

THERAPEUTIC USES OF VICHY WATER.

No natural water has ever been made the subject of such exhaustive clinical study as that of the Vichy Springs, and it owes its reputation, not to a simple popularity due to its pleasant taste, but from a fame resulting from the crucial test of centuries of clinical observation.

Like other mineral waters, their activity is somewhat greater at the spring than when taken in bottled form. Yet this is scarcely a disadvantage, since in many cases it allows of a milder, more prolonged effect which is especially serviceable in chronic conditions.

It has been noted that the three springs are very similar in their chemical composition. In practice, it is found that the water of Célestins is especially indicated in disorders of the kidneys, and such as depend upon the uric acid diathesis; rheumatism, gout, gravel, and cutaneous lesions, such as eczema, etc. The Grande-Grille water is deemed to be especially efficacious in stomach and liver disorders, while the Hospital spring is useful in the same way, but is somewhat milder and slower in its action than either of the others.

Practically it may be said that the water of the Célestins spring meets every indication for the employment of Vichy Water. It has a mildly diuretic action of great power, and its action upon the liver and stomach is excellent. By its continuous use the blood is rendered more alkaline, deposits of uric acid in the form of sodic urates no longer take place, since the acid becomes promptly changed into urea, which is rapidly eliminated. The bile becomes diluted, and calculi are no longer formed in the gall-bladder. Those which may be present are disintegrated through the solution, in a strongly alkaline medium, of the mucus which holds the various parts together, and the fragments are discharged through the common bile duct into the intestinal tract.

In chronic hepatic disorders there is secured a greater flow of bile, and the improvement in gastric and intestinal digestion, due to the alkaline treatment, relieves the liver of a large part of the work previously given to it. In cases of hepatic sluggishness, attended with painful and slow digestion, the effects are often nothing short of marvellous.

In gastric and intestinal indigestion the use of Vichy secures a more free action of the bowels, digestion becomes more perfect, and the products of this digestion reach the blood in a better prepared condition. This relieves the liver and kidneys, which no longer have to deal with so many products of imperfect metabolism, and therefore we rapidly see an improvement in the general health which is quite surprising in character.

A very large number of the girls and young women for whom we prescribe iron owe the poverty of their blood to gastric and intestinal sluggishness, and the great majority of cases of anæmia and chlorosis are therefore much improved by the Vichy treatment.