

REPORT OF A CASE OF PRIMARY CARCINOMA OF THE LIVER.

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The history of this case is rather interesting, illustrating as it does how much progress an incurable disease process may have made without exhibiting any subjective signs and, in patients of the insane class, with very little subjective feeling of discomfort.

The patient, R. R., was admitted some ten years before her death, age 45; her family history being negative, no heredity, alcohol or syphilis. Personal history: Patient has been a seamstress, always worked hard and had constantly complained of various somatic disorders, but except for a condition of chronic constipation, she was really in fair physical health. Her hypochondriacal condition, with slight affect depression, necessitated her being committed to the Buffalo State Hospital, where she remained until the time of her death. Her mental condition slowly grew worse and she finally demented.

During the entire time of her residence in the hospital she continued to complain of various ills, but careful physical examinations failed to discover any cause for her subjective expression of malaise. She ate and slept well, adapted herself to the hospital routine and led an automatic, almost vegetative, existence. In November she complained of feeling very weak and she was ordered to bed, and on examination it was noticed that she was anaemic. A few days later she became markedly jaundiced. The skin of her face became quite yellow as did also the conjunctivæ. Constipation, which had been present for some time, became more marked, and when the patient had a stool it was of a very light clay color and bile was also demonstrated in the urine. Patient later complained of pain in the right epigastric and hypochondriac regions, the abdomen became distended and there was some dullness in the flanks.

The liver did not appear to be enlarged, the edge was distinctly palpable and no nodules could be felt. There was no enlargement of the spleen. A provisional diagnosis of hepatic cancer was made at this time.

About two weeks later patient developed a pneumonia on the right side which was only discovered when there was increased rapidity of respiration and pulse rate—there was no pyrexia and only slight coughing, no complaint of any feeling of distress in the chest. Patient died two days later.

The autopsy report is as follows: Body is well nourished—markedly jaundiced throughout. Rigor mortis not well marked—no post-mortem discolorations. Right lung pleura adherent