

## CASES OF FEVER, ETC., FOR 1851.--(Continued.)

No. of case.	When attacked.	Age.	When discharged.	No. of days on sick report.	Remarks, result, etc.
33	April 21	19	April 24	3	Had very threatening symptoms when first attacked; but had no return of fever after the first remission.
34	... 25	42	... 29	4	
35	... 25	17	... 29	4	
36	... 25	49	... 30	5	
37	... 28	23	May 7	9	
38	May 1	33	... 14	13	The subject of Case No. 27, and of Case No. 4 in 1850.
39	... 2	20	... 28	26	
40	... 5	17	... 11	6	
41	... 24	18	July 4	41	Sent to hospital-ship "Crescent," and subsequently invalided, not having made a perfect recovery.
42	June 10	26	June 25	15	

Average duration of the attack 21·28 days.

Do. Do. recoveries 20·6 ...

ARTICLE III.—*A Notice of an Epidemic Fever which occurred at Grey Town, Nicaragua, on board H.M.S. "Rosamond," formerly the "Eclair."* By J. WATSON, M.D., Surgeon, Royal Naval Hospital, Jamaica.

IN consideration of the interest that may be felt respecting an epidemic fever occurring on board the ship so unhappily notorious under her former name the "Eclair," and also because it involves some points of practical importance, I beg to communicate the following notice of the fever which recently broke out on board the "Rosamond" at Grey Town. I have been indebted to Mr Forbes, the surgeon, for the greater part of the facts which did not come under my own observation:—

The "Rosamond" arrived here from Europe in December 1851, and afterwards made several trips to the Spanish Main and among the islands, during which her people enjoyed good health. There were a few cases of mild seasoning fever, such as most new crews experience on first coming to the West Indies, but the general sanitary state on board was quite satisfactory. On the 4th June she took her departure from Port Royal, and anchored at Grey Town, Nicaragua, on the 9th of the same month, with no disease then on

board. The anchorage of Port Royal not being productive of marsh remittent fever, terminating in ague, there can be no doubt that the serious disease which soon after manifested itself in the "Rosamond," had its origin in the harbour of Grey Town.

That harbour is a circular basin at the mouth of the river St Juan, landlocked, and surrounded by a low swampy country, containing many lagoons, and covered with thick forests, and a dense undergrowth of tropical vegetation. The river opens into the basin by several mouths, with low alluvial islands between them; its bottom is a thick mud, and the beach is composed of a dirty muddy sand, with a nearly impenetrable *bush* towards the land. The vessel lay near the centre of the harbour, which is not less than half a mile from the shore, from the 9th June till the 4th July, when having, in the interval, had thirty-seven cases of fever, she proceeded to the Island of St Andrews, which is 150 miles to windward, far removed from the coast, and esteemed very healthy. She returned to Grey Town on the 11th July, and the day following, in consequence of the continued and increasing sickly condition of her crew, she put to sea, and made the best of her way to Jamaica, where she arrived, and disembarked her sick at this hospital, on the 17th July.

While the "Rosamond" remained at Grey Town, it rained almost incessantly the greater part of every day. The awnings were sloped to protect the people from the rain; but the protection so afforded was only partial, and the interior of the vessel, as well as the clothing and the bedding, was necessarily very damp. The temperature was comparatively low, being usually from 76° to 78° Fahrenheit in the shade. I believe it has been the practice to permit the crews of ships stationed at Grey Town to fish in the river with the seine. The "Rosamond's" people received this indulgence, and a portion of them used to fish in the river, when the weather permitted, from four to seven o'clock in the morning. The amusement was of course attended with much bodily exertion, and complete exposure to wet while it continued, at least as far upwards as the waist. Simple as this matter of fishing may seem, it will be seen that it was followed by the most pernicious results. It has been ascertained by lists which were kept, that sixty men went to fish from once to six times each, including officers, and that ninety never went on these fishing parties. Because some persons are so constituted as to be able to expose themselves with impunity, and are daily seen to do so, it is not uncommon to hear their *escapes* advanced as proofs of the innocence, or even healthfulness of the exposure, and its concomitants. But when, as in the present case, a ship's company become the subjects of the experiment, and when the results are stated numerically, as they will be found below, the fallacy of such notions must become immediately apparent. It will be seen that they who entertain them mistake the exception for the rule.

The daily progress of the disease is shown in the following abstract from the sick list:—

*Fever Cases put on Sick List on*

June 23, . . . . .	3	July 9, . . . . .	1
„ 24, . . . . .	1	„ 10, . . . . .	5
„ 25, . . . . .	2	„ 11, . . . . .	1
„ 26, . . . . .	3	„ 12, . . . . .	3
„ 27, . . . . .	3	„ 14, . . . . .	2
„ 28, . . . . .	8	„ 15, . . . . .	1
„ 29, . . . . .	3	„ 16, . . . . .	2
„ 30, . . . . .	3	„ 17, . . . . .	1
July 1, . . . . .	6	„ 18, . . . . .	2
„ 2, . . . . .	3	„ 19, . . . . .	2
„ 4, . . . . .	2	„ 20, . . . . .	1
„ 5, . . . . .	4	„ 21, . . . . .	2
„ 6, . . . . .	7		
„ 7, . . . . .	5	Total, . . . . .	77
„ 8, . . . . .	1		

This fever was of the remittent type, and precisely similar to those which, in the same locality, have affected almost every ship-of-war stationed there during the last four or five years. The cases which occurred at Grey Town, presented sharp pyrexial symptoms for the first three or four days, with headache, pains of back, dry skin, and thirst, becoming then remitting, and finally intermittent. Those which occurred at St Andrews after the "Rosamond" left the malarious region, are said to have been milder; and of the fifty-three which were sent to this hospital, the majority had assumed the form of ague at the time of admission. The few cases which appeared on board, after the ship returned to this place, and which were sent immediately to my care, very soon became convalescent, except one man, who had anomalous convulsive symptoms, and another, who nearly died of epistaxis.

Of the treatment in this place, little need be said. There was seldom need for depletion, and mercury was not exhibited, and those who survived, therefore, convalesced rapidly; but moderate antiphlogistic measures were employed in the pyrexial periods, and quinine formed the principal remedy in the apyrexial. As soon as intermissions occurred, wine, punch, and a generous diet, were found highly serviceable. A similar plan was adopted on board; but the Surgeon there generally commenced the treatment with an emetic, and afterwards administered some antimonial medicine. As there was scarcely any irritability of stomach in any of the cases, the emetic treatment answered well, although, on account of a traditional antipathy against it, we avoid it in this hospital, as likely to induce that most troublesome symptom.

From associations connected with the former history of the "Rosamond," there was a considerable panic, and a very general apprehension among her people, that the cause of this illness was something in the ship. It is quite clear that this could not have been the case. She arrived healthy at Nicaragua, and, after fourteen

days, her first case of fever showed itself. She left the place, the last time, on the 12th July, and nine days afterwards fresh cases ceased to occur, although only 51 per cent. of the people had gone through the disease when it stopped.

The salient points of interest connected with this sickness in the "Rosamond," are embodied in the following statements:—

"Rosamond" had on board 150 officers and men, of whom 77 or 51·3 per cent., took fever.

Of the above 150, 60 went from once to six times each man, on fishing parties.

Of the above 150, 90 did not go on fishing parties at all.

Of the 60 fishers, 39 took fever, or 65 per cent., and 35 per cent. escaped.

Of the 90 non-fishers, 38 took fever, or 42·2 per cent., and 57·7 per cent. escaped.

Died of fever or its consequences on board,	7
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Died of fever or its consequences in hospital,	2
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Invalided in consequence of fever,	6
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but generally with complication of other complaints of some standing. The commander and a stoker were also invalided, but they were not in the surgeon's fever list, and are therefore excluded here.

From the above contrasted statements, it is manifest that the liability to fever was increased nearly 23 per cent. by the practice of fishing, and its accompaniments. At least I cannot imagine any cause besides that, for the remarkably larger number of seizures among those who fished, than among those who did not. The increased danger among the men who went fishing, must be due to the bodily exertion, or to their being exposed to a more concentrated malarious poison, than their shipmates who remained on board half a mile distant, or to both causes conjoined. I am inclined to believe that any bad effects of the bodily exertions, in a temperature by no means high, were counterbalanced by the good effects of mental exhilaration in the enjoyment of a favourite amusement; and I attribute the unhappy results of the fishing to the fact of the people being brought into the heart of the malarious district in the river, where the poison was probably most energetic. However that may be, we are justified in concluding that, if the sixty men had remained on board, their proportion of attacks would have been twenty-five, and not thirty-nine, as it actually was, and that fourteen cases of fever were added to the list, which might have been prevented, had the commanding officer been aware of the additional source of danger; which, of course, he was not. I am certain that the practice of fishing with the seine in the Grey Town river, has been the rule and not the exception, among the ships stationed there, and all of them have been sickly. If a statement similar to this had been drawn up respecting the sickness on

board one of those ships, and that paper, with results corresponding with the above, had fallen under the observation of the captain of the "Rosamond," that officer would have probably not followed the practice of his predecessors.

It is in the hope of disseminating more correct notions of the danger attending the unnecessary exposure of men in unhealthy districts, that I have ventured to record the facts which form the subject of the preceding observations, and more especially that, if the Admiralty continue to keep a ship-of-war in that most fatal place, Grey Town, the danger of the special exposure herein reprobated may be fully appreciated. As a proof how little people are in the habit of recognising such causes of disease, even when they are in full operation, I may mention, that officers of intelligence were quite unaware that more cases of fever occurred among the fishing parties than among their other shipmates. Convinced, however, of the facts by the lists which were kept, the inference is admitted doubtingly and unwillingly, although any other conclusion from the premises seems impossible.

NAVAL HOSPITAL, JAMAICA,  
10th August 1852.

MANCHESTER

ROYAL

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ARTICLE IV.—*Cases of Induction of Premature Labour.* By  
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of Surgeons of Edinburgh, Hawick.

THE induction of premature labour, while it is the simplest, and one of the most beneficial, of the operations in midwifery practice, is certainly at the same time the one of all others least frequently resorted to by the general practitioner, and consequently least known to the class of patients for whose benefit it has been proposed. A dislike to interfere with, or interrupt, the natural course and duration of pregnancy, and the dread that such interference, if attempted, might be followed by some disagreeable or dangerous consequence to the mother or the child, have gone so far in counterbalancing the advantages the practice otherwise possesses, that the result has been, in too many instances, that patients, the capacity and general formation of whose pelvis is such as to preclude the very possibility of their bearing a full-grown living child, are allowed to go forward to the completion of pregnancy, with the certain result awaiting them, that their labour, in addition to all its ordinary train of hazards, can only be completed by their being subjected, not certainly to a painful,—as, since the discovery and use of chloroform in midwifery practice, pain, in the great majority of cases, may be avoided,—but to an operation highly dangerous, and often hurtful to themselves, and whose sole aim and object is the mutilation and destruction of their