

# Canada Medical Journal.

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## HAMILTON (ONTARIO) MEDICAL AND SURGICAL SOCIETY.

The meetings of this Society are held on the first Wednesday of each month. At the last meeting, on the 2nd instant, the subject of acute rheumatism was introduced by Dr. MacKelcan. There was a fair attendance of members, and the newly elected President, Dr. J. W. Rosbrugh, occupied the chair.

After a few introductory remarks Dr. MacKelcan said: "As a general principle I have observed throughout life that medicines which in themselves are suited to the removal of disease, fail to produce their expected effects, when arterial excitement and the accompanying local inflammation run high, and that when such arterial excitement is reduced the drugs which before seemed inefficacious, at once begin to exercise their influence and speedily remove the morbid conditions. Many instances of this have occurred to me in the treatment of acute rheumatism; my chief reliance has, in the early stage, been placed in the wine of the seeds of colchicum, combined with some alkali, generally calcined magnesia: taking care also to keep the bowels freely and regularly moved by such aperients as the state of the alvine secretion indicated: alterative, if unhealthy, *saline* if normal." The use of colchicum should be discontinued when the acute stage of the disease is passing away, and the iodide of potassium substituted for it, combined with hyoscyamus. Opium is to be avoided, except in cases of extreme suffering. With this treatment Dr. MacKelcan seldom failed to produce convalescence in *fourteen* days. He then referred to the great benefit to be derived from blistering in the neighbourhood of the affected joints.

Dr. J. Ryall had never found it necessary to have recourse to blood-letting in acute rheumatism. Dr. MacKintosh agreed with Dr. MacKelcan as to the utility of bleeding in certain cases. He treated his cases almost invariably, for the last ten years, with half drachm doses of acet.