

irritation to the scalp, iodine, and cod liver oil given internally, be added, we have nearly the sum total.

1st. Diuretics.

With regard to remedies of this class, it is my firm conviction, from some little experience in the treatment of the disease, that given *simply* they are utterly useless. Whenever any benefit has appeared to have been derived from them, it will be found that mercury in some form has been administered with them, and has been the real cause of the temporary improvement.

In a case mentioned by Dr. H. Bennett, diuretics were given after paracentesis had been performed, and seems to have been used merely with a view of meeting a diminution of the quantity of urine passed, which invariably followed the operation. Of course under these circumstances they may have been of service as adjuncts to the previous tapping, but it has yet to be proved that they exercise any perceptible influence upon the progress of the disease. The only reason indeed which can be given for their use, is the analogical one, if one may coin an expression, that as they have been very serviceable in other dropsies, they ought to be of use in dropsy of the brain.—How unfortunate it is that nature will not listen to reason.

2nd. Purgatives.

I now pass to a most important class of remedies, and one which has been proved to have been of great benefit at various times. At the very commencement the disease, I have often remarked an amendment follow the use of an active aperient; and the temporary improvement noticed during the whole course of the disease, as a result of the free action of the bowels, is too familiar to all practical men to be further enlarged upon.

But although there is a favourable change for a time, I fear that it cannot be said that the continued use of purgatives is at all likely to cure the disease. It must be borne in mind that the subjects of chronic hydrocephalus, are seldom free from a scrofulous taint, and that they do not bear depletion well. Any long continued drain upon the system, would in the opinion of the writer, tend to increase the accumulation of the fluid in the cavity of the skull, instead of diminishing it. It is also to be remembered that the majority of cases of the disease are found in the young, and a course of cathartic medicine cannot be used with them for a long time with impunity.

The mercurial purgatives are those which I have used with the most advantage, but I confess I have employed them only with the intention of paving the way for the iodide of potassium.

Mercury. I have had no experience of the effects of the treatment by crude mercury and manna. Different preparations of this mineral seem to be the favourite remedies for chronic hydrocephalus. Almost every author who writes on the subject, speaks in very high terms of the valuable effects of calomel. The objections to this plan of treatment appear to be that it cannot be persevered with for a sufficiently long time, and the system is left in a very debilitated state, even should it prove partially successful. In all the cases of the disease that have come under my notice, the scrofulous element has been marked, and I felt unwilling to push the employment of the remedy as far as others