

**THE NON-ALCOHOLIC
TREATMENT
OF DISEASE**

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The non-alcoholic treatment of disease by Various

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VARIOUS

**THE NON-ALCOHOLIC
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OF DISEASE**

THE
NON-ALCOHOLIC
TREATMENT OF DISEASE.

NOTES OF CASES TREATED AT THE LONDON
TEMPERANCE HOSPITAL, WITH INTRODUCTORY
REMARKS AND SUPPLEMENTARY SUGGESTIONS.



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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

BY

DR. JAMES EDMUNDS, M.D., M.R.C.P., M.R.C.S.,

*Medical Officer of Health and Public Analyst to St. James',
London;*

Physician to the London Temperance Hospital.

The publication of this brochure takes place at the instance of a gentleman, who, though not himself a pledged abstainer, has evinced a warm and intelligent interest in the establishment of the London Temperance Hospital; and it is hoped that the information here presented will be of interest to the supporters of the Hospital, and also induce the medical profession to make further trial of the treatment of disease without alcohol.

So enthralling and debasing, yet so easily and insidiously excited in numberless cases, is the appetite for intoxicating beverages, that all must earnestly desire the employment of suitable means for its prevention and cure. Appeal may, therefore, be fitly made to medical science to determine

whether the use of alcohol can be safely and advantageously omitted from the treatment of ordinary ill-health and disease. Mere theory is of no value in the settlement of this question, and of little avail is the reference to authority and usage, when resort can be had to fresh and specific observation upon the facts themselves.

In order to put this question to the test of clinical experience, the London Temperance Hospital was opened on the 6th of October, 1873, and, after a working experience of two and a quarter years, the cases appended have been extracted from the daily notes made by the medical staff of the Hospital, and are published in order to illustrate in a variety of cases the result of treatment without the administration of any alcohol, except in a single instance—the issue of which was unfavourable. The use of alcohol also, even as a pharmaceutical agent, has been superseded by the use of glycerinated solutions, which have answered efficiently and economically as vehicles for the extraction, preservation, and administration of those drugs which are usually given in alcoholic tincture. The non-alcoholic treatment, therefore, has been pursued under conditions which were not wanting in exactitude.

In justice to the Board of Management it ought to be understood that the selection of these cases, and the comments appended thereto, have been left entirely in the hands of the Medical Staff, with myself as Editor. It only remains on the part of my colleagues and myself to add, that the details and particulars of all the cases are open to fuller investigation in the Hospital Records. Many medical men have already visited the Hospital and have seen these cases in progress, and have witnessed the class of patients upon whom the bounty of the

subscribers has been bestowed; and to all enquirers the Board of Management and the Medical Officers offer an open invitation and a cordial welcome at all times.

The number of patients admitted as indoor cases up to December 31, 1875, has been 285, and among these there have been 15 deaths. The number of outdoor patients has been 2540, making a total of 2825. Many of these, and especially the indoor patients, have come from remote country places; the Hospital not being in any way limited to the inhabitants of London. Sixty-five cases have been selected for publication. They have been taken exclusively from the indoor list—they have all been of a severe character, and it is certain that the non-alcoholic treatment was in every case adhered to. Among the sixty-five cases will be found a full and fair illustration of the Medical work of the Hospital, and, as to the Surgical work, the whole of the major operations and their full results, have been given. The only death which has occurred among the Surgical patients, is that mentioned as after ovariectomy, in case No. 220, (page 27).

The abstracts of the cases have been made by Dr. S. L. Smith, House-surgeon to the Hospital, and my colleagues, Dr. Lee and Dr. Ridge, have, at my request, stated their general impressions in the form of letters signed by themselves.

I have further been asked by the Board of Management to write some directions for cases in which the domestic use of alcoholics is now unnecessarily and often injuriously adopted. Such suggestions as I have been able to offer will be found after the letters signed by my colleagues, Dr. Lee and Dr. Ridge. These suggestions are not, of course, intended to supersede the

judgment of the family medical attendant when his advice can be obtained, for there can be little doubt that the man who undertakes to prescribe for himself in any serious illness, is pretty sure to have a fool for his patient. It is certain that serious and widely permeating mischief arises out of the domestic prescription of brandy and other powerful agents for casual attacks, and for trifling ailments. Those, moreover, who, in place of alcoholics, substitute medical bitters, chlorodyne, chloral, laudanum, morphia, &c., merely fall into habits more injurious and more dangerous. But, while the habit of amateur drugging cannot be too strongly deprecated, there are, doubtless, cases in which such suggestions as those which I have been asked to frame may prove useful.

The building now in use at No. 112, Gower Street, as the London Temperance Hospital, is not structurally adapted to the purposes of a hospital, nor does it permit of the adequate segregation of the severer surgical cases. On this account it is especially desirable that the facts as they have occurred (despite these disadvantages) should be clearly perceived, in order that the benevolent public may be prepared to estimate the importance of contributing at once towards the erection of a suitable edifice—a freehold site in the Hampstead Road having already been purchased at a cost of £3,300.

The sum required for the erection of a Hospital capable of treating 100 In-Patients at once, is estimated (including the purchase of the site) at £20,000. Of this amount two-fifths are already subscribed; and the Board of Management will rejoice if the evidence now presented of the safety and benefits of the non-Alcoholic treatment, shall

confirm and extend public confidence in the wisdom of this undertaking, and induce such a liberal support as will enable the New Hospital to be speedily reared, and its peculiar advantages widely enjoyed.

JAMES EDMUNDS.

5, Savile Row, London, W.

January, 1878.

