

On the TREATMENT of SYPHILIS of the INTERNAL EAR.

By Dr. CAMILLO POLI (Genoa).

The treatment of labyrinthine affections is frequently followed by want of success. If there are some cases in which treatment can sometimes bear fruit, it is those of lesions due to syphilis, acquired or secondary. Such results, however, are subordinate to conditions which are chiefly dependent on the gravity of the form of the disease, the epoch in which it appears, and the method of treatment instituted. Amongst the cases which have fallen under my observation I have taken notes of five, because in these the diagnosis of acquired syphilis, with secondary manifestations in the internal ear, was manifest, both from the history and the objective examination. They concerned individuals between twenty-two and thirty-five years of age, in whom the aural manifestation appeared at a period varying from four to eight months from the injection. The classic phenomena—attacks of vertigo and rapidly progressive deafness—were more or less manifest in all. The period in which they came under treatment varied from a minimum of twenty days and a maximum of about one year. The treatment adopted was a combination of a specific cure with more or less prolonged employment of injections of pilocarpin, as recommended by Prof. Politzer. The result obtained varied. In one case (the most recent) we obtained an almost complete cure, if I may so qualify an improvement of hearing so remarkable as to make the watch audible at fifty centimètres on one side and thirty centimètres on the other, accompanied by a complete disappearance of vertigo. With regard to the other cases, in two there was a more or less remarkable improvement, and in two no modification of the phenomena presented at the period when they came under observation.

With regard to the effects of the use of pilocarpin, I would observe that, as it is always difficult to weigh the clinical value of a medicament, this task is more difficult in syphilis, where the phenomena tend of themselves to improve in so far that the vertigo disappears, the tinnitus diminishes, while, on the other hand, the deafness either remains stationary or gets worse. I am of opinion that, in the cases in which improvement took place, this could not be positively ascribed to the use of pilocarpin—still less so in the case with a good result, which I attribute particularly to the effects of specific treatment in the form of injections of calomel.

The author then discussed the employment and rapid results of this medicament, which he considered better than other mercurial preparations.

Dr. GRADENIGO remarked that, in the treatment of syphilis of the ear, one must in turn have recourse to various therapeutic agents, such as iodine, mercury, and pilocarpin, because, as a rule, the treatment has to be continued some time.

Dr. FICANO believed that injections of calomel were to be preferred in syphilis of the ear, because the action was more energetic and prompt. With regard to the point brought against injections of calomel—*i.e.*, that

they produce suppuration—the majority of syphilographers agree in denying it. Prof. Mannino, of Palermo, has made innumerable injections of calomel without ever producing suppuration ; he, however, adds to the solution a few drops of simple distilled water. The injections should be made, with all the usual precautions, every ten to fifteen days.

Dr. POLI had never found suppuration from injections of calomel. He shared the opinion of Prof. Scarenzio on the method of action of the remedy, and invited his colleagues to adopt it whenever they required an energetic and prompt remedy in aural affections.

CONCLUDING ADDRESSES.

Prof. DE ROSSI : Most esteemed colleagues,—The order of the day being exhausted, I declare the Section of Otology of the Eleventh International Congress to be closed. I owe you, my dear and illustrious *confères*, my warmest thanks for the great honour you have conferred on me by nominating me your President. I know that my nomination is not due to any special merit that I can boast of, but to your kindness and friendship for a son of Italy, a country you esteem and love. In taking this chair and measuring my own power, I feared that I could not satisfactorily fulfil the difficult task. Now, however, I am delighted to find that my work has been easy and pleasant, thanks to the efficacious assistance of the illustrious honorary presidents, of the active and intelligent secretaries, and the goodwill of all the otologists here present. The considerable number of papers presented attest the extraordinary progress of our science.

The animated discussions and the enthusiasm aroused by some of the communications of the most illustrious masters will shed greater light on our studies, and add fresh laurels to their authors.

Honoured colleagues ! You will soon be returning to your homes. Remember, and remind your children and your friends, that the Italians have welcomed the foreign scientists as representative of their countries, and are more secure of that peace which Italy so much requires, and which is here sealed in the fraternal embrace of science. *Valete !*

Prof. POLITZER, speaking in fluent Italian, said : In the name of my compatriots I feel the duty of thanking our illustrious President for the devotion and impartiality with which he has directed our sittings, and his care in satisfying the members of our section. At the same time I would offer my thanks to our eminent colleague, Prof. Gradenigo, for his indefatigable work in translating the communications, and so facilitating the appreciation of the subjects discussed. Finally, our gratitude is due to the excellent secretaries, Drs. Ferreri and Avoledo, who have devoted themselves to their task without interruption, so that we shall all be able to study at home the interesting communications presented.
