

of proteid matter by other than toxic agencies and more especially as the result of impaired nutrition of the epithelium dependent on arrest or stagnation of the blood flow through the capillaries. Most forms of albuminuria probably depend on one or the other of these agencies. The main interest of albuminuria to the practitioner arises from the difficulties in the interpretation of its true significance rather than any difficulty in the diagnosis of its presence.

Errors in testing the urine may fail to reveal the presence of albumin especially when we are dealing with only small quantities and certain forms of albuminuria, such as that variety spoken of as albumosuria, may be overlooked by improper or careless testing, but on the whole most of our mistakes with reference to this condition arise from attaching an improper significance to its presence, and very often from our treatment being too much directed to an attempt to diminish the albuminuria or from its presence preventing our using useful drugs from an undue fear of complications resulting therefrom.

Serious organic disease of the kidneys may sometimes be overlooked owing to the urine being examined but once and conclusions being drawn from the absence of any albumin, since it must be remembered that in some organic diseases, especially granular kidney, albuminuria is not necessarily persistent, and hence repeated examinations may be necessary in order to exclude this malady.

The presence or absence of organic disease usually reveals itself by other characteristic changes in the urine, such as alterations in the quantity and specific gravity, quite apart from the presence of albumin, and one of the most common mistakes of practice is to draw far-reaching conclusions, sometimes of grave import to the patient, from the mere presence of albumin. This mistake is liable to be made both in cases where there is much, and also in cases where there is but little albumin.

In this address I propose especially to consider the interpretation of the significance of albuminuria and for this purpose the following varieties may be recognized: First, the so-called functional albuminuria, which is of ever-increasing