

## ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

## THE THERAPEUSIS IN CONJUNCTIVAL INFLAMMATIONS.\*

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MANY years ago the ideas existent in the minds of medical men at large regarding the therapy in conjunctival disease were notable for their indistinctness above all else. The treatment was purely empirical and so allowed no range for individuality or ingenuity on the part of the physician, hence he sought safety in polypharmacy and prescribed the old gun-shot eye-drops or used his caustic stick in a manner that has made his name famous upon his native heath until this day. There were in his mind few indications for the exhibition of any one drug and so zinc, lead, silver, alum, boric acid, opium and belladonna were by many jumbled together and used assiduously by believing patients. The light of modern medicine has dispelled much of that darkness, yet many of us have even now only the crudest ideas regarding the importance of rational treatment in all cases of conjunctival inflammation and need an awakening along these lines.

Not ignorance but thoughtlessness is at the foundation of such conduct; perhaps an excusable thoughtlessness, for ordinarily the physician's mind is so fully concerned with matters of life and death, it is small wonder the minimizes the importance of possible corneal opacity or future irregular astigmatism, while he may spend sleepless hours worrying over two inches of shortening in a fractured leg. Yet I venture to say that a man with one femur two inches shorter than the other after fracture, is not handicapped in the life struggle to the same extent as his competitor with a visual acuity of only 6-24 due to irregular astigmatism following a deep corneal ulcer, which his physician has hurriedly dismissed as a "bad cold in the eye."

That lack of thought regarding these painful and important maladies still exists; and that errors in therapy with subsequent disaster consequent upon that carelessness are still too common must be acknowledged by all. Some such have lately come under my notice and have in part prompted this paper; three or four I shall mention, knowing they will recall others of which you are cognisant either in your own practices or those of your friends.

An acquaintance of mine in Melbourne told me not long ago of the shocking way two corneæ melted away after the instillation at his command of silver nitrate drops, ten grains in the ounce: he was firm in the belief that his drastic application had far more to do with it than had

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\*At a Saturday afternoon clinic in the Orthopedic Hospital, Toronto.