

physiological experiments have been instituted and carried out with the greatest care and skill, and the evidence thus afforded is contradictory or inconclusive. Still, from the mass of material furnished by these various sources, not a little evidence may be sifted which, though certainly far from decisive, is yet of great value in preventing the establishment of false views.

The theory of a connexion between "Bronzed skin" with its accompanying symptoms, and a morbid state of the supra-renal capsules, was suggested to Dr. Addison by the evidence of the most faithful and impartial post-mortem examinations. In a succession of such examinations made upon the bodies of patients dying with the peculiar symptoms which had so often and so completely puzzled him, he sought in vain for anything to account for such manifestations, until, with continued and thorough investigation, he was struck by the fact that, in all these cases, the supra-renal capsules were the seat of an organic change. Here, then, there seemed to him a reasonable hope of finding a solution of the problem. A pathological condition of the system had been observed, with which no invariably coexisting organic lesion was discoverable, either before or after death, excepting only in a pair of organs whose office in the animal economy had never been ascertained.

Dr. Addison at once saw the importance of these concurring facts, and his subsequent labors only served to establish in his mind the conviction that this apparently invariable association of these two phenomena arose from the existence between them of the relation of cause and effect. In ten of the eleven cases cited by him the supra-renal capsules were either entirely destroyed or very seriously altered in structure, and in the remaining instance the emulgent vein of one of them was so completely obstructed by a malignant growth as to cause an intense congestion of the organ, and a consequent probable interruption of its function. Thus far all was in favor of the correctness of his opinion, and for a time the results obtained by other observers coincided with his own.

But soon, with further inquiry, and an increased number of reported cases, other and conflicting evidence was brought to light, until this supposed connexion between bronzed skin and capsular disease appeared by no means so certain as at first. Now, instead of there being no case on record where one of these conditions existed without the other, there are many such, all detracting more or less from the plausibility of their mutual dependence, and each one of those, where disorganization of the capsules has been found unaccompanied by the cutaneous discoloration, being a direct refutation of the necessity of such an association; since, while some other morbid hue might be mistaken for that of bronzed skin, there can be no doubt in regard to a case of well-marked organic lesion.

I will notice a few cases. In the *Gazette Hebdomadaire* for the 3d October, 1856, M. Puech, interne at Hôtel Dieu, Toulon, relates a case which he believes to be one of genuine bronzed skin, and yet where no disease of the supra-renal capsules was discovered. The following is a free, but I believe a correct translation of the author's description of the discoloration, which is the only symptom he especially notices:—"The face is pallid; while upon the belly and chest are several large brown spots, situated in close proximity to each other, of a hue similar to that of desiccated cartilage, or to use a more accurate simile, to that of the areola upon the breasts of women several months advanced in pregnancy. This color, less marked at the edges of the spots, grows darker about the umbilicus. From the mons veneris it extends to the region of the ensiform cartilage, and thence, stretching away to either side, leaves the breasts unaffected. Washing has no effect but to render the discoloration more striking by contrast. The skin is delicate and brilliant, presenting neither eruption nor desquamation."

As Mr. Puech anticipates, it is at once to be objected to this case, that the peculiar distribution of the color is not at all such as observed in those cases where capsular disease was found after death; and although, as the author replies, no one can mark out absolutely the invariable situation of the stains of bronzed skin, still the general simi-