

Elliott (S. T.) on Bassorin Paste in the Treatment of Skin Diseases.—Dr. Elliott calls attention to the substance bassorin, obtained from gum tragacanth, as a base for the preparation of paste or varnish to be used in the treatment of certain skin diseases, and states that it possesses properties which render it surperior to greasy applications, to collodion, etc. Almost any drug can be incorporated with it, and exerts the same effects as when used in an ointment, etc., but the superiority of the varnish is shown by the cleanliness attached to its use, by the fact, that when rubbed upon the surface it dries rapidly, forming a coating, and thus keeping the remedy continually in contact with the skin. It can be removed with a little water or wet sponge without any trouble. The preparation is made with the other ingredients as follows :

R. Bassorin	48 parts.
Dextrine.....	25 “
Glycerin.....	10 “
Water sufficient to make 1,000.	M.

The result will be a pasty, smooth, jelly-like compound, resembling vaseline in colour. It is odourless, but requires to be kept in a well stoppered jar.

Drs. Unna, Pick, and others recommend it very highly, and are fully convinced that it should be made from gum tragacanth instead of salep (which they experimented with) for the reason that it can be made from the former cheaper and simpler ; when made from salep and starch it becomes sour rapidly, and will rub off as easily as an ointment would.

During the heat of summer bassorin paste proves to be of limited use, as it does not dry completely, therefore is sticky and produces a certain amount of discomfort.

In applying it to the axilla, anal furrow, inguinal regions, and between the fingers, it should have added to it zinc oxide, maylum, or orris, etc., to the amount of five to ten per cent.

In certain forms of acne it proved to be of great value, especially in the acute. When acne pustules complicated a rosacea, that is, when acne rosacea existed, the same local application was used with marked benefit, and no new ones developing under the continued use of the paste. In rosacea, originating from suborrrhœic eczema, the effect of

the bassorin-resorcin, or bassorin-aristol, or sulphur, was peculiarly brilliant and rapid. As a rule, it was better than when the process was treated with ointments, or lotions containing the same ingredients as the paste, and was more satisfactory, owing to the continued effect kept by it upon the diseased surface. In all forms of seborrhœic eczema on non-hairy surface it was superior to any other menstruum.

The diseases mentioned are sufficient to demonstrate that its scope of application is an extended one, and that its particular advantages are cleanliness, ease of application and removal. By its means the nastiness of greasy garments is obviated. —*Notes on New Remedies*, April, 1893.

Lithemia.—The reason for the appearance of uric acid in the blood, and secondarily in the urine, may be threefold :

1. An increased production from high living, immoderate use of animal foods, a diet rich in albuminoids, or even in fatty matter, although the latter is not directly an agent.

2. Imperfect oxidation of the nitrogenous foods, dependent perhaps upon the neurotic temperament, upon too little exercise, upon the use of alcohol, especially sweet wines, upon the use of “heady” wine and beer, upon the moderate and continuous use of tobacco, highly seasoned dishes, impaired glycogenic activity of the liver, or the supply of oxygen being relatively insufficient.

3. Impaired elimination by the kidneys.

An increase in the proportion of acids and acid salts in the blood tends to retain uric acid in it, hence, the acidity of the blood is high in winter, but lower in summer, because of the loss of acids in the summer in perspiration ; hence, uric acid is stored up in the winter and excreted in summer, and this is presumably the explanation of why lithemia is more prevalent in the spring-time, even if it is customary for a winter vacation to be taken. Again, in vigorous nutrition in adult life acidity runs high. In coming to a clear conception of the importance of uric acid, it is also well to remember Haig’s law, that all substances which form soluble compounds with uric acid, or increase its solubility in the blood, increase its excretion ; while all substances which form insoluble compounds with it, or diminishes its solubility in the blood, diminish