

attacks. The presence of infectious disease of any kind tends to increase this tendency, as does also the operation of all causes having a depressing influence on the resisting power of the nervous system (worry, exposure to cold, and traumatism.)

2. There is no sharp dividing line between certain cases of chronic rheumatism and the earlier stages of rheumatoid arthritis.

3. There is not sufficient evidence to support the views commonly held, as to the nervous origin of rheumatoid arthritis.

4. There is no direct relationship between tuberculosis and rheumatoid arthritis.

5. The polyarticular forms of rheumatoid arthritis have clinically the features of an infectious disease.

6. The result of recent investigations points very strongly to its infectious nature.

I have only a few words to say on the treatment of the disease, especially on the treatment by super-heated air baths.

It is universally recognized that the medicinal treatment is very unsatisfactory. Whether surgical interference will ever become practically applicable is difficult to say. There appears to be a field for surgery in these cases. Schüller, of Berlin, and other German surgeons have published results which certainly tend to make one think that much may be accomplished in this way. Something also may be accomplished by the injection into the diseased joints of various antiseptic agents. Reports by Schüller and others on this way of dealing with the disease are more or less satisfactory.

At the present time the most universally applicable and successful method of dealing with early rheumatoid arthritis is by means of baths of various kinds.

The Scotch douche is in certain cases a very valuable means. It consists in the direct application of an alternating stream of hot and cold water. It promotes the absorption of the exudations into the joint, and it also relieves pain.

Dry baths are, however, generally more effective than moist ones. The dry sand bath has for a long time been used with more or less success. But in my opinion the most valuable of all methods of treatment is the use of baths of super-heated dry air, after the Tallerman method. It has been used in 20 cases of rheumatoid arthritis in the Royal Victoria Hospital during the past nine months with gratifying results.

The apparatus consists of a copper cylinder, of various shapes and sizes. The usually employed model is sufficiently long to admit a lower limb to some inches above the knee. By means of valve taps the