

ORIGINAL DEPARTMENT.

COMMUNICATIONS.

SOME SUGGESTIONS IN REFERENCE TO YELLOW FEVER.

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etc.

[We have been furnished with a record of the recent observations of this experienced observer, from which we make the following extracts.—
ED. REPORTER.]

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The question is asked, when should yellow fever be declared epidemic in a town?

The rule in all epidemics is, when more deaths occur from one disease than from all others, in a given time.

But an exception to this rule might be made in yellow fever. And the answer I would give would be this: When there are two or more cases in two or more places, in any city or town, and a tendency to spread. I make this exception for the following reasons: That if persons wish to leave, they ought to leave before it spreads and infects them so they will carry it to other places. Again, to call special attention to these first cases, in order to completely isolate them and disinfect them, their rooms and clothing, that others may not take the disease. These first cases are usually called sporadic, and we are told sporadic cases never produce an epidemic. This is true! But we most positively assert there never was an epidemic without first starting in sporadic cases. Then, to prevent an epidemic, keep all cases isolated. Let no one go

where they are but those who have had the disease, and let all houses be whitewashed with lime, clothes and other things washed in hot water. Send every one from the immediate neighborhood that has not been attacked. The Spanish doctors have a medicine which they give to all such, and others who are not sick, in an epidemic place: "Go quickly, go as far as you can, and come back late." Now, this is sound advice, and the only certain course for safety. I mean for those who have never had the disease, for I still assert no one ever has a real second attack, or if they do, it is only one case in two hundred. All the commissions sent out to investigate this subject, from Louis to the present time, and two-thirds of all authors that have written upon it, assert this to be a fact. So no one need to fear the disease who has had a genuine attack. But it will not do to take every doctor's diagnosis, for they often make mistakes; many of them make no distinction between yellow fever and periodic fevers, or believe yellow fever to be only an aggravated form of miasmatic (periodic) fever. There have been quite a number of such, and a few are still left, but their number is lessening every day.

Another question of great importance is, how to manage an epidemic?

First, all should leave who can. Go quick! do not fall over one another, but be calm; go as gentlemen, and not as sheep. Take as little with you as possible, for you may carry the disease with you. If you cannot go far, go to the nearest place that is high and dry and with plenty of water, and where your supplies can be sent you in an open space, and only brought by those who

have been known to have had the disease. Do not go back in the daytime or especially at night, for it is not safe either night or day. Let no one come and stay with you from the infected districts. Be quiet; it will not come to you if it is not brought. Live in tents, not in houses, and if brought you will not take it, even sleeping in the same bed; but this I would not recommend any one to try, if it be possible to avoid it. If these instructions are fully carried out, you may stay within one mile of an infected place without danger.

Those who cannot or will not go away should live soberly and temperately. Never commit any excesses in eating, drinking, or doing anything that will exhaust mind or body. If you have been a hard drinker, let up; never get drunk, by no means, or at any time. It would be well to close all saloons. Form a Howard Association, and give full power to them to manage everything. The Howards should first prevent all persons from coming into the infected place except citizens, whether nurses or doctors, or any other persons, for they cannot do much good, and often do great harm, by adding to the number to be treated and taken care of. All doctors, ministers and apothecaries of the place should remain; it is their duty and they should no more desert their post than a sentinel on duty.

Call for doctors, nurses, ministers and apothecaries that have had the disease, until you get as many as are required. Hold no public assemblies of any kind, for we have instances of great outbreaks and rapid spreading of the disorder from these causes.

Do not burn bedding or clothes in open places, for it is believed that this is a frequent cause of its rapid spreading, and besides, hot water is better than fire. Dr. Rush tells us that the fires built in the streets were generally believed to have made the disease worse, and the burning of bedding in the streets of Memphis, in 1878, was undoubtedly injurious, and most certainly did no good, but caused many to suffer for bedding and clothing when cold weather came. So we do not recommend clothing or bedding to be burned; at least, never in the open air. Lime freely sprinkled in the streets after a rain, in alleys and low places, has done much good in Galveston, Texas, but this ought to be repeated after each rain. Chloride of zinc solution should be freely used on floors, in chambers, and on streets. All vomitings and stools should be saturated with it, and removed from the room and buried or destroyed by hot water. Only one patient ought to be al-

lowed in one room, large or small, and the bed put in the centre of the room, free from all draughts, but with plenty of fresh air. No one ought to be removed after he has once taken off his clothes, if he is at all comfortable. I am much opposed to hospitals for yellow fever patients, as I believe the cases are always worse where one has died; many patients make so much noise that they ought to be where one could not see or hear another. On the score of economy, hospitals are a great saving of expense, for a patient can be treated for one-quarter of what it will cost to treat him alone. Nurses and doctors ought not to talk about other cases in the presence of one sick with yellow fever. There should be no tolling of bells. Only doctors and nurses should be admitted to the room, unless friends are specially called for. Two nurses, one for night and one for day, ought to be provided. One of them should always be in the room, let the patient's situation be what it may, for they may get up or do something that will cause a fatal result in only a few minutes.

Medicine ought to be prepared in proper packages, according to well recognized prescriptions, so it could be given promptly.