

oles are contracted, and the circulation through the brain is decidedly deranged. Certain drugs and acid drinks will throw down the uric acid out of the blood; but at the expense of a recurrence of the rheumatic pains in the joints.

Prof. Lange has given a great deal of study to the important fact that suicides prevail in the hot months. Indeed, July has been called the month of suicides. This can, to a great extent, be explained by the fact that the blood at this season of the year is in the condition of uric acidæmia. The arterioles are contracted, and the cerebral circulation not free. Mental depression follows. In these facts we have an explanation for the facts that suicides are more frequent during the hot months than at any other season of the year.

In various papers during the past four years, I have shown the relationship existing between uric acid in the blood and epilepsy, migraine, neuralgia, uræmic convulsions and some allied conditions. These papers have appeared at different times in the *Medical News*, *Therapeutic Gazette* and *Alienist and Neurologist*. So far as these observations go, they all tend to confirm the ground so ably maintained by Haig.

It is a well-known fact that during fasting the alkalinity of the blood falls very considerably. Any uric acid in the blood would tend to be precipitated. This fact was specially emphasized by Sir W. Roberts a short time ago. He made it clear that, to those who are subject to renal calculi, the greatest period of danger is toward morning, when the acid wave sets in. To guard against this acid wave and the formation of renal calculi, he urges that the person should live on a non-gouty diet, should take some digestible nourishment a short time before retiring, and some alkali at bed time. For this purpose he recommends a good dose of citrate of potash in a glass of water. All this is thoroughly scientific. The alkali, in these cases, may do good or may do no good, just as it is given at the right time or not.

Those cases of dead hands, where the circulation is almost arrested in the fingers, due to contraction of the arterioles, are due to the uric acid diathesis. This distressing condition is an ally of gout. The great majority of those intense headaches of the migrainous type are nothing other than one of the protean forms of the same condition.

The treatment of these cases is of much interest. Drugs will do much to assist, but will not cure. The gouty diathesis is a food diathesis, and can be cured only by regulating the diet. The diet should be largely a non-nitrogenous one. Milk should take the place of meat to a great extent. A vegetable diet, which raises the alkalinity of the blood, is to be advocated. All indulgence in ales, beers, wines, etc., which lower the alkalinity of the blood, and consequently favour retention, within the system, of the uric acid compounds, should be prohibited. From what has been said the *raison d'être* for the water cure, the hot springs' cure, the grape cure for chronic rheumatism and gout, will readily be seen.

The action of drugs would require too much time for this paper. One thing I may urge, namely, that the sodium salts are not so good as the potassium salts, for the sodium compounds with uric acid are not so soluble as the potassium compounds with the same agent. Further, it may be mentioned that lithium salts are almost valueless in the treatment of the uric acid diathesis. Potassium salicylate is better than sodium salicylate. The views that rheumatism is due to some nervous condition, to a germ, or to lactic acid, may be dismissed at once; and the treatment consequently directed in proper channels.