

Selected Articles.

THE MANAGEMENT AND TREATMENT OF CHRONIC BRIGHT'S DISEASE*

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In response to a request on the part of members of my class that I would deal more especially with the practical treatment of diseases, I gladly devote this lecture to the management and treatment of chronic Bright's disease.

At the outset I must, however, remind you that at the root of all successful treatment there must be an accurate diagnosis, without which our best attempts at medication or other ameliorative efforts are only blind gropings in the dark, and are as likely to do harm as good.

THE POSSIBILITIES AND AIMS OF TREATMENT.

Having established the diagnosis that our patient is suffering from a chronic disease of his kidneys, let us consider first what kind and degree of benefit we may hope to confer on him by treatment. We may generally assume that the patient has already been a sufferer from kidney disease for a longer or shorter time when he first comes under our observation: in a case of cirrhotic kidneys, the disease has probably been slowly coming on for years. It is plain, therefore, that permanent organic changes, destruction of secreting membrane or increase of fibrous tissue, or both, have been established, and that a *restitutio ad integrum* is not to be hoped for. Chronic renal disease is, strictly speaking, incurable.

On the other hand, the slow onset and progress of the disease show that the destruction of secreting kidney tissue is far from being complete, since complete destruction of the secreting tissue would be as incompatible with continued life as would be the existence of an impermeable stricture of the urethra. In effect we may conclude that the patient possesses kidney tissue capable of dealing more or less imperfectly with the average nitrogenous waste of the body, and that if the nitrogenous waste were reduced in amount it might be capable of eliminating it entirely.

We shall further probably find that the patient is suffering

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