

enables us to use as *adjuncts*, diuretics and hydrogogue cathartics, but gives us the privilege of discontinuing the former if renal disease is suspected, and the latter if intestinal lesions contra-indicate them. OTTAWA, September 16th, 1876.

Progress of Medical Science.

IDIOPATHIC PYROSIS.

A Lecture delivered in Hôpital de la Pitié by Professor Laségue. From the Allgemeine Wiener Medizinische Zeitung, July 18, 1876.

Pyrosis is a trivial affection of the stomach which generally lasts but a short time and rarely necessitates hospital treatment. Nevertheless, as it is quite frequently met with in ordinary practice it should receive our careful attention and study.

As a text for my remarks I present to you, to-day, a laborer, 38 years of age, otherwise in excellent health, who for about ten years has had very painful attacks of a peculiar gastric neuralgia, which last on an average 10-12 days and recur three or four times a year. The pain does not radiate toward the spine as in simple ulcer of the stomach; it is not a cutting or piercing, but a burning pain, a feeling of internal heat, and at times of an unbearable fire within. When it spreads at all it is upward, following the course of the œsophagus.

The pain is often accompanied by sour vomiting and sometimes, when the attack is particularly severe, the patient vomits ropy mucus similar to that of drunkards, but never vomits blood or food. Another resemblance between this vomiting and that of the inebriate is that it always occurs in the morning before the introduction into the stomach of food, and not immediately after eating or an hour or two after, as in round gastric ulcer or in carcinoma of the stomach.

This man never indulged to excess in spirituous liquors, but inclined to the opposite extreme. Of late the disease has made him almost a hypochondriac. He is afraid of everything which he thinks might produce an attack or increase the severity of his disease, and, knowing that the abuse of alcoholic stimulants often injures the health, he is quite rigorous with himself in this regard. Therefore drunkenness cannot be the cause, although his case seems to have a good deal in common with alcoholic gastritis.

The man's tongue is coated, his appetite is diminished, and he is somewhat inclined to constipation,—symptoms quite common among tipplers; he has never, however, presented any symptoms referable to the brain or sensory nerves. During the attacks he sleeps but little, but his sleep is not disturbed by frightful dreams, nor has he any of the hallucinations common to drinkers.

This idiopathic pyrosis disappears regularly within a few days. Can we attribute this to a rational mode of treatment?

In similar cases we usually begin with the administration of mild laxatives, magnesia, for example, continue it for four or five days, then substitute the alkaline carbonates. Finally we order tonics to arouse the lost appetite.

This medication is, perhaps, rational, but is it effective and useful? This we think we have good reason to doubt.

Although the magnesia and the alkalies would probably tend to neutralize the increased acidity of the gastric fluids, and although under their administration we see recovery follow in numerous cases, it is none the less true that very often this is not the case and that the pyrosis continues for weeks and months during the administration of these remedies. We are, therefore, justified in asking the question to what extent the duration of the neuralgia can be cut short in this or that individual by the exhibition of the above mentioned agents.

Finally, it must be remembered, that when a pyrosis passes off with or without rational treatment, we do not cure the affection but simply hasten the crisis.

A symptomatic pyrosis, distinct from the affection of this individual, is often observed in men who produce an irritability of the stomach by the continued use of certain articles of diet or certain medicaments. Some of the "imitation" wines, made by the addition of acids, produce a pyrosis, by which several persons of one family are frequently attacked. On changing the wine, the neuralgia passes off in a few days and does not return so long as the wine taken by the patients is good. Every one is aware that the salts of quinine very frequently produce neuralgias of the stomach, as do also various chalybeate preparations and a few other medicines. Such pyrosis is not, however, idiopathic as in the case I have presented to you to-day.

THE BISULPHIDE OF CARBON IN THE TREATMENT OF CANCER OF THE STOMACH.

In a paper read by Dr. James T. Whittaker before a Cincinnati society (*The Clinic*) he spoke of the singular efficacy of bisulphide of carbon in the treatment of carcinoma of various organs, especially of the stomach. "Whatever theory may be entertained regarding its nature, the fact remains that cancer is a disease characterized by a too rapid proliferation of the tissues, epithelial, connective, etc., which form its seat, and I have cherished the belief that any agent which would check this proliferation would attack the chief result, if not the actual cause, of the disease. Why should there not be found anyhow a remedy as efficacious for cancer as the iodide of potassium for syphilis?

"We can arrest the progress of putrefaction and fermentation, or even prevent the development of these processes by certain agents which have the power of preventing the development of, limiting the growth of, or destroying the fully-matured vegetable and animal germs upon which these processes depend. Salicylic and carbolic acids are agents of