

FEVER, SIMPLE (THE INTERMITTENT TYPE- AGUE).

This disease is known as ague, intermittent fever, chill fever, etc. It also includes dumb ague.

There are three forms of this disease, viz.

Every-day ague, or Quotidian Type;

Every-other-day ague, or Tertian Type;

Every-fourth-day ague, or Quartan Type.

Cause. — Ague may be caused by any of the general causes of fever, which see.

Symptoms.—This fever may be readily distinguished from all other forms of fever by the fact that the paroxysms, which are characterized by hot, cold, and sweating stages, occur in regular succession, the cold stage varying from thirty minutes to four hours. This stage is gradually succeeded by the hot stage, in which the surface of the body becomes dry, and intensely hot. The mouth is parched, there is excessive thirst, bounding pulse, painful sensation of fullness in the head, general uneasiness, and frequently there is delirium. The hot stage, which is seldom of less than two or three,

nor more than ten or twelve, hours' duration, is followed by the sweating stage in which the whole body generally participates.

The pulse and breathing become natural, and the patient soon feels quite well, and so continues until the next day, in every-day ague, or until the third or fourth day, in the tertian or quartan form of the disease, when he again passes through the paroxysm. These paroxysms generally return at about the same hour of the day. In some cases, however, they make their appearance an hour or so earlier each day; in others, an hour later.

Like all other forms of fever, there is in this disease a tendency to terminate favorably, without the interference of art; but it is a slow disease, and in very many instances, the patient feels completely worn out before the termination.

Treatment.—If the case is a recent one, and the patient's vitality is not much lowered, it is easily managed. The bowels should be freed with enemas, and the stomach with warm-water emetics. When the chill is expected, the patient should go to bed, cover up warm, with a hot jug or hot brick to his feet, and a bag of hot sand to his back, and a cold wet cloth to his head if it aches. He should drink a glass or two of hot water during the cold stage. As soon as the hot stage comes on, or soon after, the patient should be placed in a warm wet-sheet-pack, in which he may lie from thirty to sixty

minutes, having a cold wet cloth on his head. Some prefer the cold pack when the fever is on, but the temperature is immaterial, for the cold pack immediately becomes warm. The patient should be allowed to drink freely of cold water or of lemonade. On the day during which the chill does not occur, he should take either the hot full-bath, sitz-bath, vapor-bath, or hot-air-bath—it is immaterial which—and immediately following this, the sponge-bath or cool dripping-sheet.

If the case is of long standing, or if the patient's vitality be low, the hot full-bath should not be administered oftener than once a week; the warm sitz and foot-bath should take its place on other days. In chronic cases, the liver, or spleen, or both, are torpid or congested, and to induce action in them, the wet-girdle should be worn most of the time. See description in Part III. Rest from all care and labor is essential to recovery. If hard water is used for drink it must be discontinued and soft water substituted.

In this disease it will be necessary to provide the patient with a nourishing diet, which may include any of the articles mentioned under the head of Diet for the Sick.