

23rd.—Greatly troubled with cough; bowels confined; ordered magnesia sulph. 3 grs., to be repeated if bowels do not move. From this time he gradually improved. I now ordered him the following:—

R

Cinchonidia Sulph. ℥ii.

Acid Hydrobrom. ℥iii.

Aquæ ad. ℥iv.—M

Sig.—A desert spoonful every four hours.

Et.

R

Potas. Iodidi. ℥iiss.

Aquæ ad. ℥iv.—M.

Sig.—A deserts spoonful to be given three times a day, with an occasional dose of magnesia sulph.; to apply small blisters to right side.

The fluid soon began to disappear, and at the end of the second week the right side measured 17¾ inches. He was unable to pass urine without the aid of the catheter till the third week. He walked to see me, a distance of nearly half a mile on the 24th day after the accident, when I found his ribs united; vesicular murmur heard all over the right side, temperature and pulse normal.

Remarks.—The chief points of interest in this case are: 1.—The distance he fell, with the slightness of injury sustained, no bones being broken except the ribs which was caused by direct violence.—2 The symptoms at first pointed to rupture of some of the abdominal viscera, but subsequent events proved them to be uninjured.—3. The amount of fluid which at one time threatened to prove fatal by asphyxia, and which was wholly absorbed by rest in bed, aided by pot. iodidi, cinchonidia sulph. and blisters. The ribs united without trouble by the bandage acting as an external splint, the fluid as an internal one.

NOTES ON SOME OF THE CHANGES IN THERAPEUTICS DURING THE PAST QUARTER OF A CENTURY.*

BY H. J. SAUNDERS, M.D., M.R.C.S., ENG.,
KINGSTON, ONT.

I propose this evening to consider a few of the points in which our therapeutics of to-day differ

from those of a quarter of a century ago. This, of course, I can only do to a very limited extent, as the short time we are able to give to reading and discussing papers will not allow of anything like an exhaustive consideration of the subject. Yet it is one of considerable interest, and one which, I think, may not unprofitably occupy our attention for a short time.

No thoughtful man can fail to be aware of the fact that his own views of disease constantly undergo a progressive change, and that almost unconsciously to himself his methods of treatment gradually vary, as he adopts new remedies and discontinues old ones, till a comparison of his treatment of a certain case now with that of ten or fifteen years ago would, in many cases, show a startling difference. There are men still living who in the early years of their practice treated fevers and inflammatory affections as a matter of course by the enormous bleedings, purgations, and depressants, common fifty years ago, who, subsequently, influenced by the views of Hughes Bennett and Todd, discontinued these almost entirely, and used stimulants to equal excess; and, as the mischievous effects of the indiscriminate use of these became apparent, reverted to a more moderate use of both classes of remedies. The present day, or, perhaps, I should say the time of the past ten years, is marked by this character, *i.e.*, small and moderate doses of medicines. I qualify the statement of the present day, because it seems to me that during the last few years there is a strong tendency towards a return to large doses; large as regards their effect, though not, perhaps, in bulk; for example, it is taught by some that to produce a beneficial effect by certain medicines it is necessary to produce the physiological effect that formerly we were careful to avoid. By men of this school of thought, strychnia is given in progressively increasing doses till stiffness of the muscles of the neck is produced, and this state is sought to be maintained. Iodide of potassium is given in the same way till its unpleasant constitutional effects are produced, and the dose so reached is persisted in till improvement in the disease for which it is given is observable. Quinine is frequently given in the same way, and many other medicines which it is not now necessary to enumerate. This practice is very much facilitated by the form in which medicines are now given;

* A paper read before the Cataragui Medical Society, and published by request of the Society.