

teenth year. The patient then began to turn to native medicines, and she was placed under the treatment of a native female, who promised to effect a radical cure in a short time. The lady doctor waited till the next catamenial period came round, and on the first day of its appearance she administered a nostrum, composed of a certain root with black pepper, made into the consistency of syrup by the addition of water. This medicine was repeated every morning for seven days, and during this time the patient's monthly pain decreased. The doctress dogmatically asserted that her patient would not only be cured of her dysmenorrhœa, but would speedily conceive and bring forth a child. This prophecy was made in the month of June, 1869. The following month, at the expected menstrual period, no menses made their appearance, and consequently no pains occurred. The second, third, and fourth months passed away without catamenia, and gradually, by the sixth and seventh months, no doubts were left as to the patient being *enciente*. In due time, and to the joy of the whole family, she gave birth to a healthy female child.

This marvellous cure of dysmenorrhœa, followed by conception, induced me to ascertain the nature of the plant, the root of which was endowed with such singular virtues; and I was successful in my attempt, though with no considerable amount of personal sacrifice.

Olutkombol (*Abroma Augustum*) belongs to the natural order *Bythneriaceæ*. It grows to be a handsome small tree, having simple alternate palmately divided hairy leaves, and beautiful showy purple flowers, drooping on long peduncles; sepals five, united at the base, having an epicalyx; petals, same in number as sepals. Stamens not columnar, and united to the claws of the petals; two celled introrse anthers and smooth pollen. Fruit is a capsule, composed of a few carpels, containing numerous black seeds; bark tough and fibrous; roots slender, and numerous branched. It is a tropical plant, and abounds in various parts of India. The officinal part of the plant is the root. The roots are covered with thick easily separable bark; within the bark is a thick viscid, tenacious, white fluid, which seems to be the active principle.

*Use.*—When administered during the menstrual period, the patient, if suffering from dysmenorrhœa, is relieved from the pain, and usually no catamenia appears during the following month, consequently there is no recurrence of pain. Sometimes the menses do appear on the next catamenial period, but are not attended with pain. In young married women, the cessation of the menses, and consequent non-occurrence of pain, are followed by conception. When one administration of the drug fails, it should be repeated; young women under twenty years of age seem to be specially benefitted by its use. The curative action of this medicine is seldom ineffectual in the neuralgic and congestive forms of dysmenorrhœa, or the modifications of both these forms; but it is of no use in the mechanical form of the disease. Slender fresh roots, from the size of a swan-quill downwards, should be preferred. ʒss to ʒii of the root should be well rubbed up with eight or nine black peppers in a little water, and should be taken in the morning on an empty stomach. This dose should be repeated for seven days successively, commencing from two days before the appearance of the menses, and continuing until two days after their cessation, that is to say, two days before the appearance of the menses, three days during the flow, and two days after their cessation, making altogether seven days. In case of missing the two premenstrual days, the medicine can be taken on the first day of the appearance of the menses, and continued for seven days, with equally good results.

*Remarks.*—Having employed this drug now for some twelve years in upwards of five hundred cases, with the most beneficial results, I feel it my duty to bring it to the notice of the profession, and, if possible, to secure for it a place in the *Materia Medica*.

#### A FEW REMARKS ON THE CAUSES OF "INSOLATIO OR HEAT APOPLEXY," WITH THE LINE OF TREATMENT INDICATED.

By Assistant Surgeon JOHN CANDY, M.D., 109th Regiment.

In the following remarks, I shall endeavour briefly to explain my views in connection with this terribly fatal disease in this climate. My observations have led me to attribute the attack in most instances to the following *predisposing causes*, viz. :—

1st.—A peculiar dry and rarified state of the atmosphere, connected with an increase of "positive electricity," which affects most persons prejudicially, inducing headache and an irritable restless condition.

2nd.—An impure or vitiated atmosphere from defective ventilation.

3rd.—Exhaustion, with depression of the nervous system, consequent on excessive fatigue from prolonged physical exertions.

4th.—Intemperance—which is undoubtedly a very frequent predisposing cause in the army—during the hot months, as the men are in most stations confined to barracks from 8 or 9 o'clock (a.m.) until 4 or 5 p.m., and many pass away this interval in drinking and sleep.

5th.—A constipated condition of the bowels, caused by an insufficient supply of vegetables with the men's rations, and also by a want of proper out of door exercise.

What are the immediate or *exciting causes* of this disease, which in my opinion (and that of many others who have written on this subject) is identical with "ardent, continued fever?" The chief *exciting causes* are—(a) exposure to the direct rays of the sun, without sufficient protection to the head; (b) exposure in barracks, or hospital, to a high temperature, where the thermometer ranges from 98° to 105°, with a dry and suffocating atmosphere, from the prevalence of hot land winds.

Some writers of late, amongst others Mr. J. F. Foster, 36th Regiment (*vide Indian Medical Gazette*, October 1st, 1868), have broached the theory that *insolatio* is a *zymotic disease*; that is to say, that it is produced not merely by heat *per se*, but that it owns, in similarity with other zymotic diseases, a specific poison, or miasm, for its source. Doubtless, there are many who coincide with this view, so ably advocated by Mr. Foster in his paper referred to above; but, for my own part, I rest satisfied that the disease is attributable solely to the effects of increased temperature, or "solar excitation." The dry, parched condition of the skin in all cases, together with the enormously increased temperature of the body dependent upon the accumulation of carbon in the system, sufficiently account, to my mind, for all the dangerous symptoms, resulting from the outlet or "safety valve" to the system, being impaired—plainly indicating the line of treatment to be steadily pursued.

The treatment which I would suggest, as indicated by the symptoms and pathology of the disease, is—1st, to relieve the congested condition of the heart and lungs, by free venesection to 20 ozs., or more if necessary; 2nd, to get the skin to act freely by the use of tartar emetic in full doses, combined with the liquor ammoniac: given frequently. If the patient is insensible, it is advisable to have a stream of cold water poured over the top of the head from a height of two or three feet, and to envelop the body with a wet sheet, to help to reduce the temperature, and to promote diaphoresis. The sheet often requires wetting two or three times before the temperature is reduced to 96°. The after-treatment must be left to the discretion of the medical attendant.

DELHI: March, 1872.

**Dengue** according to the *Observer* attacks cows. We have been assured by a professional friend that he has seen the disease affecting the horse. Our contemporary wishes that the epidemic would extend to the Calcutta cows!