

may be developed and in the future, in prescribing, we shall "aim chemically" to affect that cause of disease we wish to destroy.(2)

During the first years of the search for an efficient trypanocide—a drug which would be as powerful in the treatment of trypanosomiasis as is quinine in the treatment of malaria—an enormous number of substances were tried. Some of them had a definite action upon the trypanosomes, but it was not until atoxyl was employed that the experimenters were able to definitely, and regularly, cure infections by pathogenic trypanosomes in laboratory animals.(3)

When it became known that syphilis, a disease in some of its symptoms almost identical with some forms of trypanosomiasis, was caused by a protozoan parasite not far removed from the trypanosomes, the idea suggested itself that atoxyl, which had a most powerful action on trypanosomes, might also be of value in the treatment of syphilis. It has been tried in syphilis, experimentally on apes and clinically on men, by several observers and it has become certain that atoxyl is distinctly valuable in the treatment of that disease.

The results obtained by the use of mercury and iodide are so constant that it is not suggested that treatment by them should be superseded by atoxyl; but it is maintained that atoxyl may be used with advantage in conjunction with these drugs and that there are cases refractory to, or with an idiosyncrasy against, the ordinary drugs, which should be treated by atoxyl alone. To be successful, atoxyl must be properly administered. It must be given by injection, either beneath the skin, intramuscularly or intravenously; in the treatment of trypanosomiasis the latter is the best method. Since aqueous solutions of atoxyl deteriorate easily, the 15 per cent. solution of the drug to be employed must be freshly prepared and, in sterilizing, it should only be brought to 100°C. for two minutes. The dose should not be larger than 0.5 grammes of the drug. This dose may be repeated every five or six days and the treatment should be continued, probably, for some months. The patient should be watched carefully for signs of neuritis, especially if the dose mentioned is exceeded; neuritis and blindness have occurred in several cases of trypanosomiasis in which the drug was given too freely. It is interesting to note that antimony tartrate, which is also strongly trypanocidal, has been recently used in treating syphilis in negroes with considerable success.(4)

Atoxyl is the sodium salt of para-amido-phenyl-arsenic-acid.¹ It and

¹ "Atoxyl" is the trade name under which this compound was originally put on the market by a German firm. "Soamin" is the trade name of a compound of practically identical composition, which is prepared by Burroughs Wellcome & Co. It appears to be more constant and purer in composition than some of the samples of "atoxyl" which have been placed on the market recently.