

of Dublin, the latest writer on this branch, to place it in a class which he has arranged to provide for this and porrigo (which is now known to be owing to a vegetable parasite), under the name of *DERMATOPHYTÆ*. The transmission of the seeds of this plant is supposed to render the disease contagious; and hence there would seem to be some foundation for the popular opinion which has long prevailed, that it is communicated by the razor in shaving, as the name of *barber's itch* would seem to imply. What relation this vegetable parasite bears to the cutaneous affection, whether that of cause or of effect, would seem to be yet an open question. It is certain that mentagra can arise without such direct contact from a razor, in some cases at least, as I once had a patient in whose case eating of cheese was sure to bring out an eruption of this nature, and have had other cases in which the patient had not been shaved by a barber for years; and in the present case, indeed, the patient has two brothers who have been in the habit of shaving with the same razor that he has, for several years, in neither of whom is there the least trace of the disease. I could add, also, that I have treated and cured cases without any special reference to such parasitical connection. It would seem, therefore, as though a favorable idius must exist, in the shape of some predisposition, either local or general, for the propagation of the disease, as is seen in *savus*, in which there is evidently a contagious element of some kind, and which has also its own vegetable parasite, and still is only contagious under certain favorable circumstances, a fact which renders its communication of much less frequent occurrence than would be the case under other circumstances.

Under the former view of the pathology of mentagra, the course of treatment pursued was that of purgatives, laxatives, and alteratives internally, and emollient and sedative applications externally, in the early stage, and more or less stimulating, or more especially resolvent ointments, as the disease became more chronic. Among the ointments used were those of iodide of sulphur and iodide of potassium, of the former 10 to 30 grains to the ounce of lard, and of the latter from 5 ss. to 3 j. I have also used an ointment of iodide of lead with advantage, and sometimes creasote ointment. These iodine ointments are most useful after the inflammatory stage has passed, when tubercular indurations only are left. Bathing the part with warm water, two or three times daily, and particularly a douche of vapor of hot water directed to the part for fifteen minutes or half an hour, will be found to assist the action of the resolvent ointments. The beard should be kept closely cut with scissors, and the use of a razor rigidly abstained from. The diet should be light and unstimulating. The result, under the use of the best regulated means, is often quite unsatisfactory.

The treatment, in accordance with the parasitical view of the disease, is much more simple, and of much shorter duration; and is said by its advocates to be not only speedy but certain, and consequently much more satisfactory. It consists in removing each individual hair of the part affected, by means of forceps, without any previous preparation, and then making an application to destroy the vegetable parasite. The removal of the hair in this way is somewhat painful in recent cases, but in those of long standing causes but little inconvenience. As soon as the hair is re-