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Selections: Medicine.

TREATMENT OF ASTHMA BY IODIDE OF POTASSIUM AND IODIDE OF ETHYL.

M. Germain Sée, the learned Professor of Medicine in the *Faculté de Médecine* who lately introduced medication by the salicylates with so much *éclat* and success, has recently been making new discoveries in the domain of therapeutics. The object of his experiments this time (asthma) has been about as inveterate and intractable an enemy to human health and comfort as was the rheumatic subject of his former studies which the salicylates have done so much to mitigate, and it only remains to hope that experience at large will verify his last discovery as fully as its predecessor. We subjoin an account of his experience taken from *L'Union Médicale*. "After the trials made, with varying success, both by French and foreign physicians, of the employment of iodide of potassium in asthma, M. Sée, in 1859, conceived the idea of trying upon his own account this form of medication for the relief of so cruel and rebellious a disease. He had collected a number (24) of observations of patients whom he had been able to follow, some for a year at least, others during two, three, and four years. This number comprised 4 children, 6 adolescents, 10 adults, and 4 aged. In all these cases, except one, he obtained most remarkable results, totally regardless of the variety of asthma with which they were affected. At the end of some hours after the administration of the remedy he was able to observe a notable diminution of the symptoms

of dyspnoea and oppression. The severer attacks were generally arrested at the end of 24 or 48 hours, and by persisting in the employment of the remedy the disease itself was definitively removed. By giving the medicine some hours before the usual attack he had been able to prevent the paroxysm; and by giving it during the paroxysm he had succeeded in notably diminishing its intensity. M. Sée begins by administering the iodide of potassium in doses of $22\frac{1}{2}$ grains, sometimes alone, sometimes with the addition of half to one grain of extract of opium. When the oppression is considerable he administers 15 to 30 grains of chloral at night to promote sleep. The doses of iodide of potassium are gradually increased from $22\frac{1}{2}$ grains to 30, and even 45 grains per day, taken at meal times so as not to disturb the stomach. M. Sée has observed that symptoms of iodism, when they have occurred, have been produced as readily if not more readily by small than by large doses of the remedy, so much so that, following the example of M. Gosselin, it has happened to him more than once to arrest the first symptoms of iodism by doubling the dose of the preparation of iodine. The primary action of the iodide of potassium is to notably increase the secretions of the respiratory mucous membrane, and thus to liquefy the bronchial mucosities, the dryness of which renders the paroxysms of dyspnoea so painful for the patients, and thus causes to disappear the dry and sibilant *rales* of the early stage, to diminish the difficulty of respiration, and render it freer and easier at the end of some hours by permitting the atmospheric air to penetrate completely to the pulmonary