the symptoms, promptly lower the temperature and relieve the pain, while if other diseases are the cause of the trouble the benzoate of soda, although perfectly harmless, will have no effect whatever.

The disease is not self-limited; that is, the patient does not get well if let alone or erroneously treated, but the disease becomes chronic and may last for years. "It" closely resembles a state of the system commonly called malaria, for want of erudition on the part of the physician or from prejudice or through superstition of the laity, inasmuch as the symptoms are chilliness, alternating with flashes of heat, nervousness, loss of appetite, indefinite pains generally described as headache but often in the limbs and back, loss of memory, dulness of intellect and, what is more characteristic than anything else, almost complete loss of ambition.

I have frequently seen cases in which this chronic form of "it" has produced insanity, temporary or permanent, also paralysis, muscular weakness of either the upper or lower limbs, and finally death from heart failure.

Post-mortem examinations have shown that in the more chronic cases all the organs which are of vital importance, such as the mucous membranes throughout the body, the liver and spleen, the pancreas, the brain and the heart are affected and diseased except the kidneys, and it is this fact which prompted Dr. Glasgow, of St. Louis, as well as myself to employ the benzoate of soda and other diuretics together with heart stimulants, in the form of alcohol, whether it be brandy, whiskey or any other remedy of that class, to combat this disease, and the results which are truly marvelous to behold.

As to the causation of the disease, careful investigation at the pathological laboratory of the University of Pennsylvania, the laboratory of the Army Medical Museum in Washington, my own private laboratory, as well as other laboratories, has failed absolutely to discover and demonstrate beyond doubt any specific germ or micro-organism which might be looked upon as the cause or even the direct incentive to the epidemic.

The alleged discovery of the bacillus by a Chicago physician in view of the above statement of facts is evidently an error of judgment. Like yellow fever, we are compelled to look upon "it" as a disease due to a chemical poison produced without the body and introduced into the system by the air inhaled or the food and water taken in; but what produces this poison, which, no doubt, is a ptomaine, is as yet unknown.

This, however, is an indubitable fact borne out by the experience of many excellent and reputable physicians all over the country that "benzoate of soda," given in ten-grain doses every two hours, alcohol in one-half-ounce doses every four hours and absolute rest will cure without further medication a case of "it" in its acute form, in from forty-eight hours to three days.

An addition of such diuretics as buchu and sweet spirits of nitre, together with alcohol in one-half ounce doses three or four times a day, will speedily bring about a recovery in the chronic cases. Inasmuch as the

heart is weakened by the effect of the poison upon the nerve centres, all drugs having a tendency to depress the heart's action should be avoided, particularly those new remedies, such as antipyrine, antifebrine, phenacetine and other like derivatives of coal tar distillation, the physiological action of which we as yet but half understand. In like manner should other well-known antipyretics, and particularly quinine, not be given, as they invariably decrease the comfort of the patient, lower the temperature but very little and prolong the duration of the attack.

CARL SEILER, M. D.

## THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

The regular weekly session of the Board of Education was held April 9th, President Scott in the chair. The members present were Messrs. Young, Duke, Nelson, Newman, Pike and Colbath.

## PROPOSITION TO LEASE.

H. W. Whitney submitted a proposition to lease a building on Eighth West Street to the board for educational purposes at a rental of \$100 per month. Committee on sites.

## BAD POLICY AND A WASTE OF MONEY.

P. L. Williams, legal adviser for the board, submitted the following in regard to the proposed purchase of a building site in School District No. 1:

I return herewith papers left me in relation to the purchase by the school district from the ecclesiastical authorities of the First ward of certain school property. I see from the correspondence accompanying that the ecclesiastical authorities, through Joseph Warburton, have declined to carry out the proposed sale by them and purchase by the board. I have looked over the minutes of the meeting and it appears in those minutes that one of the trustees at a school meeting, in behalf of the board of trustees, read a statement, in which he stated a proposition offering to sell the ground specified for the sum of \$6,000. After discussion and the voting of a tax, I find, however, that a motion was made and adopted authorizing the trustees to negotiate with the ward authorities for the purchase; so it seems that something more was considered to be necessary than the mere acceptance of the proposition. The oral agreement was not to sell to Salt Lake City school district, but to the school district of the First Ward, so that if a valid contract had been entered into and executed it would be a question of uncertainty as to whether Salt Lake City school district could enforce it. I am of the opinion that an effort to enforce this contract would be futile and that it would be bad policy and a waste of money to attempt to procure a decree of the court for the specific performance of this contract, if indeed there ever was a contract consummated between the ecclesiastical authorities and the trustees of the First Ward.

PARLEY L. WILLIAMS.

## Committee on sites and buildings.

It was moved and carried that the clerk of the Board certify to the County Clerk the result of the recent school bond election.

Mr. Pyper stated that a proposition had been made to him for the sale of lot 3, in block 11, plat B, for \$9000. This property was adjacent to the First Ward site and would practically be worth as much to the Board. Committee on sites.

The Board then adjourned until Thursday evening, April 23rd.