

the serious consideration of the medical profession of this Province, if not also of the whole Dominion.

Yours truly,  
D. L. P.

Brantford, Dec. 18, 1877.

### Selected Articles.

#### ARSENICAL POISONING TREATED WITH DIALYZED IRON.

A case of arsenical poisoning occurred lately in my private practice, which seems to be valuable enough for publication, both on account of the completeness of the details and the intelligence and reliability of the patient, but especially as it is, so far as I am aware, the first case where the new remedy "dialyzed iron" has been put to the test as an antidote.

As I was leaving my office one morning, a few weeks ago, a young lady patient, Miss S., hastily entered, with a face indicative of intense pain and nervous disturbance, saying, "Doctor, I am poisoned." Her story was as follows. While attending to the wants of a valuable servant who was sick and confined to her bed, Miss S. found hidden away in the servant's trunk a paper of arsenious acid, which had been procured by Mrs. S. some weeks before, for use as a poison for rats. As this servant had been in ill health for some time, and morbid and melancholy, Miss S. at once very naturally, and no doubt very rightly, supposed that she had secreted the poison for the purpose of taking her own life. Quietly placing the packet of arsenic (which was open) in her pocket, she continued her duties, intending at the earliest moment to put it in a safe place. Days elapsed, the arsenic was forgotten, stored away in the pocket of her wrapper, until this unlucky morning, when, putting a couple of handfuls of gum-drops and bon-bons into her *arsenic pocket*, she sat down to her sewing-machine and her confectionery. She noticed from time to time, as she sewed, more powder upon the drops than seemed usual, but she continued quietly to dust them off as she ate, and went on with her work. *Can anything be more absurdly tragic than this unconscious suicide, deliberately eating gum-drops powdered with arsenic?* Probably an hour and a half passed in this innocent amusement, when suddenly, "becoming deathly sick, instantly followed by intense pain," as if, as she quaintly expressed it, "she had had a pure mustard-plaster on the inside of her stomach," she was roused to the consciousness that some strange mischief was at work. Terrified on remembering the arsenic, she attempted, unsuccessfully, to relieve her stomach with warm water; then, unwilling to alarm her mother, who was also an invalid,

she hastily threw on her dress and hat and hurried to my office, about two blocks away. Fortunately for both of us, I had on my table a sample bottle of dialyzed iron (John Wyeth & Bro.), and as soon as she told me she had taken arsenic, and before she began her story, I administered a half-tablespoonful of the iron well diluted in a tumbler of water. This gave her almost instant relief. I repeated the dose in ten minutes, and then gave her a bottle of the iron, directing her to take a similar dose every half-hour, and, later, every hour during the day. I saw her at her home in a few hours after, but she had had no return of her pain, except some slight cramp in the lower bowel and limbs; and a dose of magnesia at night, with mucilaginous drinks, soft food, with occasional doses of the iron well diluted, kept up for a few days, completed her cure. At my request, the day after her attack, Miss S. put into my hands the pocket cut from the wrapper, which she could not be persuaded to touch after her poisoning. This I transferred to a reliable analytical chemist, from whose report of his examination, now in my possession, I condense the following: "In the pocket of a chintz dress I found a small packet labelled Arsenic,—Poison,—and in this packet a second envelope, open on its long and upper side, containing a white powder. Both outer and inner envelopes were worn as letters carried in pockets are. Between the outer and inner envelope was a white powder, and in the pocket itself, mixed with the powder, I found two (2) sugar-crystallized, soft gum-drops, and one (1) sugar-coated bon-bon, all three (3) richly covered with the powder. The powder, which with a brush I took away from the gum-drops, and the dragée, weighed  $3\frac{1}{2}$  grains, and the remaining powder, after separating the gum and sugar, weighed  $2\frac{1}{8}$  grains. In the pocket I found also  $6\frac{1}{2}$  grains of the white powder. The powder obtained from the gum-drops and dragée gave all the tests arsenious acid gives."

What amount of arsenious acid my patient swallowed, it is, of course, impossible to say. It is certain that from this open package of arsenic a considerable quantity escaped into the pocket, and the gum-drops were mixed with it, as she states "that she had to dust the powder off upon her work as she ate," and the three remaining after, show  $2\frac{1}{8}$  grains of arsenious acid upon them on examination by the chemist. I have perhaps been unnecessarily full in the details of this case, but I think they have established several facts. 1st, that my patient did swallow, in the space of an hour or more, *numerous poisonous doses* of arsenious acid in powder; 2nd, that I found her with marked symptoms of arsenical poisoning; and, 3rd, that by the administration of moderate doses of dialyzed iron, well diluted, I was enabled to give her immediate and certain relief, and ultimate and entire restoration to health. I do not