

arsenic in skin diseases and in numerous affections of the nutritive functions. The foregoing statements of these observers are largely confirmatory of the idea long held of the power of arsenic in nutrition and its ability in all forms of disease where impaired or disordered conditions of the function of nutrition are concerned.

In my experience, without this condition arsenic is not indicated in any form of disease. If we look at the long list of diseases where this drug has been recommended in our text books we must come to the conclusion as to the correctness of this statement. True, close discrimination is often required.

In prescribing any remedy, the great point is to know when it is indicated, or, in other words, the deranged or impaired condition known as disease requiring the use of that drug or remedy. Here is the difficulty we all encounter in treating disease with drugs. A dozen or more drugs are recommended for one disease; how are we to select the proper one? Is there a characteristic or definite symptom which will enable us to select the drug and prescribe it with confidence of success? If there be in our treatment by drug medication one difficulty greater than another, I feel it here. Let me illustrate what I mean by the recital of one or two cases:

Some years ago I chanced to have under treatment about the same time two cases of pleurisy with effusion, one a young man of twenty years, well-built, medium sized and in a general way up to the time of his illness, passing as healthy. His antecedents were inclined to be tuberculous; I understand one uncle died of tuberculosis. The patient was taken ill with pain in side and ordinary symptoms of pleuritis. After trying various remedies, I was obliged to aspirate the chest in order to relieve distressing symptoms, removing about three quarts of fluid. In less than a week the pleural cavity was as full as ever. Again I aspirated, removing about the same quantity. This was repeated four or five times within six weeks, each time the amount seemingly increasing. In the meantime, potassium iodide and several other drugs had been tried, but with no effect, the case seemed to go from bad to worse. In despair I tried the use of arsenic, Fowler's solution, 5 drops every 4 hours till its physiological effect was shown on the eyes. In three days' time I again examined the chest and no fluid was found in the pleural cavity and it never returned. At the time arsenic was prescribed, the patient was pale, anæmic with marked dryness of the skin and some scaly eruptions on different parts of the body—a true picture of faulty nutrition.