

with but little interference. If the bowels do not move in three days, a warm water enemata should be used, or, this failing, a compound aloë pill, a small dose of sal rochelle, or other similar mild laxatives.

In chronic constipation the physician should remember that it is not the symptoms, but the cause, to which he should direct his attention. It is often a symptom of some other disease. Its causes are so peculiar to the individual and depend upon so many variable habits of life that each case calls for special study. When we find the cause to be the habit of neglect, hurried eating, use of aperients, or whatever it may be, then we may consider the cure. The digestion is of great importance. If there is deficient secretion in either small or large bowels, it is apt to be associated with hepatic disturbance, and is marked by dull headache, bad taste, viscid secretions from buccal glands, etc. This condition is usually aggravated by cathartics, for although there is temporary improvement following temporary increase in secretions, there is corresponding decrease, and the patient is worse than before. Fruit, such as contain citric acid, as much as can be properly assimilated, serves a good purpose. An orange the first thing in the morning is often an excellent thing. Water is also a good remedy if taken freely in the morning. A slight saline may be added, as it increases its capability for absorption. A single grain of quinine will greatly add to its effect. If drugs are given, it should be those which aid intestinal digestion. The mineral waters are best suited to those cases dependent upon intestinal catarrh.

Deficient enervation, as found in old people and those of sedentary habits, is generally attended by deficient action of the skin and sallow complexion. In such cases water will be found to weaken digestive powers unless it can be combined with a different mode of life and an abundance of outdoor exercise. Cold bathing, plenty of exercise in the open air, electricity, massage, nux vomica, and belladonna will be helpful in keeping the rectum empty. Massage, for women, children, and feeble persons, will to some extent take the place of exercise.

The best diet for cases of atony of colon and rectum is one which is easily digested and contains a moderate amount of water. Porridge

of oatmeal or cracked wheat, with coarse bread, should be part of the daily diet. Too much vegetable matter is harmful, as the bowel is filled with an excess of water. In addition to the drugs mentioned, iron, quinine, and strychnia are useful.

Very often we must resort to aperients, and then good results may be obtained from aloes, cascara sagrada, sulphur, pulv. glycyrrhizæ co., podophyllin, and salines in doses just sufficient to produce the result desired and no more. These drugs used in rotation will be of much greater service than the continued use of any one. The continued use of water enemas has not in my practice been very servicable in the treatment of this affection, as after a time the bowel fails to respond. Glycerine, owing to its hygroscopic action, has given me much better results, and I have used it quite freely either in enemata or in 90 per cent. suppositories. In many cases it has effected a cure. Like all the other remedies, it is difficult to get the patients to attend to it faithfully and to carry out the treatment thoroughly.

Cumulative constipation occurs more frequently than is commonly supposed, as the true condition is so often masked by deceptive symptoms. Many cases of diarrhœa are from an accumulation of fecal matter in the colon, and for this reason do not yield to the usual remedies applied. All this class of cases, either in children or adults, can be readily treated by flushing the colon by injecting from one-half to a gallon of hot water. It acts promptly, and has less reaction than purgatives. It cannot do any great harm where the bowel has been so much distended with its load of filth. The colon must be thoroughly flushed by using a large quantity of water to make the treatment efficacious. Dr. Fields, in an article on this phase of constipation in the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* of November, 1889, advises in all cases twenty freshly prepared compound rhubarb pills, one to be taken every hour. He says: "In very bad cases this has made complete cures in twenty-four hours without any injurious reaction." Of course, whatever plan of treatment may be adopted at first, the after treatment must be carefully looked after.

Surgical treatment has been tried with good results in very obstinate cases of constipation.