

hundred representative gynecologists from every land who were gathered together at the ninth International Congress at Washington. We doubt if Danion would meet with any reception at all, in this country at least. We would respectfully suggest that Apostoli would best defeat Danion's object by continuing to maintain that dignified silence concerning him which he has only broken under the most harassing temptation. Let Danion's calumnies die a natural death.

### THE CAUSE OF ACUTE ARTICULAR RHEUMATISM.

A German writer whose article appears in the *Philadelphia Medical News*, 4th April, 1891, seems to have a hard time in proving that this is an infectious disease. He has had 121 cases, and although his observations correspond exactly with our own we entirely disagree in the deductions. Thus, he finds that it is most common in cold and wet weather because these meteorological conditions favor the growth of the minute organism. We find that it is most frequent in cold and wet weather, but because at such times people who are large eaters and who are accustomed to oxydise their nitrogenous food by hard labor, in fresh air, come into the crowded, ill-ventilated house and lounge around until the weather clears up. Not burning all their nitrogen into urea a large portion of it remains in the previous stage of uric acid which deposits from the blood, which is saturated with it, whenever the former is cooled below  $100^{\circ}$ , in the extremities for instance. He finds that it is rare among factory hands, notwithstanding the fact that they are poorly clad and frequently have to walk long distances in cold and wet weather and then stand long hours in wet shoes and clothing. This he attributes to the fact that they do not have to work hard and that they are away from their houses all day. We, on the contrary, would suggest that it is due to their being so badly

paid that they cannot afford to buy any more nitrogenous food than what they are fully able to convert into urea during their long walks and long hours of work. Servant girls, waiters and coachmen are very liable to it. We would suggest that these parties are all either heavy meat eaters or else they get very little fresh air or exercise to burn up completely what they do eat. Brewers and heavy beer drinkers are more liable to it because, as is well known, alcohol and malt liquors being more combustible than nitrogen have a first mortgage on all the oxygen taken into the blood, so that nitrogenous elements have to do with what oxygen is left, and if that is not sufficient for their complete oxydation then they will stop as uric acid forming sharp-pointed crystals of hardly soluble urates instead of urea. He finds that disturbances of the digestive tract precede an attack of rheumatism, which he thinks favors the disease germs. We think that the preceding dyspepsia causes acid fermentation which loads the blood with acids, causing uric acid crystals to deposit in the joints and muscles, from which it can be taken up again by rendering the blood alkaline and deluging it with water. As we have already said in a previous editorial the worst attack of rheumatism can be cut short in a few days if (1st) we cut off the supply of nitrogenous food, (2nd) render the blood alkaline with salicylate of soda and iodide of potash, and (3rd) deluge the blood with distilled or moderately pure water. We should never expect to cure a case of rheumatism on an unlimited milk diet, which was the diet in vogue when Abernethy made his famous answer to the question "What is the best cure for rheumatism?" to which he replied, "Six weeks in bed."

### CONSUMPTION IS CONTAGIOUS.

Do you, gentle reader, believe that it is? If you do not you are behind the times. If you do you can save hundreds of lives by instructing every man, woman and child