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BELLADONNA IN SOME SKIN AFFECTIONS.

Read before the St. John Medical Society,
15th May 1895, by Dr. G. P. Dougherty.

The few remarks I am about to make this evening scarcely rise to the dignity of a paper, and I trust that you will deal leniently with this my first effort before your society. My attention was called to the use of belladonna in skin affections by an article published in the October number of the *Therapeutic Gazette* from the pen of Dr. Danbar of Zurich. It was a paper read before the section of Dermatology held at Bristol, Eng., 1894. This communication was based on 35 cases of which 30 or about 85 per cent were relieved or cured. The detailed account given of some of the more striking cases indicates that relief seems to have come very soon after the exhibition of the medicine.

Dr. Dunbar made use of the remedy in such cases as exhibited irritation of the skin as eczema, prurigo, puritus and urticaria. Considering the amount of failure I had heretofore experienced while attempting to carry out the best authorized plans of treatment laid down in the text books on skin disease, I thought it advisable to give the belladonna treatment a trial. I first

prescribed belladonna in a case of acute eczema of the face and hands, with subacute eczema of the lower extremities scrotum and penis. The patient, a laborer 45 years of age, consulted me first on the 6th of October 1894. There was at that time eczema of the thighs, legs, scrotum and penis. There was exfoliation leaving a reddened and thickened surface which was intensely itchy. The patient complained of loss of appetite and a furred tongue pointed to disordered digestion; I prescribed a grain pill of calomel to be taken for 3 consecutive nights and a Seidlitz powder the following mornings. A stomachic tonic was also ordered. Locally, I had the parts bathed with a solution containing 3 drachms of carbolic acid and an ounce of glycerine to the pint of warm water, after which a little oxide of zinc was to be dusted on. The treatment seemed to modify all the symptoms, but after a fortnight very little seemed to have been accomplished towards a cure. However, I ordered a continuance of the treatment and did not see the patient until the 2nd of November. On that occasion he was suffering from an acute attack of eczema of the face and hands. There was considerable swelling, particularly of the face. There was also an aggravation of the former affection of the lower extremities. I prescribed belladonna tincture in 15