

# THE CANADA LANCET.

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Science, Criticism and News.

*Communications solicited on all Medical and Scientific subjects, and also Reports of Cases occurring in practice. Address, DR. J. L. DAVISON, 12 Charles St., Toronto.*

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## THE BICHLORIDE OF GOLD.

The columns of the press, both lay and medical, are at present filled with allusions to the now famous treatment of inebriety by hypodermic injections of so-called bichloride of gold, as is practiced by a Dr. Keely at Dwight, Ill. There can be no doubt that whether the effect be of a moral nature or really due to the drug used, great and seemingly lasting benefit has been derived by the unfortunate victims of alcohol, who have sought relief from its clutches. We know of at least two cases where every other method having been tried in vain, the patients went to Dwight, undergoing the usual six weeks' treatment, returning cured as they say of any craving for stimulants; up to the time of writing no relapse has taken place, and a sufficient length of time has elapsed to prove that the injections are at least superior to any thing we have as yet met with.

But the question arises, What is the real nature of the remedy? It is claimed to be a preparation of the bichloride of gold and sodium, yet we cannot help thinking that perhaps cocaine is the active ingredient, or at all events one of them, the writer having found that hypodermic injections of  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{1}{4}$  grs. four times daily relieves the craving for both alcohol and tobacco. Some need the dose increased up to grs.  $\frac{1}{4}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$ , which latter may be given internally in distilled water. But care must be taken that too much be not given at first until the susceptibility of the patient has been tested, for fainting occasionally results from the

use of cotaine, even when locally applied in applications the nose or throat. This effect is however transient, and is relieved by placing the subject in a recumbent position. This drug is rapidly making a name for itself apart from its well known utility as a local anesthetic. The writer, who has had quite an extensive knowledge of its use in practice, can strongly urge its use in the following cases:—The vomiting of pregnancy he has frequently seen relieved as if by magic by gr.  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{1}{4}$  in aq. dest. four times daily; as a cardiac tonic wherever indicated, in dose of gr.  $\frac{1}{10}$  to  $\frac{1}{4}$  three times a day; and to relieve the mental depression so generally met with in cases of gastric derangement, given in doses of  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{1}{4}$  gr. one hour after meals, of course in conjunction with the usual remedies used, for cocaine is one of the most rapid stimulants known, causing clearness and brightness of the intellect within a few minutes of its ingestion. The only objection to its use is the fact that a cocaine habit is easily formed, and against this the practitioner must ever be on his guard.

## PROGRESS IN PUBLIC-HEALTH WORK IN MICHIGAN.

In 1889, the Michigan State Board of Health resolved that the local boards of health throughout the State be urged to second the action of the State Board of Health by making "regulations" declaring typhoid fever a "disease dangerous to public health," which should be reported to the health officer in accordance with the law. Also that in the opinion of this Board all cases of so-called "typho-malarial fever" should be reported to the local health officer, and the same precautions taken as in cases of typhoid fever. Also that all cases of fever of doubtful origin continuing more than seven days should be reported to the health officer, and precautions taken as in other diseases dangerous to the public health, such as typhoid fever.

Since this action by the State Board of Health, it seems that a less proportion than formerly of the cases of fever are reported as "typho-malarial," and an increasing proportion of the cases of typhoid fever which occur, are, undoubtedly, being reported to the State Board of Health. The local boards of health are beginning to co-operate with the State Board; thus at its meeting, Oct. 16th, 1891, the