

As regards cancer of the uterus, the mortality after surgery has been very great, even with the best technique and in the hands of the most skilful surgeons. The general opinion is that operation should be performed in every operable case, but that the use of radium after operation will tend to prevent recurrence, and thus increase the percentage of cures. In some instances the use of radium in an operable case will render a radical operation possible. A very large proportion of these cases are already inoperable when they first come under the observation of the surgeon.

In the therapy of Grave's disease, or exophthalmic goitre, a judicious use of the radium rays will in many cases produce results which are nothing less than brilliant, when combined, of course, with the usual medical measures of rest, diet, medication, etc. Radium applied over the thyroid slows the rapid pulse, lessens the nervous excitement, causes a variable degree of shrinkage of the gland, and in numerous cases has rendered quite unnecessary the surgical operation which has been proposed as a last resort in treatment of diseased thyroids.

2. THE VALUE OF RADIUM IN PROLONGING LIFE.

Those who express unfavorable opinions as to the value of radium therapy frequently do not consider sufficiently the fact that a very large number of the cases submitted to its treatment are in the last stages of cancer, when the growth is so extensive that surgery is powerless, and the patient is so ill that the fatal termination of the disease is imminent. In these cases radium is only used as a last resource, and it has frequently done what no other known form of treatment is capable of doing. In cases of inoperable cancer in the uterus and other regions, radium often causes disappearance of the local manifestations, and in certain cases cure has been effected in an apparently hopeless case. Life may thereby be prolonged for months or even years, although the patient may succumb subsequently to metastasis in other parts of the body.

Post-operative radiation is now regarded as a most important part of radium therapeutics. Many cases of cancer of various forms have been reported, in which the patient has remained without recurrence for three or four years or more after the radium treatment, sometimes for such a long period that cure may be assumed. In other cases the growth may become so much reduced in size that a previously inoperable case may become operable. In the report of the London Radium Institute, issued at the end of 1918, it stated that between 1911