

The third effect of the current, its electrolytic action, is, I admit, as mysterious as it has ever been, but not more so than the invariable absorption of syphilitic gummatous deposits following the administration of iodide of potassium. Whether what we call electrolysis means the actual breaking up of an organic tissue into inorganic atoms, or whether it means, as seems more likely to me, that the growth deprived of its blood supply undergoes fatty degeneration, and is partly eaten up by phagocytosis stimulated to greater activity by the trophic nerves, no one with a large experience with this subtle fluid can deny that a uterus infiltrated with and enlarged by the deposit of fibrous tissue, whether localized in the form of fibroids or diffused as in areolar hyperplasia, so that the sound will enter four or five inches, will invariably diminish in depth by means of electrical treatment.

Then, again, what is the enormously enlarged uterus after delivery but a bleeding myoma? Does it not stop bleeding when the arteries which supply it with blood are squeezed by its contracting walls? Does it not rapidly get smaller when, for the want of blood and exercise, that immense mass of muscular tissue silently undergoes fatty degeneration and returns to the blood from whence it came?

Wonderful and almost incredible as the total disappearance of a fibroid or myoma may seem to some, it is no more mysterious than this wonderful process of nature which we call involution. Have those who doubt and, even worse, deny the power of electricity to work a change in fibroids, never reduced the size and weight of a uterus which nature had failed to involute? Has Emmett never reduced its size by repairing a lacerated cervix? Have Churchill and Athill and ten thousand others with honored names never reduced the quantity of tissue in the uterus by the application of iodine? Have not a hundred

thousand others reduced the weight of blood and muscle and areolar tissue in the heavy uterus by means of glycerine and hot water and other therapeutic measures? Then why in the name of reason and justice deny that an agent which we can see blanching tissues before our eyes, and making muscles of every kind contract, why deny, he said, that it can diminish the blood supply to and favor the fatty degeneration and absorption of the fibrous or myomatous uterus?

The electrical treatment of fibroids reduced to the above simple question, and stripped of all the extravagant claims which were at first made for it, stands today upon a foundation so strong and true that it will find an honorable place in the treatment of fibroids as long as women shall dread to die by the surgeon's knife.

Society Proceedings.

MONTREAL MEDICO-CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY.

Stated Meeting, February 22nd, 1895.

G. P. GIRDWOOD, M.D., PRESIDENT, IN THE CHAIR.

Discussion on Hypertrophy of the Heart apart from Valvular Disease.—DR. JAMES STEWART introduced the subject by a paper on the etiology as follows:—

I have been assigned the duty of dealing with the causes of cardiac hypertrophy other than those due to valvular disease. Perhaps it would have been better if the term enlargement of the heart had been used instead of hypertrophy, for the reason that a pure and simple hypertrophy is rarely met with. I will confine my remarks chiefly to hypertrophy, but it will be necessary to refer frequently to the almost constant presence of dilatation.

The causes of cardiac hypertrophy have been recently attracting great attention, but not more than the condition merits on account of its great practical importance. No doubt a great deal can be done to stay the progress of an advancing hypertrophy if the cause or causes at work are clearly recognized.

A discovery of the causes is essential to judicious therapeutics.