

Special Selections

ON COLON CATARRH.*

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Under the heading of colon catarrh I propose to include certain morbid conditions of the colon which in their extreme developments present somewhat differing clinical pictures, but which nevertheless have as their common factor a catarrhal irritability of the colon and which are connected together by so many intermediate types of disease that their inclusion under one common heading seems justifiable. The conditions I refer to are: (1) Simple acute catarrhal colitis; (2) subacute and chronic simple catarrh of the colon intermediate between No. 1 and No. 3; (3) the so-called "muco-membranous colitis," also called "membranous colitis"; (4) mucous colic; (5) true catarrhal typhlitis.

I do not include under the heading colon catarrh, the various types of ulcerative inflammation of the colon of more or less specific origin.

VARIETIES OF COLON CATARRH.

1. By simple acute catarrhal colitis I mean what is recognized as the ordinary acute inflammatory condition of the colon due to errors of diet, chill, etc., and is characterized by colicky pain, colon tenderness, diarrhea, and the passage of much mucus, and sometimes blood in the stools—a morbid condition ably described under the above heading in Allbutt's "System of Medicine."

2. The heading "subacute and chronic catarrh" really includes all the three remaining types to be spoken of, but the term is used here to include those cases which cannot be classified as true membranous colitis, mucous colic, or typhlitis. These less characteristic cases constitute, in the writer's experience, a considerable portion of the cases of colon catarrh met with, and to them the description of the disease here given very largely applies.

3. By "muco-membranous" or "membranous" colitis I mean the condition usually described under these names, characterized by pain, constipation, passage of so-called membranes in

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