

purging and vomiting. A gentleman sat up with her all night, and used the hot-air bath and stimulants freely, and got her out of the state of collapse. However, in the evening, she became bad a third time, and soon after died.

A MEMBER.—Was there any shivering in this case; for it seems to present the character of an intermittent?

Mr. HOOPER.—None at all. I have had many such cases as this, and in none of them shivering.

Mr. SALMON.—The disease seems to be a functional disorder, and not an organic; but of what function? It appears to me to be caused by an arrest of the natural perspiration, which it should therefore be our object to restore, for from all I have read or heard there is no perspiration in the cholera.

Dr. BLICKE.—There is none at all.

Mr. HOOPER.—I never saw a case without it.

Dr. WHITING.—It is abundant.

Mr. SALMON.—Yes; but the moisture you speak of is not the proper secretion of the body.

Dr. WILLIAMS.—What does Mr. Salmon mean by perspiration?

Mr. SALMON.—That which is exuded is not carbonic acid gas, the natural perspiration of the human body. It has been described by all writers abroad that if you can get a profuse and wholesome perspiration you obtain a cure, and the fact that emetics produce an increased action of the skin, and that they will produce benefit in the disease, is a corroboration of my position. Mr. Salmon then instanced certain evidences against contagion which have often before been quoted.

Mr. STEVENS argued that the disease was only an epidemic. He had often known ague begin near water, and after a time appear in parts at a distance from the original source of the disease, in the same manner as in cholera. Yet ague was not allowed to be contagious, though the communication of inhabitants of the first district with those in the second, seemed the only possible source of its existence in the latter,—a thing which was out of the question. There was no difficulty in tracing small-pox.

Mr. KINGDON said a few words on the same subject, and observed that he would have every case of cholera reported, mild and severe, to show how comparatively trifling was the mortality which attended them.

Mr. HOLT read the case of a patient who had died under his care. It did not excite discussion.

Dr. JOHNSON, in the course of some observations on the diarrhoea of cholera, recommended that the Indian practice in the first stage of the cholera in Asia, should

be adopted in the second stage of the cholera in England; for the two stages were synonymous.

The meeting shortly after adjourned.

There are some things in the above discussion, which, if they do not edify our readers, will at any rate amuse them.

In the course of the discussion on the 12th, Dr. BURNE made some observations, tending to show that the late researches of Delpech were not correctly founded.

Mr. MISKIN mentioned a case attended by severe cramps, for the allaying of which a small quantity of belladonna was successfully employed.

Mr. EVANS, in the course of some observations on the diet in cases of cholera, strongly recommended milk as the best fluid that could be given.

He also related the following facts, as very curious, if not bearing importantly on the question of contagion. An old woman who resided in the house which was turned into the cholera hospital in his district, quitted the place about nine days after its alteration, leaving a little dog behind her, which was at night thrown into the cellar, where the coffins were temporarily deposited, as his pupil wanted to preserve it for the purpose of some anatomical inquiries. It was soon afterwards conveyed to his (Mr. E.'s) house, and fed, and kept well. In a short time, however, the dog fell ill, had purging, vomiting, and most dreadful cramps in the extremities, and speedily died. Two hours after, an examination of the animal was made, when the bowels were found much congested and contracted; there was considerable redness of the small intestines; the gall-bladder was enlarged, and the biliary ducts were contracted; the bladder was rigidly contracted; and, in short, all the more prominent signs which are found in patients who have died of the malignant cholera were present. He would not dwell on the circumstances; but they were curious enough.

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COMMUNICATIONS  
OF THE  
CENTRAL BOARD OF HEALTH  
WITH MR. SHELDRAKE.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—I subjoin the copy of a letter which I have just received.

“Central Board of Health, Council  
Office, Whitehall, 6th Jan. 1832.

“Sir,—In reply to your letter of yesterday's date, I am directed to acquaint you, that as the subject therein alluded to ap-

peared in THE LANCET of Saturday last, the Board are not aware of the necessity of further measures being taken to give it publicity. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant.

W. MACLEAN, Secretary,  
"T. Shelldrake, Esq. 73, Upper  
Berkeley-st., Portman-sq."

This letter confirms a truth which is well known to your readers, viz. that the simple statement of any fact in THE LANCET is of more use to those whom it may concern, than any act of the Central Board of Health. As the particulars of their transaction with me may be useful if made public, I hand them to you, although they will not elevate the parties who constitute that Board in the general esteem. As my letter to Dr. Johnson, published by you on the 31st December, explains itself, I shall say nothing more about it. On December 13th, the immaculate and learned Board published a report, of which I inclosed you a copy, which contains recommendations to charity for the afflicted;—common-place directions as to what might be tried in hopes of stumbling upon something which might by chance be serviceable to the afflicted;—a declaration, that no remedy at all approaching to the nature of a specific has been as yet discovered for this disease; and the equally explicit declaration that, "under such rapidly destructive and almost universal destruction of function, the most energetic efforts should be directed to reproduce what the disease has rendered nature unable to keep up, viz. — 1st, Fluidity, heat, and motion of the blood; 2nd, Regulated action in the voluntary and involuntary muscles; Lastly, but above every other consideration, renewed energy in the Nervous Centre, the source of all Vitality and Function."

This was virtually as complete an acknowledgment as could be framed that they were totally ignorant of every thing which could be used with certainty and advantage to cure this disease, which has done so much mischief in the world, and has begun its destructive operations in this country. I, immediately upon seeing this report, wrote to inform its author, that I had for more than forty years employed in my own peculiar practice, with uniform success, a plan of treatment which would, I knew, effect all they had described in the paper I have quoted, as essential to the cure of cholera, and I believed would, in general, effect that cure: that, considering the present state of affairs, I was willing to communicate to them this treatment, unknown as it was to every human being but myself; to make, in their presence, whatever experiments they might choose to have made, to ascertain whether it were or not effectual, and worthy of official publicity:

that, if it were found worthy, I would give every information verbally, write any explanation they should think proper, and leave the whole to be made public in whatever way they thought most advantageous. The only stipulation was, that becoming means should be taken to make it properly known that I was the author of the discovery.

After the lapse of three days I received the following under the Great Seal of Office:—

"Central Board of Health, Council  
Office, Whitehall, 20th Dec. 1831.

"SIR,—In reply to your letter, respecting a cure for certain diseases which you state that you have successfully employed for many years, I am directed to acquaint you, that you are at liberty to make the statement therein alluded to, for the consideration of the Board. I am your most obedient, humble servant,

WM. MACLEAN, Secretary.

"T. Shelldrake, Esq. 73, Upper  
Berkeley-st., Portman-sq."

Wonderful generosity! A man who has employed fifty years in bringing to its present state of perfection a discovery in physical science, so much out of the ordinary course of such things that many who are told of its effects will not believe the facts to exist till they see them with their own eyes, is allowed to be at liberty to drop the fruits of his labours at their door, that they might afterwards reject them, or garble them, or perhaps convert them to their own profit or credit, while even the reputation of his discovery is transferred from himself to some retainer of their own. This letter explained the whole of their scheme. I saw that I had placed my fore-foot in the mud; but as I knew it would be more discreditable to retreat than to go through it, I determined to proceed with the business, using however due caution, and accordingly I immediately wrote a letter, of which I now give the material part.

"December 21, 1831.

"To the Central Board of Health,—Gentlemen, I beg to say, that if I use the liberty you have given me in any other way than I proposed in my first letter, *it may be injurious to my own reputation*. The proposal which I then made, and am still desirous to act upon, is this:—

"I will attend you at any time you may direct, giving me one clear day to prepare myself. I will then produce the patients I have already mentioned, whose cases are of such a description, that few members of the profession, who have not seen them treated by me, *will believe that they could be cured by any means whatever*.

"I will at the same time submit a written statement of all the means I employed

to effect those cures, and will explain, *verbally*, any particulars which may be in your opinion described in an unsatisfactory manner. This will show the *power* of my treatment when applied to diseases for which it is adapted.

"I will also explain, and, if you please, demonstrate, that the treatment I have invented and used in my own practice during forty years, with uniform success, possesses all those properties described by the Doctors Russell and Barry, in your report of December 18th, as indispensable to any mode of treatment which can afford even a chance of rescuing from destruction patients afflicted with the spasmodic cholera. When these facts and these patients have been laid before you, you will form your own judgment of the value of that treatment which is now offered to the public through your intervention. I am yours, &c.

"T. SHELDRAKE.

"No. 73, Upper Berkeley Street,  
Portman Square."

After an interval of several days I received a letter directing me to attend the Board on Saturday, December 31st, at twelve o'clock; I did so. Though there was a full Board, all its members were unknown to me, though I have since learned their names. To the Doctors Barry and Russell I was introduced by name. They were my principal, indeed my only, examiners; all the others remained silent while I was in the room. Much polite conversation took place which need not be recorded, because the real business is comprised in the questions and answers I now write down.

*Dr. Barry* said to me,—You promised to show us a curious mechanical instrument, by using which we might raise the circulation of the blood in any patient who has the cholera morbus, to any extent we please, and keep it up for any length of time we may think proper. *Have you that instrument here?*

*Mr. Sheldrake*.—My meaning has been mistaken: what *I did say* was this:—I would produce before you patients whom I have cured of peculiarities which no one has been able to cure but myself. Their diseases are quite distinct from cholera morbus; but I understand from your report what properties are indispensable in any application to afford a chance of curing that disease. I know that by the means I employ in one part of my practice, I produce fluidity, heat, and motion in the blood of my patients, and carry it to any extent and for any time I think necessary. I regulate and continue the action of the muscles, voluntary and involuntary, to any extent and for any duration I know to be necessary. I prevent cramps and spasms, to which my patients

are very liable, and always cure them without creating uneasiness, or causing the patients to make the least exertion, or voluntary action of any kind. This is the power you are said to want, and which I offer to place at your disposal for the benefit of the public, in this serious state of alarm and danger. I have in waiting two patients upon whom I can demonstrate the accuracy of my statements.

*Dr. Barry*.—It was prudent to bring two patients, because, if one *experiment should fail*, the second can be tried. Let them come in.

The young man entered, carrying something enclosed in a napkin.

*Dr. Barry*.—Oh, I see you do use instruments after all.

*Mr. Sheldrake*.—No. (*To the patient*.—Take off the napkin.) That is a model of the youth's leg in the diseased state in which it was when he came to me. By comparing it with the leg as it is at present you will see the amount of the benefit he has received from my treatment.

*Dr. Barry*.—We don't want to know about lame legs, we want to know what will cure the cholera morbus.

*Mr. Sheldrake*.—True. The same process which I used to cure that leg will, according to your own showing, enable those who adopt it, to cure the disease you mention, if the powers you have called for will effect it.

The demonstration being required, the patient was seated. I took the foot in my hand and gave it the motion I knew would be necessary; but that motion appeared to be so simple that *Dr. Barry* said, What good will that do?

*Mr. Sheldrake*.—It will produce great increase of circulation in the blood immediately.

The *Dr.* took out his watch, placed his finger on the pulse, counted, calculated, and exclaimed with surprise, "This is wonderful! *His pulse has risen to one hundred and four already!*"

The patient was quite at his ease while I continued the treatment with increasing effect. All present were satisfied.

*Dr. Barry*.—How can this effect be produced more quickly if it be wanted?

*Mr. Sheldrake*.—In the short time employed, the pulse has been raised to 104, by acting upon one foot; if two feet had been acted upon, the effect would have been double in the same time. If the two feet and the hands had been acted on by different assistants at the same time, the effect would, at the least, be quadrupled; that is, an extent beyond which, I presume, there would never be occasion to go: but should that be advisable, I have topical applications which might be applied to the whole surface of the body for any length of time, so that

any degree of effect might certainly be attained. I mentioned, particularly, that I would undertake to produce as much circulation as could be required in any patient who had cholera, in *half an hour*. Dr. Russell noticed this, and in the hearing of all present told Dr. Barry that I had said so.

Every one was now satisfied. Drs. Barry and Russell asked if I would communicate to them the recipes to make the preparations I had mentioned. My answer was that, whenever I was called upon to produce them for publication, I would do so, and put whatever I knew would be useful into writing, in addition. I received most cordial thanks from Drs. Barry and Russell, for what they were pleased to call my liberal conduct. They added, they would deliberate, and write to me on the subject, and I withdrew.

I now believed that everything was fairly meant; but, when many days passed without my hearing from them, I wrote the following note:—

“Jan. 5, 1832.

“No. 73, Upper Berkeley-st., Portman-sq.

“To the Central Board of Health,—Gentlemen, I beg to ask if you have determined what course shall be pursued to make public the subject I laid before you on Saturday last, as I am desirous to proceed as speedily and as effectually as the subject will admit of; you having observed, very justly, that the subject was important, and pressed too much to allow of delay. I am, Gentlemen, your most obedient servant,

“T. SHELDRAKE.”

I sent this by a special messenger, who was directed to ask for an answer. He was asked if he was acquainted with the business my note related to. He said no: and was then told, that an answer would be sent to me in the course of that day. I then received the letter which I have placed at the head of this paper.

In making this statement I have confined myself to a simple narrative.

I am, Sir, yours, &c,

T. SHELDRAKE,

73, Upper Berkeley-st., Portman-sq.

Jan. 6th, 1832.

## LONDON MEDICAL SOCIETY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

Sir,—I wish you would allow me to assume the office of critic for a few moments in a matter connected with the London Medical Society, which deserves a word or two of remark. I do not wish to take this duty out of your own hands, but some things occur at the meetings of that insti-

tution deserving correction, which may either not come under your notice at all, or may escape your comments if they do, and on this account I crave leave to make a few remarks on one of them, for I do not see that any proposition towards a remedy is likely to be submitted in the Society itself.

Since the cholera has been a subject of discussion there, the members have, many of them, laid aside the good manners which used to be observed towards speakers—I allude to the interruption of those who are addressing the meeting. It is true that the audience is occasionally goaded into a breach of politeness by the prosiness of the speakers themselves, and that there is precedent for a show of impatience during long and inappropriate speeches in other important assemblies. But I do insist either that gentlemen who are allowed to commence an address should be permitted to spin out the whole thread of their discourse uninterrupted by noises, or that the Chairman himself should have power to stop the speeches, and save the time of the Society. Of these two the latter is much to be preferred, for no sign of disapprobation beyond that of “moving to order,” or a direct censure uttered by a member *on his legs*, ought ever to be indulged in a medical association. I have of late heard even the President himself, a calm, gentlemanly, and highly philosophical man, who very rarely says anything which might not be listened to with satisfaction, if not positive advantage, most unpleasantly interrupted by scrapings of the feet, coughing, and buzzings of conversation, and if these continue to prevail I do not know that in a month any man in the Society can feel sure when he rises that he shall be permitted to continue his observations for more than two or three minutes. As to the President himself, I do say that as the members have elected him to the chair, they ought to hear him, if it were for half an hour at a time, with the utmost quiet. It was by their judgment that he was placed in the office, and it is now the duty of the members to show respect to *their own decision*. It certainly ought not to be a habit of the President to speak often in his place, and when he does speak it ought rather to be at the close than in the middle of a debate, except, of course, in the discharge of his official duties.

The remedy I would propose for the evil is this. There has been sufficient proof given during the present session, that gentlemen do not all of them know when they have said enough. There are, indeed, some sad prozers at the meetings, and occasionally too a stranger will come in, who not knowing what has been said at the meetings during the last month or two, will, big with important matter, as he conceives, go over