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ART. XXI.—ON THE TREATMENT OF CHRONIC INFLAMMATION OF THE BLADDER BY INJECTIONS OF NITRATE OF SILVER.

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I believe it will be generally admitted, that of all diseases, few occasion more anxiety and embarrassment to the medical practitioner, or are productive of more misery and suffering to the afflicted patient, than chronic inflammation of the bladder; the consequence of previous disease of the urinary apparatus, as gonorrhœa or stricture, or as a primary affection produced by other and more general causes.

In either case, when once fully established, it entails the most excruciating suffering on its victim, prevents him following his usual avocations, debars him from society, and not unfrequently produces death, either from the morbid action extending to the ureters and kidneys, from ulceration corroding through the walls of the viscus, or from the exhaustion of the system it is certain to induce.*

In a disease of such importance, it is only to be expected that numerous remedies should have been proposed for its cure, and consequently we find agents of various natures strongly recommended by practical writers, yet they all admit the difficulty attending the treatment of the malady, and the failure that has followed the use of their favorite remedies.†

Some years ago, Mons. Lallemand, the eminent pro-

fessor of Montpellier, discovered, accidentally,* the great value of nitrate of silver in chronic inflammation of the bladder, and the utility of this plan was shown in a paper by Dr. O'Bryen, in the fourteenth volume of the Dublin Medical Journal. But this gentleman does not appear to have had any personal experience of its employment, and moreover, he confines his remarks to the use of the solid nitrate, the form preferred by Lallemand.

I am not aware that he has done more in this matter than introduce to the notice of British surgeons the views of the distinguished professor.

When a student of the Richmond Surgical Hospital, Dublin, I had an opportunity of seeing my friend and former preceptor, Dr. Hutton, (to whom I am indebted for much information that I have found valuable in my profession,) inject the bladder with a weak solution of nitrate of silver, but as this had (if I recollect rightly) but little effect upon the disease, the practice was abandoned in the hospital, nor have I since either seen it employed or heard of its being employed by any one but myself, and I can find no mention of it in those valuable records of medical practice—Braithwaite's Retrospect, and Ranking's Digest, or in the recently published Systems of Surgery.

Having met with some cases of chronic cystitis, that resisted general treatment, and bearing in mind the great success which attended the application of nitrate of silver in substance, in the hands of Lallemand, I determined to give the remedy a further trial in the form of solution, and the success I met with, has far surpassed my most sanguine expectations; I have now no hesitation in stating, that as far as pure uncomplicated chronic inflammation of the bladder is concerned, *that the operation has been removed from surgery, and that we do possess a method of treatment followed by a greater amount of success than usually attends remedies em-*

* CRUVELIER, in the details of one of his cases, depicts the sufferings of his unfortunate patient, in the following words,—
 "Alors se manifestèrent des besoins fréquents et imperieuses d'uriner avec contractions douloureuses de la vessie et douleur à l'extrémité de la verge, les urines devinrent catarrhales, le malade presenta tous les symptômes du catarrh vesical."—"Au bout de quelque temps, les douleurs devinrent tellement vives et tellement rapprochées qu'il lui fut impossible de quitter la chambre."—"Le malade survécut trois mois d'agonie les besoins d'uriner fréquents pressants douloureux contractions violentes detoutes les puissances expultrices, tellement que le defecation accompagnait souvent l'émision des urines."

† Sir Benjamin Brodie, the highest British authority on surgery, and who has devoted so much attention to diseases of the urinary organs, says "there is no disease for which an improved method of treatment is more wanted than for this, which has hitherto been the opprobrium of surgery."—*Lectures on the Diseases of the Urinary Organs.*

* "When applying caustic to the neck of the bladder, the instrument slipped and cauterized the lining membrane of that reservoir, and to his great astonishment, the patient was cured of a chronic catarrh, as well as the affection for which it was intentionally employed. Speaking of this, in one of his lectures, he used the following language:—*La première fois que cette accident, m'arriva, J'eus pendant plusieurs jours des vives inquiétudes, sur les conséquences qui pouvaient en résulter, mais ils ne se manifesta aucune phénomène facheur.*"—*O'Bryen, Dublin Medical Journal, Vol. xiv.*