

Cantrell (J. Abbott)

DUP.

A CASE OF ECZEMA WITH URTICARIA AS A
COMPLICATION.¹

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TO THE PHILADELPHIA AND ST. AGNES HOSPITALS.

The present case having lately come under my notice, and being to me one of great interest, I thought that the report of it would be the same to be read before you this evening.

John S., aet 75 years, resident of the northern part of New York State, in a mountainous district, was admitted into the private ward of the St. Agnes Hospital, and, through the kindness of Prof. H. A. Hare, came under my care on April 3d, 1892.

The patient having lost by death a member of his family, this being followed by several reverses in business and loss of money in a collapsed bank, so preyed upon his mind that the natural care demanded for his bodily preservation being neglected, he relapsed into that nervous state to which we are often obliged to give the credit for the production of Eczema.

These occurrences happening upon the first of the present year, dates the onset of the eruption, and the disease not being recognized by his then medical adviser, progressed steadily until at his admission into the hospital, when we found the conditions herein enumerated.

The present eruption, which began three months ago, was somewhat of sudden onset, and occupied the greater portion of the cutaneous surface, being, in the writer's opinion, Erythematous in type, but, to-day (April 3d, 1892), the condition is one of Eczema Rubrum, the disease occupying all portions of the skin from the head to the foot, with the exception of the palms and soles; the parts are decidedly inflamed, the skin being thickened and infiltrated, the cedema being more conspicuous about the face and neck, with the ears about double the natural size.

¹ Read before the J. M. DaCosta Medical Society, June 17, 1892.



The presence of itching was apparent from the number and character of the blood crusts, the discharge of watery fluid being very great, with crusting here and there over the surface.

Although it would seem that with these conditions present, the temperature of the body would have been above the normal, but this was not seen either at this or at any other time during the course of the disease.

I advised that the patient be placed upon an exclusive vegetable diet, with the administration of a tonic aperient every morning. Owing to the great amount of itching and the high inflammatory nature of the disease, he was ordered to be bathed with a saturated solution of Boric Acid in water, three or four times daily, and to be thoroughly dried and the parts dusted with Kaolin. Internally he was given twenty grains of Acetate of Potash every three hours.

In three or four days, the inflammation having subsided somewhat and the itching having diminished, he was given inunctions as follows: *Picis Liquidæ*, *Sulphuris Sublimata*, $\text{āā} \text{ } \text{ʒss}$, *Ungt Zinci Oxidi*, *q. s.* ʒj , which was applied twice daily, the parts being afterwards covered with paraffine paper and bandaged.

The disease progressed favorably for one week (April 13th, 1892), with the exception of the parts around the genitals and the inner portion of the thighs, for this I advised a cucumber ointment; but, by some miscarriage of directions, the nurse applied the ointment from head to foot, and, at my next visit, I was confronted with an attack of *Urticaria*, and, whether in ignorance or not, I charged the cucumber ointment for its production, as I knew that it was one of the prolific products of *Urticaria* in those so disposed.

The *Urticaria*, which began with a chill, was situated mostly upon the trunk, where it was visible in large numbers, the lesions being about the size of a nickel five cent piece, and those that were not visible were plainly discernible to the touch; the parts were very irritable, and the patient in a depressed condition.

At this time he was given thirty grains of the Sulphate of Quinia in repeated doses in the course of twenty-four

hours, and also bathed frequently with a 3 per cent. Carbolic Acid wash. On the evening of the second day the attack was repeated, the lesions being more numerous and the patient more depressed. At this visit I advised that ten-grain suppositories of the Quinia be inserted every three hours, until forty grains had been given. The following day the attack, although diminished in severity, was still very irritating, the Quinia was now ordered to be given in five-grain doses every two hours and a half. On the next day he complained that the Carbolic Wash had no effect, and did not remove the itching as well as on previous days. A wash containing two drachms of fluid extract of *Grindelia Robustæ* to the quart was given, which seemed to give the patient more relief; the dose of the Quinia was kept at the maximum for the succeeding two or three days, when it was gradually diminished; and, now that the Urticaria was controlled, the Tar and Sulphur ointment previously ordered being again advised, and in two or three days doubled in strength.

The patient left the hospital on the sixth day of May, 1892, and no word has been received from him since.

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