

## Editorials.

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### The Treatment of Diseases of the Stomach.

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This was one of the topics discussed in the Section of Therapeutics at the Edinburgh meeting of the British Medical Association (B. M. J., Oct. 29).

Dr. George Herschell opened the discussion. The principal therapeutic agents employed in the treatment of diseases are electricity, massage, hydrotherapeutics, lavage, the gyromele of Turck, and drugs, acting either chemically or in the muscular coats of the organ. With regard to electricity, though there is considerable diversity of opinion, yet the clinical experience at the present day is overwhelmingly on the side that this is a very valuable agent in the treatment of atonic conditions of the digestive organs. The speaker's experience was in favor of the continuous current to the solar plexus and to the ganglia of the sympathetic vagi in the neck.

Massage of the stomach has also its opponents and its advocates ; but the best testimony seems to favor its employment. Massage may be used on an empty stomach before breakfast to strengthen the muscular power ; or three or four hours after meals to assist in mixing its contents, and in expelling its contents. The indications for massage would be found in the disturbance of the motor function, in atony, in a moderate degree of stenosis, in chronic gastritis with defective secretion, in gastroparesis, and in certain cases of nervous inhibition of peristaltic action.

Lavage is another means of treating atony of the stomach, which often yields good results. Dr. Herschell spoke highly of the benefit to be gained by using hot and cold water alternately. He was of the opinion that a double channel stomach tube, giving an in-and-out flow at the same time was of much assistance in the treatment of these cases. It was also an improvement to have a small bulb in the end of the afferent tube, carrying a number of small holes, by which the flow is converted into a spray.

Under the head of dietetics two very important problems came before us for solution. The first of these is where there is an excess of hydrochloric acid formed, and a good deal of pain in the stomach. A meat diet uses up a large amount of acid during its digestion ; and would thus appear to be a suitable food. But, while it carries the acid secreted, it also stimulates to further free secretion, so that the