

general use; and it is unquestionable that some obstinate cases have yielded to it. I still, however, must maintain my preference for a previous trial of arsenic in decreasing doses, and on a full stomach, for the following reasons:—

1. As far as my experience has extended, it has, when regularly and properly administered, never yet failed in any of the diseases enumerated by your correspondent, provided the patient be free from organic disease, and temperate in his habits. And we have yet to learn whether, in any of the cases of reputed failure, the arsenic has been carefully administered in accordance with the conditions I have specified; and this is an all-important point; for in a majority of my own successful cases, arsenic had failed, having previously been tried on an essentially different plan; and in many of them tar had likewise failed.

2. Arsenic not only cures the disease, but, when continued for a certain time after the final disappearance of the disease, always in a great degree, and frequently entirely, destroys all tendency to the morbid action. This is not the case with tar. On Mr. Wetherfield's own showing, some of his patients were only relieved for the time, and "suffered repeatedly from the disease."

3. Although Mr. Wetherfield's patients appear to have made no complaints—to their honour be it spoken—yet the odour of tar, to say nothing of its trouble and filth, is to some persons intolerable; and to none can it be agreeable to reflect, that they carry it about with them into every company. Arsenic is not open to this objection.

4. Arsenic, besides being more certain and lasting in its effects, as well as less unpleasant, is as safe as tar. Of this I have abundant proofs in the history of many thousands of cases. Nor have I yet met with a patient who, from idiosyncrasy, could not bear it. I have explained in my book, that where the system was remarkably susceptible, and in a degree intolerant of the remedy, the disease was so much the more amenable to its influence, yielding speedily to such very minute doses as the patient could bear with impunity.

Nevertheless, if I should meet with a case in which arsenic cannot be born in any dose, I will certainly give a trial to the tar.

I may, perhaps, be allowed to add, however, that it is our duty in every case, as it will prove our interest, as well as that of the patient, to try at once the most effective remedy we have at hand, especially if it be safe, and subjects the patient to no annoyance. —*Mr. Thos. Hunt, of Herne Bay, in Med. Gaz.*

SURGERY.

On Choroiditis or Inflammation of the Choroid Membrane of the Eye—Treatment. By Dr. JACOB.—It is obvious from the description before given of this form of inflammation of the eye, that it does not require the same amount of active treatment necessary in the more acute varieties. The two great resources relied on in violent and rapid attacks—depletion and mercury—are frequently not only unnecessary, but even pernicious. It is often, in fact, more an example of the slow destructive process accompanied by increased local vascular action, which is scarcely to be considered inflammation, than true inflammation itself. The time is not, perhaps, far distant, when these circumscribed local disorganizations, or even more extended derangement of vascular arrangements, will not be considered of the same nature as the condition which exists in unequivocal inflammatory action. The adoption of such terms as congestion, sub-acute inflammation, and similar phrases, implying the existence of various degrees of this state of parts, strengthen this conclusion. I do not mean to deny that the disease now under consideration ever assumes the form of active inflammation; it sometimes undoubtedly does, especially in relapse attacks; all I mean to insist upon is, that its general nature is of a languid or feeble character; and I am inclined to think that when great vascular action, pain, intolerance of light, and blindness, exist or supervene, the term choroiditis should not be used, but reserved for the form of a disease better entitled to that specific distinction.

I have, in the question of the other forms of inflammation, so fully discussed the treatment as to depletion by abstraction of blood, that it is unnecessary to return to it at length. I have not, I think, met with any case of this disease, either requiring general

bleeding from the arm or temporal artery, or admitting of it. Symptoms are, however, often sufficiently acute at the commencement of a first attack, or of a relapse, to demand the application of leeches; not so much, perhaps, with the view of reducing the quantity of circulating blood, as to diminish local turgescence by a diversion of its current; or rather, indeed, to effect that reduction of vascular action, which experience has taught us this method of drawing blood causes. This view is, however, so much at variance with that of Dr. Mackenzie, that I think it right to copy his opinion here:—

"Profuse and repeated blood-letting does more good in the early stage of choroiditis than all other remedies put together. Yet we might perhaps not be tempted to bleed sufficiently at this period of the disease, from the circumstance that in many instances, there are no external signs of intense inflammation, and the patient does not suffer any acute pain. The practitioner, therefore, who is not acquainted with the nature and symptoms of this ophthalmia, might be apt to trifle away time in the application of a few leeches, when he should be opening the temporal artery, and removing a large quantity of blood. I have known the blueness and evident distension of the sclerotics, which, notwithstanding leeching and other remedies, had continued unabated for many weeks, disappear suddenly and completely, after the loss of twenty or thirty ounces of blood from the temple. Bleeding from the jugular vein, or from the arm, is also highly useful. Twenty-four or more leeches round the eye, every second day, I have seen attended by the best effects. In chronic cases, we must not neglect the frequent and liberal application of leeches. In the repeated and often severe attacks of pain which occur in the course of sclerotic-choroiditis, if the pulse is not affected, blood taken from the arm is not buffy, and venesection does little good."

From this I am almost inclined to think, that I have not been describing the disease to which Dr. Mackenzie has been directing his attention. What I call *choroiditis*, I have so generally seen occurring, as I have stated, in persons of feeble constitution, and so often in females of delicate frame and impaired health, that I find the treatment here recommended inadmissible. I do not consider violent inflammation of the eyeball to be entitled to a distinct specific character, and to be called choroiditis, because the sclerotic becomes blue and distended in consequence of it; I am more inclined to restrict the term, as I have said, to the languid inflammation above described. The late Mr. Tyrrel, in treating of *choroiditis* in his work on Diseases of the Eye, expresses opinions more in unison with those which I venture to offer, and I therefore quote them; although I have some doubt as to the application of his observations to the disease alluded to by me or Dr. Mackenzie. I quote them also because I find that Mr. Tyrrel, more than any British surgeon, insisted upon the necessity of carefully distinguishing the more feeble or languid forms of inflammation from the more active, and adapting the treatment accordingly:—

"The medicinal and dietetic treatment, must depend upon the condition of the constitutional power of the party affected; most frequently, as I have stated, the disease occurs in persons having a scrofulous diathesis, and therefore generally weak power. Of the number of cases of this disease which have come under my observation, I am certain that, in nineteen out of twenty, it has occurred when the general power has been below par. Supposing, therefore, that such be the condition of the patient, the diet should be good and nutritious; he should take small doses of mercury with chalk, or very minute doses of the bichloride of mercury, or in some instances, Plummer's pill; but in addition to either form of mercury, some tonic should be given; the form of which must depend upon the peculiarity of the constitutional disturbance; or the influence of any particular functional derangement. Thus, in some instances, sarsaparilla or bark may be proper; in other cases, the addition of mineral acid may be serviceable, as when the cutaneous action is inordinate; or further, some preparation of steel may be employed with advantage, as in the case of the young female suffering from irregularity of uterine functions, &c. &c."

"Sometimes cases occur in which the disturbance of general health has been principally produced and maintained by causes which tend to exhaust too rapidly the general power; such as excess of application to a sedentary employment, with deficient