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TREATMENT OF ALCOHOLIC
CIRRHOSIS.*

BY DR. J. J. CASSIDY.

I shall proceed to illustrate my views on the treatment of alcoholic cirrhosis by reference to a very marked case of that disease which I treated three years ago.

1886.

November 9.—T. B., male, aged 45 years. Had up to last summer been a healthy man. Had lost appetite, and felt weak, though he continued to work at carting. In the latter end of September he noticed that his feet were swelled, so that he could not put on his boots easily. In October the abdomen began to swell. He looked anæmic. The ascites was enormous, the scrotum and legs were œdematous; no œdema of the face or upper part of the body. The sounds of the heart were normal, and the lungs were healthy. The urine was scanty, and loaded with urates, but contained neither albumen nor casts. No history of syphilis or phthisis. He acknowledged that for years, particularly when working at the rolling mill, he had drunk strong liquor freely. During the past summer and since he began to be ill he had taken soda water and ginger ale, but no strong liquor. Dr. Wallace, who saw the case with me, agreed that it would be well to try purgatives and diuretics.

The medicinal treatment was thoroughly carried out, but did not relieve the patient.

November 27.—The late Dr. J. H. McCollum, of this city, tapped the patient, one and one-half pailfuls of fluid being removed.

December 2.—I was again asked to see the patient. His condition had been improved by the operation, but the fluid was rapidly accumulating.

December 11.—Assisted by Dr. Wallace I tapped the patient, one and one-half pailfuls of fluid being removed. I began a mercurial treatment, using mercurial inunction and one grain of calomel three times a day.

1887.

January 12.—The fluid having accumulated I tapped the patient again. Two pailfuls were removed. He was mercurialised, the gums being tender, and the breath slightly fetid. I stopped the mercury and ordered a lotion of chlorate of potash for the mouth, and the following mixture:

R—Acid Nitro Mur. dil. m. 160.
Inf. Quassia ad., ʒviii. M.
Sig.—ʒi, t.i.d.

January 26.—The effusion is collecting, but slowly.

February 22.—He takes the acid mixture, is able to leave his bed, and sits up in his room; looks pale. No œdema of feet or legs; abdomen very slightly enlarged.

March 12.—No œdema; a small quantity of fluid in the abdomen; tongue clean, bowels

*Read before the Toronto Medical Society.