

Retrospect Department.

QUARTERLY RETROSPECT OF MEDICINE.

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Lithæmic Manifestations in the Upper Air Passages.—In the *American Journal of the Medical Sciences* Dr. A. Whitehall Hinkel calls attention to this subject as one which has hitherto received but slight attention. The author uses the term *lithæmia*, as Murchison used it, to express a condition of suboxidation and overcharging of the blood and excretions with excretory matter in a state of faulty elaboration, due to inherent and hereditary abnormality of function or to prolonged exposure to depressing environment. Lithæmic manifestations in the upper air passages fail to present conditions that invariably announce their origin, and they are not uniform in type, but at the same time certain given appearances or symptoms are more or less connected with lithæmia and suggest treatment for that condition, whatever local measures may be indicated. A patchy congestion of the laryngeal face of the epiglottis, extending along the arytaeno-epiglottic folds and over the posterier aspect of the ventricular bands, is occasionally seen in cases of irritable sore throat associated with lithæmia. There is a harsh, dry cough, with a sense of extreme irritation about the larynx. This patchy congestion of the mucous membrane has been observed by means of the cystoscope in the bladder of a lithæmic patient. A case cited, which was aggravated by aromatic inhalations, mild astringent sprays, etc., was promptly relieved by alkalies and antizymotics, together with inhalations of diluted lime-water and a carefully arranged diet. This patchy condition may exist in the pharynx, extending in streaks along the postero-lateral walls, with a sense of uneasiness or pain on swallowing. The pain of gouty sore throat appears severe, out of all proportion to the degree of inflammation. Lithic storms have been accompanied by marked naso-pharyngeal catarrh, not present in appreciable degree during the intervals, the symptoms appearing several days before the digestive and other disturbances.*

* The New York Medical Journal, Feb. 15th, 1890.