

A. Teste

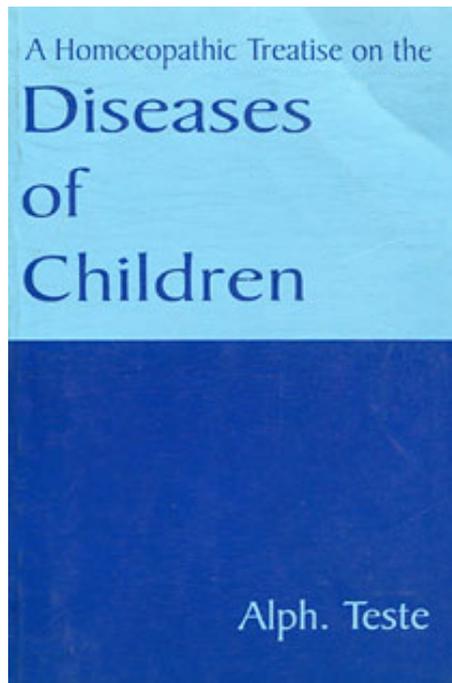
Diseases of Children

Reading excerpt

[Diseases of Children](#)

of [A. Teste](#)

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P A R T II.

DISEASES OF CHILDREN.

CHILDREN are exposed to the greater part of the disease which attack adults. There are, however, a certain number which are peculiar to them, or which assume in them: *a* gravity that they have not at a more advance age. These last will naturally form the special object of our attention. As to the order which I propose to follow in their description, I confess it is almost arbitrary. I have said, in my Introduction, that a philosophical classification of diseases is not yet possible. I shall, therefore, content myself with grouping those of which *I* shall give the history, according to the sensible analogies of their prominent symptoms. This mode of proceeding, vicious without doubt, in this, that it brings together, upon the faith of physical notions, sometimes illusory, affections probably very dissimilar in their essence, is without inconvenience, from the moment we admit it as purely conventional.

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DISEASES OF THE SKIN.

The generic name, *exanthemata*, is given to all diseases of the skin. A very small number of these exanthemata result from an irritating action, exercised upon the cutaneous envelope: the greater part are only the apparent symptoms of miasmatic affections diffused in the economy.

The means employed by the Old School to combat these exanthemata are generally pitiable and sometimes monstrous. I shall not stop to describe them; but, I do not hesitate to attribute to them a great part of the incurable diseases and infirmities, which we so often meet with in old people, and even in individuals still in the flower of their age.

ACUTE EXANTHEMATA.**ERYTHEMA.**

This name is given to the partial and circumscribed redness of the skin, caused either by the constant attrition of two contiguous surfaces, or the contact of acrid or irritating matter, such as urine, perspiration, and even fecal matter, when in nursing children these are not promptly removed; it is also caused by exposure to the sun.

In the former instances, the erythema has received more especially the name of *intertrigo*. It is observed most frequently in the armpits, between the thighs, on the neck, at the anus and in the groins. It is often

accompanied by an albuminous secretion of a disagreeable odor; but sometimes also, the affected places are dry, and are then attended by the production of scales or scabs.

Frequent lotions of tepid water, almost always suffice to prevent and to cure this species of erythema; if this, however, is ineffectual, we should have recourse to medicine, and that which deserves the preference, is chamomilla.

The efficacy of chamomilla, in this case, is proved by the frequent result of the abuse which is made of it. Nothing is more common than to see in little children, and intertrigo come on after they or their nurses have taken an infusion of the flowers of this plant. The natural remedy then is, the antidote of chamomilla, that is to say, *ignatia* and *pulsatilla*, taken alternately in small doses at short intervals.

Mercurms sol., thirtieth dilution, a few globules in a glass of water, taken by teaspoonfuls, every six hours, would suit in a case where the intertrigo is very painful, and the parts affected are raw.

The erythema caused by insolation, is commonly manifested on the face, neck and hands; that is to say, on the parts most commonly exposed to the sun. The redness in which it consists, turns readily to a copper brown or purple, and is accompanied by an intense burning. Abandoned to itself, this affection lasts two or three days, and terminates by desquamation of the epidermis. It is not dangerous;

it is, however, of sufficient importance to be treated, especially when seated upon the face or scalp. We have seen it, in this last case, occasion delirium, and all the symptoms of meningitis, and this disagreeable complication sometimes develops itself before any remarkable redness of the skin has been observed—a circumstance to which we would call the attention of physicians.

Rhus toxicodendron, of a medium dilution, in repeated doses, is the specific for erythema produced by insolation.

CRACKS.

Cracks in young children have the same cause, and call for the same treatment as intertrigo. *Mercurius sol.*, when they are very painful, and *pulsatilla*, when we may attribute the febrile state, which accompanies them, to the use of *lycopodium*, with which they may have been powdered.

BURNS.

As this disease, or rather the affection produced by it, is not more common to childhood than to any other age, we shall not give the subject the extension it would admit of in a treatise upon surgery. That which especially characterizes the species of disorganization caused by burns, however slight, is the intense pain, which accompanies it, and the slowness with which this disorganization is repaired; but it must be observed also, that the various modes of treatment

adopted by Allopathy for these accidents, contribute not a little to their gravity and to the persistence of their effects.

I have already pointed out, in my Introduction, the objection to immersion in cold water. I return to this point, for it is of the first importance, and comprises in itself the whole spirit of the Old School. Whether the burn has caused only erythematous redness of the skin, or has produced phlyctaena, or destroyed the whole thickness of the cutaneous membrane, I pronounce, in all these diverse cases, cold applications an error.

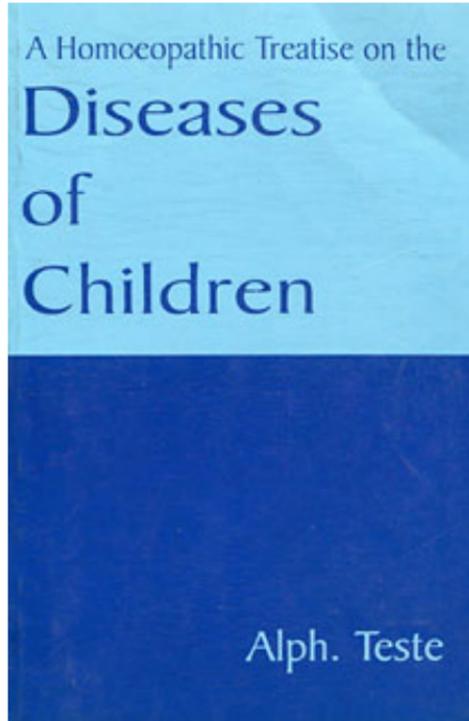
As to astringent or acidulated lotions, compresses or pledgets saturated with lead or opiate ointments, etc., I have seen them employed a thousand times without any decided advantage.

The only local application of which I recommend the use, is a layer of cotton moistened with sweet oil of almonds, renewed twice a day.

In a case, however, where the falling off of the blister has exposed a large surface of the true skin, it is better to apply the oiled cotton *mediately*, that is to say, over a compress of fine linen perforated and saturated with cold cream prepared without the essence of roses.

The homoeopathic treatment of burns is very simple and comprehends, complications excepted, but two medicines; *rhus toxicodeti-dron* and *tinctura sulphuris*.

Rhus should be administered from the beginning,



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344 pages, pb



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