

CASE I.

A CACHEXY.

Saturday, September 21, 1737.

GENTLEMEN,

YOU see this patient who is now aged 66 years, and labours under a *Cachexy*, or ill habit of body.

IN the first part of his life * he served as a common soldier in the troops, and afterwards gained his living by spinning of wool. He has been attacked with acute distempers, and had formerly a tertian ague which was then epidemical, and afterwards fell into a *Cacochymie* which brought on that species of dropsy called *Leucophlegmatia*: Of all these complaints however he got pretty well recovered. His temperament for a man is but weak, inclining to the *Atra-*

* These histories are an abridgement of the public lectures the doctor gave in the hospital to the students, after examining the patient and inquiring into the symptoms of the disorder.

biliaris;

biliarian ; this feebleness has been much increased from age and his former dropsy ; his strength however is not as yet intirely decayed. The present situation of his body is accounted a bad sign, for lying on the back denotes a weakness. His appetite is extremely little, and the fibres of the stomach and intestines so very weak, that all the food he takes passes through him unchanged, in the same manner as in a *Lientery**. He has a great drought, and no sooner drinks than it passes quickly through the intestine. Hence we may learn the reason, why the dropsy is not increased, nor any considerable swelling in his belly. The organs for preparing the *Chyle* and *Bile* are weakened ; hence the *Bile* itself is not sufficiently strong, and the fibres are relaxed. His pulse is very low, but pretty equal. He breaths freely, and when he sleeps, it is not attended with any noise or snoring. His tongue is very smooth ; no bad taste in the mouth, and a pretty moderate heat even down to the extremities. The *Foeces Alvi* smell. His urine is not high coloured nor rank ; when shaken, like a *Saponaceous* mixture, it keeps the froth. There is nothing swimming in it, nor has it a bad smell.

* *Liennery* is a flux, wherein the aliment is discharged crude and indigested.

WHAT he has brought up by spitting, has likewise no offensive smell; there is no *Pus* nor *bilious* matter in it, but is white, thick and insipid. Hence it is plain, that this spittle is a meer collection from his weak lungs, which have been much fatigued to bring this matter up, and are now unable to throw it off, whence it gathers here, and becomes more digested and thick, till at last he is so much oppressed with it, that he employs the strength of all the *Thorax* to get rid of it. The animal functions are in a pretty good state, except that he is slow and unable for muscular motion.

THUS, gentlemen, I have given you, what is sufficient for forming the indications. For eating; biscuit, fresh flesh roasted and well seasoned, are proper; and now and then a glass of wine. But in place of these, all dry mealy grains, boiled barley, &c. serve the poorer sort. The best drink in this case is *Brunswick Mum*, and were our Patient in easy circumstances, a rough *Grecian Wine* and marmalade of quinces might be given to great advantage. The stimulating class of medicines is likewise indicated, such as spices, &c. The cure then ought to be attempted, first by a gentle purge, and then the cough must be allayed by opiates, and lastly, the solids must be strengthened
and

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and the humours corrected; all which we will endeavour to do by the following remedies.

The P U R G E.

R. Rhei gr. xl.
Scammon. gr. iv.
Lap. Cancror. scrup. i.
Syrup. Rosar. Solutiv. drach ij.
Contritis accuratissime admisce
Aquæ stillat. Sambuc. unc. i. fs.

Mix all these together for a purgative draught, to be taken at six a clock to morrow morning.

The P A R E G O R I C K D R A U G H T.

R. Aq. stillat. Cortic. Aufrant.
Meliss. ana unc. j.
Aq. stomach. drach. fs.
Opii puriss. gr. j.

Mix all these carefully together and let it be taken at once, ten hours after the purging draught.

The C O R D I A L, S T O M A C H I C K W I N E.

R. Cortic. Cinnamom. unc. fs.
Winteran. drach. ij.
Radic. Helenij
Imperator. ana drach. vj.
Semin. Angelic.
Cardamom. Min. ana drach. v.

With these ingredients and three pints of white French wine, let there be prepared S. A. a medicinal wine. The patient is to drink of it on Monday, one ounce four times a day.

Wednesday,

Wednesday, March 25. You perceive, gentlemen, a change in the symptoms much to the better; he has now acquired more strength, his tongue has a better colour and is become moist. He sleeps better, and is not so much disturbed by the cough. His appetite is likewise somewhat mended; the water he now makes, keeps the froth less than formerly, though still it be faulty in this respect. The *Phlegm* which at last visit, was white, thick and insipid, is now become thinner and more fluid. The cough proceeds from a thick matter flowing from the *Lungs*, which are very weak. He has a pretty equal heat over all the body. The flux or *Lientery* still remains, for which we must use warm and narcotic draughts. His stomach is extremely weak; so we will order a plaster for it. With regard to the diet, the indications are the same as formerly.

Take plaster of Oxyeroceum, what suffices. Spread it on leather for a stomach plaster, and let it be immediately applied.

R. Aq. stillat. Fœnicul.

Menthae ana unc. ij.

Syr. Pap. alb. unc. j.

Opii puri gr. iij.

Mix all these together. He is to take one fourth part of it every morning, at seven a Clock.

September,

September 28th. THIS patient is fatigued with the smallest motion, and lies as if he were dead. The two chief symptoms we remarked last time, were the weakness which still remained and the *Lientery*. The solids therefore were to be restored to their tone as much as possible, and the *Juices* defended from putrefaction. He took the remedies then prescribed, but was worse afterwards, and the day before yesterday was so low that he seemed to be nigh his end. I ordered some such thing as follows, *viz.*

R. *Aq. stillat. Mentb.* unc. v.

Lapid. Cancror. drach. iij.

Laudan. puri gr. iij.

Mix altogether, and let him take one spoonful every two hours.

MY design in this was in some measure to stop the flux. He has had no stool these last thirty hours. He has now a little recovered his strength, but brought up again his last medicines. The *Diagnosis* remains the same, except that there now appears to be an extreme relaxation in the intestines. He found himself better after taking the *Opiate*, but now complains of a *Vertigo* which symptom proceeds from the *Opium*, and can scarcely be prevented.

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R. *Ol. Stillat. Cortic. Aurant,* gtt. vi.
Sacchar. drach. fs.

M. f. s. a *Elaeo saccharum,* cui admisce
Mastiches, Tburis ana drach. j.
Succi Acaciæ inspissat. drach. iij.
Tartar. puriss. drach. j.
Conserv. Rosar. rubr. unc. fs.
Syrup. Myrtin. q. s.

Mix all these together into an electuary, of which he is to take half a drachm every three hours, with one spoonful of the following mixture.

R. *Aq. stillat. Fœnicul.* unc. v.
Opii puri gr. iij.

Mix them together, for a vehicle.

October, 2. *WE* found at last visit, this patient's stomach so weak, that it could not bear the force of the medicines then prescribed, for he had no sooner taken them, than he vomited them all up. This symptom still continues, his pulse is at present very low; the flux is diminished. I am of opinion that we must keep by the first *Diagnosis*, and may try if a little wine and aromatics will not do service. We shall therefore take our *Stomachic Water*.

R. Aq.

R. *Aq. Stomach.*

Spir. Matricar. Burrhi ana unc. fs.

Mix them together: and let him take thirty drops four times a day, in an ounce of white French wine.

This is a very grateful mixture, and at the same time strengthening.

October, 5.

WE mentioned last time, that this patient had vomited up all he had taken; thence we inferred the great decay of his natural strength, and the fear of giving way under the *Atrophy* peculiar to old age. The pulse is still so low, as hardly to be felt; hence it is plain that the juices are not recruited by any thing he eats or drinks, so as to fill the vessels. The cough is rather increased and freer; the *Lientery* and vomiting are diminished; his strength is very much spent. We shall continue the last prescriptions and stomachic plaster. When the cold weather comes on, his weakness will then very much increase, the flux likewise grow worse, and so he will make his *exit*.—This was my opinion from the beginning.

October 9.

The natural functions are at this time in a much better condition than formerly, and his stomach can now bear, and in some measure digest what it receives. He has only had two stools these last twenty four hours, which

which is a sure sign that his stomach and intestines have recovered a little more strength. His muscular motion is somewhat brisker, and he breaths easily. The cough likewise is freer and without stress, which formerly was very weakning. There is an equal heat over all the body, quite down to the feet. The pulse is at present so low, that ye ought to feel it; this signifies the small quantity of blood in the vessels, and a proportionable strength, for there is hardly enough to raise the arteries. Hence the same *Diagnosis* still takes place, *viz.* that the vital force is not sufficiently recovered: and the *Prognosis* must be, that as long as he continues thus weakned by old age, the bad state of the juices and solids, his forces must intirely give way on the approach of winter, unless they be supported with a recruit of new humours. We must therefore indeavour to repair his strength as much as may be by proper food, which he must take in small quantities at a time, else he could not digest it. But as there is so very little blood in the arteries, there is danger of the *Nervous Liquids* failing. Physicians use much to observe this symptom, which is a sign of approaching death; from it proceed, dimness of the eyes, and suffusions; but this has not as yet happened, and he keeps in his senses. His constant waking is now likewise gone off. The in-

dications “ we formed last time, were, to strength-
 “ en the *primae viae**, to comfort his stomach
 “ by a plaster, and give such food as is easily di-
 “ gested with a little wine, in which aromatics
 “ and some distilled waters were infused.” By
 means of which he is at present better, and so
 we’ll repeat the last mixture for the same pur-
 pose.

October 12. This patient’s case is truly
 surprizing, as now almost the chief symptoms are
 relieved; for his appetite is returned, his di-
 gestion is good, and he retains what he eats the
 due time. Thus by *Nature* assisted with *Art*, we
 have removed all the chief complaints. The prin-
 cipal of these was the *Cough*, which proceeded
 from a collection of heavy matter lodged in the
Lungs, which were so weak as not to expecto-
 rate nor cast it off. The force of the blood is
 still so weak, as hardly to be felt, nor does it
 increase on respiration; if he closes his fist (which
 generally accelerates the motion of the blood)
 it is even then scarce sensible. Hence every cir-
 cumstance is much mended, save the circulation
 of the blood, which must be imputed to the pre-
 sent ease and inactivity of the patient. Could he
 afford it, it would be extremely proper, gently

* The stomach and intestinal tube.

to shake and exercise his body, with riding on horseback or in a chaise. But as his low circumstances do not admit of this remedy, we will substitute *Friction* in its place. Let then all about his stomach and belly be well rubbed over, with coarse, warm, dry *Flannel*. Says *Hippocrates*, *the part you would nourish, must be moved*; for motion produces heat, which attracts nourishment to the part; and for this purpose nothing is more serviceable than *Friction*, so we recommend it. He ought to indulge in sleeping, and his drink should be strong, with some pure generous wine. The present fine weather and heat of the bed has wonderfully restored him. We ought then to continue the same prescriptions. His tongue which at first was red, smooth and dry, is now moist, and turgid with it's *Papillae*.

October 16. I visited this patient yesterday, and could then find the blood returned into the arteries. Ye remember, the pulse was so low as scarce to be felt, but is now pretty strong. He breaths easily and the expectoration is not considerable. The natural heat is equal and as it should be. The tongue has lost its smoothness, and is moist. His urine is now more inclining to a straw-colour; a sign that the natural *Forces* are increased. Thus, ye see gentlemen, this poor man though exhausted to the last degree, is sur-

prisingly recovered, and we have got the better of the bad symptoms, the flux, decay of strength, &c. From the description I at first gave of this case, we can promise, that the patient *may possibly* regain as much strength, as is to be expected from a constitution so much broken with old age, and severe sickness; for there is not the least ground to hope for a renewal of his age or total recovery of his strength, especially at this present time of the year. Let the last mixture, be again ordered for the same intentions.

October 19. THE patient still continues better, and the several functions are now stronger; hence we will renew the last prescription.

October 26. HE was worse t'other day; and whenever it freezes, there must be a considerable alteration in his condition. The principal concern at present, is to fortify his body against the cold; by what remedies, must this be done? where there is no drought, heat or fever, or a putrid *Alcalescency*, there are none more proper than *Antiscorbutics*. Hence,

R. *Vin. Gall. alb. unc. viij.*

Elixir. Proprietat. drach. ij.

Spir. Carminat. Sylv.

Cochlear. ana unc. fs.

M.

Of this mixture, he is to take on an empty stomach, one spoonful thrice a day, viz. an hour before breakfast, dinner and supper.

October

October 30. WE could not look for better health in so aged a body; the appetite and digestion are good, and if you ask himself, he says *he is perfectly well.* Ye have here in truth a proof of the power of medicines; for we have removed all the bad symptoms.

November 6. THIS poor man did not take our last prescriptions but three or four times, and was tolerably well so long as the weather continued mild and warm; the only care then, was to defend his body against the cold; *but now he falls back.* This is a proper time, gentlemen, to observe *the influence of the weather* on the human body, after the example of our *great master Hippocrates*, especially as it is most manifest when old age and distempers have preceeded.—If the frost continues, this patient must in a few days come to his end. A proper diet, which is cordial and gently exciting is here required.—But if too much, must be improper, as the cough would thence grow worse.—Likewise too watery diet and medicines are here forbidden, as he formerly had a *Dropsy.* Hence we shall order what is mild and gentle.

R. Aq.

℞. *Aq. menth.* unc. iv.
Sp. Carminat. Sylv. unc. j.
Syrup. Papav. Alb. unc. ij.
Tinct. Croci
Succin ana drach. j.

M.

Let him take half an ounce of this mixture, every three hours.

THIS remedy can only be useful from its gentle stimulating virtue, and by allaying the cough.

AFTER three days, the patient died in a very easy manner.

HISTORY