

As to the part taken by the thyroid gland, the pituitary body and the suprarenals we possess little precise information.

Our observations in this direction are purely experimental and if our several operations on the drainage scheme have done nothing more than demonstrate the damage done by these poisons, the remarkable power of repair which the several tissues of the body exhibit on being freed from their malign influence, and the extraordinary improvement in the functioning of the organs of the body after operation, they have been fully justified. They have, however, done more than this, since they have thrown a light upon intestinal conditions which has simplified their treatment most materially, and has put them upon a definite mechanical basis replacing what was previously little more than a nomenclature.

Let us consider the matter of pigmentation of the skin which becomes a very marked feature in advanced cases of stasis, especially in patients with dark hair. These cases have on many occasions been diagnosed as Addison's disease by very competent physicians, and I have no doubt would have gone to the post-mortem room as such except for operative interference.

On eliminating the supply of poison the color of the skin changes with a remarkable rapidity. The deep brown or coppery tint disappears and is replaced by the warm red color indicative of health. Has this unmistakable change come about by a restoration of the suprarenal to its normal condition or to what is it due?

Following almost immediately on the exclusion of the large bowel the cold blue clammy hand is replaced by a nice warm pinkish dry one. Nothing can be more obvious than this change. Is this remarkably rapid alteration due to an improved cardiac condition alone, or does the adrenal or the pituitary body exert any influence upon it? It is not a matter of food, as the patient may be having nothing but normal saline. In the case of a young man with fingers that had been blue for some years, on asking him what was the first change he noticed within a day of the operation, he said: "My blue fingers have gone," and the blueness never recurred.

We know very little of the action of the ductless glands except from physiological experiment, and perhaps nothing in the operative treatment of chronic intestinal stasis strikes one as more disappointing than the helplessness of the physiologists to supply us with useful information that can be applied to our practice.

Again in the case of the kidney affected by so-called Bright's disease, which is merely a product of chronic intestinal stasis, the exclusion of the large bowel is followed by an improvement in functioning