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IN CHARGE OF

J. BRADFORD McCONNELL, M.D.

Associate Professor of Medicine and Neurology University of Bishop's College,
Physician Western Hospital.

LEUCOMAININE POISONING.

B. K. Rachford, M.D., of Cincinnati, Ohio, in "The Medical News," May 16, 1896, communicates an article on this subject. In a paper read by him a year ago before the Association of American Physicians, Washington, he presented evidence to show that leucomaine poisoning was an important phase of auto-intoxication, which may manifest itself as (1) 'leucomaine headache' (true migraine); (2) leucomaine epilepsy (migrainous epilepsy); (3) leucomaine gastro-neurosis. The present paper describes another type, leucomaine asthma. The attacks are similar to the ordinary bronchial asthma, and come on in the early morning hours. The urine contains an excess of paraxanthin and other leucomaines of the uric acid type which are produced in excess. The condition, however, in all the types being produced by paraxanthin rather than by xanthin or heteroxanthin. He thinks that the convulsion seizures of chronic alcoholism, and the delirium tremens symptoms, are due to a similar cause, and also the paroxysmal headaches, the epileptoid convulsions, the gastro-intestinal attacks and the dyspnoea, which so much resemble the symptoms observed in marked gout. He quotes Naunyn as saying that lead like alcohol produces these effects, not as a direct poison, but indirectly, in consequence of abnormal nutrition of the whole system brought about by the continued circulation of a foreign poisonous material in the blood. Cases are given illustrating this perverted metabolism where paraxanthin was demonstrated in one quart of urine; according to Salomon, it can only be demonstrated in nine litres of normal urine; its presence is demonstrated by chemical tests, and the production of paraxanthin poisoning in a mouse, in which a clonic convulsion later becoming tetanic, is a marked feature. In the examination of a number of urines, he found, in regard to xanthin and paraxanthin, that when either was abundant, the other was to the same extent absent. In the closing note of his paper he produces evidence pointing to the fact that paraxanthin poisoning has something to do with the symptoms observed in uraemia.