

chronic diarrhœa, the passages being watery, containing no blood or mucus, and there being no tenderness:—

R Opii gr. ss.
Plumbi acetatis gr. ij. M.
Ft. pil.

Sig.—every four hours.

In treating *chronic eczema*, place your patient upon a farinaceous or a mixed diet. Locally, an ointment which will give good satisfaction is composed thus:—

R Ung. hydrarg. nitratis.
Petrolat. aa 3j
Ung. picis liquid. ʒiv. M.
Ft. Ung.

Sig.—As an ointment. (Rex.)

For *chronic rheumatism*, Prof. Da Costa prescribed as follows: Avoid nitrogenous foods: take plenty of exercise, and use alkaline baths freely each evening; also—

R Potas. iodid. gr. v.
Tinct. colchici sem. gtt. vij.
Syrup. zingiberis
Aquæ aa f3ss. M.

Sig.—Ter die.

In *amaurosis* resulting from over-indulgence in tobacco and alcoholic drinks, with a co-existing anæmia and general debility, Prof. Bartholow suggested the following plan of treatment: Pay proper attention to food, selecting good, nutritious and easily assimilated articles of diet. Give ol. morrhue and the phosphates, combined, perhaps, with the bichloride of mercury; and directed immediately to the amaurosis, order the occasional injection of $\frac{1}{6}$ gr. of strychnine into the temple.

Prof. Bartholow, for a man with *pseudo-angina*, ordered the following: Improve nutrition by—

R Ferri arseniat. gr. $\frac{1}{8}$
Ext. nucis vomice gr. $\frac{1}{4}$
Ol. morrhue ʒj
Syrup
Aquæ aa q. s. M.

Sig.—Ter die, after meals.

For the attacks of *angina*, sol. nitroglycer. con-tesimal, η j, to be increased to characteristic effects.

To tone the nervous system and improve blood in *chronic pleurisy*, Prof. Da Costa directed:—

R Tinct. ferri chloridi f3ss
Acid. acetic. dil. f3iij M.
Adde—
Liq. ammon. acetat. f3vj
Elixir. simplicis f3ix
Strychninæ gr. ss. M.

Sig.—Dessertspoonful ter die.

—Col. & Clin. Record.

IRRITABLE WEAKNESS.

EVERY student of medicine knows, when he is questioned on the subject, that there is no hard-and-fast line between the normal and the abnormal; that physiology runs into pathology. It is a mistake to describe life as a very slight process of inflammation, though in a certain curious fashion it may be so considered. Normal nutrition contains within itself the elements of inflammation, which is, in fact, an exaggerated and perverted condition of healthy tissue and vascular action. Whenever differences in degree are the subject of discussion, there is fertile ground for paradoxical statements.

The transition between healthy mental action and delirium is an almost imperceptible one, as is likewise the gradation between normal movements and abnormal ones. The mind is considerably exercised to understand how it is that involuntary movements should be so near akin to paralysis, or absolute want of movement. This department is perhaps one of the most instructive in the whole range of disease. We may examine it a little more closely. Take a normal ganglion cell of the motor kind in the spinal cord. Contemplate its healthy mode of existence. It responds only to stimuli from a special part of the cortex of the brain or from a certain region of the body, with both of which it is in special relation. Increase its irritability, by any of the numerous means, to a considerable extent, and it will discharge its energy "spontaneously." A lesser grade of irritability will render it liable to be discharged on the slightest provocation. Of course this is an illustration of disease, yet how little it apparently differs from a state of health. Although the phenomenon of "irritable weakness" has long been recognised, yet we are inclined to think that it is still insufficiently acknowledged in practice. Actual diseases of the spinal cord afford abundant illustration of the principle. As an example we may consider the "knee-jerk." There are good grounds for believing that the disappearance of this phenomenon is always preceded by a state of exaggeration, transient no doubt in many instances. Weakness of the heart shows itself much more by an increase in the rate of its action, although one might *a priori* be disposed to think that its debility ought to be manifested in the display of less energy. Strange as it may seem, *a priori* thinking is not far wrong even here, if we do but define what is meant by strength. The strongest man, like the most powerful or healthy nerve cell, is to be gauged by the power of self-control and by the deliberateness of actions. The truly strong man about to perform an act effects his object with the expenditure of the least amount of force necessary under the circumstances. The heart, with its work to do, acts in the same economic manner as if it were in