

Translations.

THE DANGER OF ACTIVE REMEDIES IN CASES OF RENAL LESION.

It is now rather a long time since this curious symptom—viz: the impermeability of the kidney to odours, in albuminuria was remarked; thus it is that in these patients the absorption of turpentine or of asparagus does not give rise to the usual characteristic odour in the urine. Dr. Beauvais had even pointed out the fact, as sufficing, for himself, to establish the existence of Bright's disease. When this defect of elimination is produced by active remedies, as opium, belladonna, etc., serious accidents may occur, hence the conclusion that these substances become poisons, even in small doses, in cases of renal alteration. M. Chauvet has fully demonstrated this fact in his thesis, by the observations which he has collected, and has shown at the same time by experiments that the mode of elimination of certain remedies is greatly modified by kidney disease. Take the sulphate of quinine, for example, its elimination by the kidney in healthy subjects commences twenty-five minutes after its ingestion, and lasts three or four hours; moreover, there is found in the urine more than a quarter of the amount ingested. In persons whose kidneys are affected, on the contrary, the sulphate of quinine delays a much longer time in showing itself in the urine; its elimination may continue for eight hours, and the total quantity eliminated varies between one-tenth and one-fiftieth of what was taken. These experiments were made upon a large number of different subjects.

The bromide of potassium, whose elimination is completed twenty hours after withholding the remedy in a healthy subject, lasts thirty or forty days in one whose kidneys are diseased.

Analogous results have been observed with the iodide of potassium, whose elimination otherwise is much more rapid.

M. Chauvet reports also two cases in which rapid and most serious mercurial intoxication occurred, produced by the absorption of Van Swieten's liquid in very moderate doses in the first case, and by a cauterization with the acid

nitrate of mercury in the second. In these two cases Bright's disease was found at the autopsy; the kidneys, acting only very imperfectly, had not been able to sufficiently eliminate the mercury, hence the fatal results.

English authors, who have well observed this susceptibility in albuminuric patients, advise the disuse of mercurials in patients affected with Bright's disease, salivation occurring more rapidly in them than in the normal state.

The author again cites two other observations, in which accidents occurred from small doses of opium and atropine. In the former death resulted, in the latter—subsequent to an instillation of atropine for an iritis—symptoms of atropia poisoning occurred; the patient dying later, tubercular kidneys were discovered.

From the totality of these facts it results then that diseases of the kidneys render toxic, even when administered in small doses, certain active remedies, and that before ordering these it would be prudent to examine carefully into the state of the urinary secretions. Moreover, an important fact from a medico-legal point of view, in an examination relative to poisoning by the alkaloids and the medicines called active, one ought rigorously to note the condition of the kidneys, since, as has been seen elsewhere in an analogous case, a medicinal dose may cause death under particular circumstances.—*Journal de Medecine et de Chirurgie Pratiques.*

ON THE ABSORPTION OF MEDICINES THROUGH THE MUCOUS MEMBRANE OF THE VAGINA.

Dr. E. W. Hombuyer, of Franzensbad, has made several experiments to prove to what extent medicines were taken up through the mucous membrane of the vagina. The experiments were made in the following way.—Two tampons of clean cotton-wool, soaked in the solution of the substance, were introduced into the vagina through Ferguson's Speculum, after which two dry tampons were afterwards introduced. The tampons were allowed to remain for twenty-four hours. The urine examined for the medicinal substance was drawn with the catheter, so that it could not possibly be mixed with the substance in its passage out.