

Selected Articles.

RELATION BETWEEN THE INTESTINE AND THE LIVER IN PATHOLOGICAL CONDITIONS.

At the Congrès Français de Médecine Interne, Bordeaux, M. V. Hanot of Paris read a paper on the above subject.

In a complete exposition of the pathology of the liver, drawn from his own experience and the researches of his pupils, he offered the following conclusions : Physiologically, intimate relations exist between the liver and the intestines, through the nerves and the circulation. The liver is one of the fundamental wheels of the general nutrition, feeding all organic activity and defending against poisons. By creating the bile it maintains the nutritive equilibrium of the intestine, neutralizing the poisons which reach it or form in it during its action, and also aiding in the special work of digestion. The physiological services rendered to the liver by the intestine are more restricted ; it appears to be the vestibule of all toxic and infectious agents, alimentary poisons such as alcohol, digestive poisons such as acetic, lactic, or butyric acid, and microbes and their toxins. An injurious influence is exercised upon the liver by the intestine only when the former permits it. It is from these relations between the two organs that the doctrine of intestinal antisepsis springs ; and it will be easily understood that the term must not mean merely a direct action exercised on the intestine, but also an indirect action exercised on the liver. While the intestinal poisons are neutralized in the intestine itself, the antitoxic power of the liver must be maintained or strengthened, in order that it may contribute its part toward the destruction of the intestinal poisons, and at the same time defend itself from the poisons which enter it by other channels. In short, intestinal antisepsis is not really efficacious unless it is hepato-intestinal.

In the discussion of this paper, Teissier described some experiments made with Guinard upon dogs, which demonstrated that certain microbial toxins, probably those with great diastasic power, when introduced through the portal vein, acquired an increased virulence in the liver, and, although retained there for a certain time, produced symptoms much more rapidly fatal than if the same toxins had been introduced in equal amounts into the peripheral venous system. Contrary to what has hitherto been supposed, therefore, the liver would appear to be capable, under certain circumstances, of aggravating the action of such toxins as those of the pneumobacillus and the diphtheria bacillus, by increasing their