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THE PATHOLOGY OF URÆMIC INTOXICATIONS.¹

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In venturing to address you this evening on the subject of uræmic intoxications, I am not unmindful of the difficulties that are inseparable from the problem which I shall undertake to discuss. Indeed it cannot be denied that one of the attractions of this subject is the obscurity which surrounds the oft-recurring phenomena which we call uræmic—phenomena that have excited the interest and baffled the insight of Richard Bright, of Traube, of Frerichs, and of many lesser intellects.

Although a study of uræmia that has extended over many years does not make it possible for me to isolate, as definitely as could be wished, the pathological factors concerned in the production of the symptoms of uræmia, I believe I can, at least, indicate the direction in which we should look for an explanation of the nature of these symptoms. It will be my purpose to show that the clinical phenomena which we include under the term uræmia are dependent on toxæmic states rather than upon primarily mechanical causes. In doing this I shall make use of observations which I have accumulated from the study of the blood in 28 cases of uræmia, which have either been observed by me in my medical service in the City Hospital, or have been placed at my disposal by interested colleagues. In addition to this, I shall draw upon facts which have come to my knowledge from a study of experimental uræmic states. It would be a satisfaction to present these facts in full detail, but as this could hardly be done without exhausting your patience, a summary of results must suffice for the present.

¹ Read before the Montreal Medico-Chirurgical Society, at McGill University March 4, 1898.