

else which goes to make the body healthy and strong. In ordinary attacks of neuralgia heat to the afflicted nerves gives most relief. This may be given by wrappings of flannel or applications of a hot water bag or a small tin Japanese warmer, which is very convenient in applying heat to the face; or it may be given in the shape of flaxseed poultices. The latter are useful in intercostal neuralgia and lumbago and various forms of neuralgia of the internal organs. In severe cases of sciatic and other neuralgia cold has been applied with great success by the use of ice bags bound to the line of the nerve trunk; this treatment, with rest, has been found very efficacious in obstinate cases. Quinine, strychnine and phenacetine are the most popular remedies for neuralgia, but as neuralgia is very often the main symptom of many other troubles and is not more than once in ten cases due to trouble in the nerve itself, it is impossible to lay down a definite treatment with much prospect of beneficial results. If you are afflicted with neuralgia, you should have it interpreted and with it have mapped out the line of treatment to be followed.

ANCESTRAL GOUT.

One who should know says that "gout is the manufactured product of civilization." It has been not without a certain degree of pride that the statement is made: "There has always been gout in our family"—a fashionable malady, since it has represented a pedigree. It is, however, lapsing in popularity, and one of the triumphs of modern medicine is seen in the decrease in the severity of the attacks of gout. Gout is the disease of men; women inherit from their convivial fathers a gouty condition to which is given the name of goutiness.

Gout is often regarded as an incurable malady. It is curable in its lighter manifestations, but when the deposits of urate of soda are made about the small joints it is incurable in the sense that it is impossible to remove these manifestations and deformities which it causes. The best medical minds in the world have been occupied with this problem. A few years ago Edison, regarding these deposits from a chemical standpoint, thought that the masses could be dissipated by electricity. He made experiments, finding some old men who were willing to spend the time necessary and they sat hour after hour with their gouty joints immersed in a liquid in which were placed the electrodes of a battery. It was thought at first that the results would be successful, but time proved otherwise.

Why gout should attack only the small joints of the body and prefer to all others that of the great toe is one of the mysteries which give rise to much speculation. It is thought that it is because these joints are more exposed to injuries and to cold. The great toe bears the brunt of pressure in walking and is more apt to be injured. A case, for instance, is cited of gout in the big toe that was accounted for by the patient's habit of holding the bedclothes in position during sleep by pressing his big toe against the foot of the bed. Another case of gout was proved to have been caused by a mother dancing her child upon her knee with the foot resting on the big toe alone.

A review of the causes of gout suggests some methods of treatment. It has been seen that in persons who inherit the tenderness the attacks are brought about by exposure, over-work, mental and physical, and imprudence in eating and drinking. It is evident that over-work and exposure should be avoided. In regard to the diet, opinions vary greatly as to what is admissible, and all kinds of regimens have been followed. The error often is to reduce the diet too much. It is not well to follow exclusively either a meat or a vegetable diet. The diet of gout is also that of rheumatism. It should be simple and nutritious, rich pastries, gravies, made dishes and, in short, banqueting being avoided. The vegetables to be eaten are the non-starchy types—those that in contradistinction to the tubers grow above ground. Salads and uncooked fruits should not be eaten. The mistake should not be made, as is sometimes the case, of eating too little, in deference to the popular notion that gout may come from over-indulgence. It is also likely to result if the system is depressed from over-abstemiousness.

THE TEMPER AND THE HEART.

In these diseases the popular anxiety is in regard to the heart, and the popular symptom of gout is irascibility of temper. The latter has a foundation in fact, and an excuse for its indulgence. As the urate of soda is deposited about the joints

of the gouty, so it is deposited in the tissues of the brain, the result being seen in the display of brain action, which exhibits oftentimes a hasty unreasonableness. Combine with this the nervous exhaustion which comes from enduring severe pain and, when the gouty old man on the stage is testy and irritable, you can see that the mirror is held up to Nature and that he has a right to be so. "Patience and flannel" are the two traditional remedies recommended for gout.

The heart troubles in neuralgia, gout and rheumatism arise from the conditions characteristic of each. In neuralgia the great nerve which goes to the stomach, the heart and the lungs may be affected in the same manner as the external nerve trunks.

The pain from this form of neuralgia is unendurable and must have speedy relief. The so-called gouty heart is crippled because of the deposit of urate of soda on the valves. If this is extensive, it can be seen that the result must be serious. It is not strange, therefore, that one speaks of the gouty heart with apprehension. In rheumatism the trouble is also in the valves, but is of the same nature as that which deforms the joints—namely, the warping of and contractions of the fibrous tissues. The fibrous tissues of the valves of the heart are deformed, rendering them leaky, or they may be hung with fringes of inflammatory tissue. This is sometimes carried away by the blood current and swept up to the brain, the smaller pieces going to the smaller blood vessels which supply certain parts of the brain. This action causes chorea or disturbance of motion or speech. Fortunately these cases are not very common.

ABOUT RHEUMATISM.

There remain some points about rheumatism which should be considered. One authority describes the disease as an obscure and obstinate pain which appears in fifteen different places—the two hips, the two knees, the two ankles, the two shoulders, the two elbows, the two wrists, the two hands and the heart. Why it should select the large joints of the body has been as much a matter of conjecture as why the gout should elect the smaller joints. Rheumatism, as has been said, occurs in the muscles and in the covering of the muscles. This last is a fibrous tissue, and as there is an abundance about the joints, this is probably the reason why rheumatism affects the large joints where the fibrous tendons of the muscles are inserted, and for the same reason attacks the valves of the heart.

The discovery of the efficacy of the salicylate of soda in the treatment of acute rheumatism was a great boon to mankind. It has changed the character of rheumatic attacks. It is good also in cases of rheumatism of long standing in which the pain is severe. The oil of wintergreen has also been found beneficial. These medicines are to rheumatism what colchicum is to gout, for this is the great medicine in gout, either used as a wine or in the extract. It is rather depressing in its effects.

Heat and rest are the great aids in curing both rheumatism and gout. Very recently an apparatus has been constructed for applying heat to the affected joints by placing them in what might be called an iron oven, so that only the afflicted part is exposed. The heat is raised to what would be supposed to be an intolerable degree, but the parts bear it well, and persons who have tried it say that the process is not painful. The joints are said to lose the pain and stiffness, to become supple and flexible, and even the deformities are said to improve and in some instances to have disappeared. It remains to be seen whether these claims will stand the test of time.

The use of mineral waters in gout and rheumatism is increasing, and the treatment of hot baths and drinking of medicated waters at mineral springs has been greatly recommended and indulged in both here and in Europe, and in many cases with satisfactory results. At the spas abroad the life is regulated, exercise and food being prescribed, as well as the bathing and the drinking of the waters. Lithia waters are used for gout and rheumatism by many, though lithia is apt to upset the stomach. Tablets of lithia have been prepared which can be added to drinking water. Carlsbad salts taken before breakfast are of benefit in both gout and rheumatism, and the drinking of pure spring water or distilled water in the quantity that mineral waters are usually taken will be beneficial. As a general thing not enough pure water is taken by grown persons. It promotes the processes of assimilation and acts upon the kidneys at whose door in these diseases which we have been considering—neuralgia, rheumatism and gout—many good authorities lay all the blame.

GRACE PECKHAM MURRAY.