

[Reported for THE CANADA MEDICAL RECORD.]

FRENCH CONGRESS OF SURGERY,
OCTOBER, 1889.DISCUSSION ON THE ELECTRICAL TREATMENT OF
FIBROIDS.

The electrical treatment of fibroids of the uterus, which was invented by Apostoli in 1883, and which has received from all sides almost unanimous approval, was recently discussed at a meeting of the above congress, where a method was brought forward which, while claiming to be the best of all, also affirms that it was new, because it was based upon the use of medium intensities, extra-uterine action and changing of the current. Apostoli vigorously opposed this pretention. 1st. The method proposed by Drs. Championniere and Danion, is by no means new, and is nothing more than the exact reproduction of old methods, which were tried, and for the most part abandoned. First of all, Apostoli claims the priority of all medical applications of electricity surpassing a current strength of 50 miliamperes. (C. Thesis of Carlet, July, '84.) During two years he employed exclusively current strength between 40 and 70 miliamperes. Since then he has deemed it advisable to increase the dose, not in a blind or exclusive manner, as they would wrongly make him to say, but rationally and progressively, according to the nature of the case.

The intensity should be lessened in cases of uterine or peri-uterine intolerance (diseases of the appendages); it should be increased in all grave forms of hemorrhage or endometritis.

In the second place, Aime, Martin and Charon were the first (in 1879) to propose the extra-uterine action of the current either on the cervix or in the vagina, and they were the first to use either reversing or interruptions of the galvanic current. Meoritz Benedikt, of Vienna, also employed reversing of the current previous to Drs. Championniere and Danion.

The method recommended by Drs. Championniere and Danion is not as effective as the treatment known as Apostoli's method.

(A) Because it does not lay down the arms of the surgeons, who continue to castrate and to perform hysterectomy.

(B) Because they choose their cases, employing electricity on elderly women and on those who are not very ill, and operating on young women.

(C) Because they admit failures which require surgical intervention.

(D) Because their treatment is always in the vagina and outside of the uterus, thus preventing them from applying the benefits of the treatment of the concomitant endometritis.

(E) Because a relapse nearly always occurs unless the treatment is constantly kept up.

(F) Because they do not even pretend to remove inflammatory perimetritic exudations.

(G) Because the addition of iodo-sodic waters, which is part of their treatment, shows that their electricity alone is not sufficient to effect a cure.

(H) Because they have never observed any tangible reduction in the size of a fibroid under their treatment.

In opposition to these affirmations, of Dr. L. Championniere, which are based on only seven months of use and eleven observations, Apostoli offers his method, which is already seven years old, and which has received the approval of nearly all who have tried it, and which includes a total in France and abroad of several thousand observations.

1st. His method is harmless and always easily borne, when his directions are carried out, the few cases of death having all been due to errors of diagnosis, tumors of the appendages having been mistaken for fibroids, and treated electrically. His method is the most efficacious, because it claims to be of itself sufficient for the treatment of fibroids, in which case it has in most cases supplanted the use of the knife.

2nd. Because it does not choose its cases, but benefits all, both old and young, with varying results, however.

3rd. Because failure with it is the exception in fibroids which are simple and not fibro-cystic, and which are not complicated with diseases of the appendages.

4th. Because it makes use of vaginal galvanic punctures, either alone or in conjunction with intra-uterine applications, which are necessary in endometritis.

5th. Because with it a relapse is the exception, and the beneficial results are for the most part permanent, provided that the treatment has been continued for a sufficiently long period.

6th. Because it embraces within its sphere of action, under different formulas of intensity and various localizations, a treatment for fibroids endometritis, metritis and a great many cases of salpingo-ovariis.

7th. Because it dispenses with all other methods of treatment, not even requiring the aid of chloride of sodium waters.

8th. Because it produces an anatomical reduction in the size of fibroids, although it is only partial, but not total.