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RHEUMATISM AND RHEUMATIC GOUT, WITH THEIR SPECIFIC TREATMENT BY KINO-COLOCYNTHEINE.

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Read before the Medical Section of the Canadian Institute, April
30th 1869.

Rheumatism and Rheumatic-Gout are diseases of uncommon interest to us in this country, because of their frequent occurrence among all classes of its population.

I by no means affirm, however, that every individual of these classes is liable to attack, but on the contrary—and this is important as requiring an explanation—there are good reasons for believing that many persons, whatever might be their exposure to what are usually regarded as exciting causes, of these affections, will ever remain free from their invasion.

I am not insensible of the difficulties, surrounding these diseases, to be overcome in their intelligent study, nor would I, for a moment, undervalue the labors of Drs. Prout, Todd, Garrod, Fuller, and others of equal medical sagacity, but the fact remains—unless we think and judge for ourselves in every case, with a knowledge, however, of the views and opinions of others—we fail to obtain, and to exhibit, that self reliance, which, to the patient, is a chief support in his hour of danger and distress, as well as fall far short of that thorough appreciation of disease and the best means of cure, so desirable to every practitioner.

With these points in full view, I propose in this paper, somewhat hastily prepared, first to touch Rheumatism and Rheumatic-Gout, as I understand them; as well as give you what I believe to be their specific treatment by a continuation of well-known remedies of recognized value, carefully prepared and discreetly administered.

If, in your opinion, I flounder for a rationale

in the treatment of these affections by the medicine—presently to be introduced—and offer causes in explanation of its action, that science shall penetrate and reject; the satisfaction to myself will remain, that I have attempted to evolve the true cause of a most common and painful malady, and added, at least, something of weight to its specific treatment. That in every constitutional affection—(giving constitutional its broadest meaning)—the blood is at fault, is a proposition, now, almost universally admitted.

There are many constitutional diseases, each differing from the other in some essential points, and these differences have been considered sufficiently important to justify a distinct appellation to each; but all those coming under the common title “constitutional” by no means admit of an “uniform cause,” though the theory of the presence of some zymotic element as the predisposing cause of typhus and typhoid fevers, scarlatina, measles and small-pox, is the prevailing and most likely one in the present stage of pathology.

Against the epidemic (as well as contagious) diseases typhus and typhoid fevers, it is impossible, *cacteris paribus*, absolutely to guard, but against the invasion of the constitutional diseases, rheumatism and rheumatic-gout, and gout, I believe it quite possible to afford protection.

I think I may affirm, with good prospect of being sustained by proof, that when persons are so unfortunate or so reckless as to permit the operation of either the predisposing or exciting causes of these diseases, an efficient and thoroughly reliable remedy may be found in the compound designated kino-colocynthine.

Causes.—The latest and most reliable investigators of these affections regard them as the product of a specific poison, in each, generated in the system as the result of mal-assimilation, or faulty metamorphic action—lactic acid ($C^3H^5O^2 + HO$) in rheumatism, and lactic and uric acid ($C^{10}H^{12}N^4H^1 + 2HO$), combined or associated,