

iodide of potassium and alkaline baths, continued for six months, resulted in the recovery of the patient.

M. Beyran draws the following conclusions from this case, which we submit for the judgment of our readers.

In this case what do we see? In the first, place a perfectly healthy woman, whose husband up to this time was entirely free from all taint of syphilis, has a child which is perfectly healthy. The same state of things does not exist during the second pregnancy. This time the husband, being infected with constitutional syphilis, communicates this disease to the product of conception, which in turn transmits it to the mother. The transmission effected in this way is evident, when we take into consideration the time at which the syphilitic symptoms appeared, and the circumstances attending their development. In addition, the absence of all specific lesion of the sexual organs of the patient at the time of the birth of the child, and the characteristic signs presented by the husband, leave no room for doubt on this point. From all these circumstances it may be concluded that the spermatic fluid of the husband infected or transmitted the germ of syphilis to the foetus at the time of conception, and that the foetus communicated the disease to the mother during the period of gestation.

ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF MERCURY AND IODIDE OF POTASSIUM IN THE TREATMENT OF SYPHILIS.

By Dr. Junien-Lavillauroy. Translated from the *Gazette des Hopitaux*.

HAVING sketched in a bold style the history of the treatment of syphilis by mercury, having pointed out at what period of the disease, and against what symptoms, mercurials may be useful, M. Junien-Lavillauroy sums up in his thesis the principal modes of the administration of mercury, and insists specially on the method of Montpellier, or that of radical cure. This first part ends with a table of the principal mercurial compounds, arranged in the order of their activity.

We know that M. Bouchardat divides the principal compounds of mercury into;—1st. The *soluble preparations*. Iodhydrargyrate of the iodide of potassium; bi-chloride (corrosive sublimate); and cyanide of mercury.

2d. *Insoluble preparations*. The red oxide; the proto-chloride; proto-iodide; and metallic mercury.

This arrangement is admitted by all therapeutists, particularly by M. Trousseau.

The second part of this work is devoted to iodide of potassium. The opinions advanced by the author are summed up in the following conclusions:—

1. If, with the generality of physicians, we adopt the method of radical cure, or that of Montpellier, in the treatment of constitu-

tional syphilis, the practice which consists in giving the iodide of potassium after the disappearance of the symptoms under mercurial treatment, is always useless and may often become injurious.

II. The mixed treatment is very energetic, and ought to be employed in the case of very obstinate and inveterate syphilis; but with the condition, that, if we wish for a durable cure, the mixed treatment must be continued a long time, or that after it the ordinary mercurial treatment should be continued for a certain period.

III. We understand the prompt and immediate treatment on the part of those physicians who do not believe in the preventive action of what they term anti-syphilitics; but from the moment that they give them to anticipate new symptoms, according to the rules of the method of Montpellier (and, it must be remarked, all those who give the iodide of potassium after mercury, do it for this end), all these do the opposite to what they propose to do. They drive, in fact, the mercury from the economy, the specific which they have designedly accumulated in it, and to which they are proposing to add, perhaps injuriously, another specific, the iodide of potassium.

IV. The action of the iodide of potassium on the compounds of mercury fixed in the economy explains the opinion that iodide of potassium does not act as an anti-syphilitic in tertiary syphilis, except in those persons who have previously undergone a mercurial treatment.

V. The iodide of potassium may act not so much as iodide of potassium, as in transforming the mercury in the system into a more active compound, the iodhydrargyrate of iodide of potassium. So that it would seem there is in reality but one specific for syphilis, *mercury*.

VI. When in syphilitic patients symptoms appear a long time after mercurial treatment (and with much greater reason when it has not been employed at all), as we may suppose that there is no mercury left in the system, if we wish to treat the patient by iodide of potassium, in order to count upon its action, it is well to give at the same time a mercurial preparation; that is to say, to follow what Vidal de Cassis calls the mixed treatment.

A CASE FROM AN OLD COMMON-PLACE BOOK.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

JULY, 1807.—Mr. A. B., 22 years, having for a long time been troubled with indigestion and the consequences therefrom, was attacked, after a short journey, with violent pain in the intestines, with an impossibility of voiding any fæces, also attended with a slight diabetes. Dr. — attended, and ordered, in the first place (Sunday evening), to have the abdomen fomented. Soon after, a large blister was applied below the umbilical region, and at the same time were ordered 60 drops of laudanum every 15 minutes, until the