

THERAPEUTIC NOTES.

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It has for some time been apparent to the editors of the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF INSANITY that a greater amount of attention given to therapeutics would be acceptable to its readers. We therefore offer, commencing with the present issue, a series of notes and observations of a therapeutic character which we hope may prove timely and of practical use.

It is undeniable that in the "Therapeutics of Insanity" we have a wide—a practically unlimited field. No "pent up Utica," confines the powers of the psychiatrist, nor even any "boundless continent," but hemispheres and even the globe itself are often embraced in prescriptions in which oceans and mountains are employed as "adjuvants" or "excipients."

Almost every agency and substance known to man, ponderable and imponderable, has had its therapeutic "day," from "whirling chairs" to "whirling mirrors," from continuous salt baths to sea voyages, from strenuous exercise to rigorous "rest-cure," from surgical operations to musical symphonies, or tartar emetic to "tenth dilutions." In older times the smithy was a pharmacy, and iron prepared by hammer and anvil was used externally for sedative effect, now, that mineral is employed internally as a tonic and coated with sugar. The fibres of *gossypium herbaceum*, assuming the form of a *camisole de force*, were formerly employed to restrain rebellious nervous energy. Such coarser agency gives place in the pharmacopeia of to-day to fetters which chemistry elaborates from narcotic drugs (sometimes as mischievous as the mechanical form of restraint).

In the newer organo-therapy (itself an evolution from the superstition of the past) a field as remarkable as it is extensive has been opened, where a few splendid achievements stand forth among many vainly ambitious attempts. One is reminded of a

veritable "witches' caldron" in reading of ovarian, orchitic, thyroid, adrenal extracts, and there is a multitude of serums and lymphs which no man can number. A page might be filled by "therapy," with innumerable prefixes, and "pathies" nearly as numerous. Two pathies have a marvellous rampancy just now. Osteopathy and (to coin a word) Eddyopathy, to which latter a certain blasphemous woman in Boston would seek to attach two infinitely ambitious names—the high appellation of "science" and the holy name of "Christ."

Man's therapeutic efforts invoke all the powers of light and darkness. In addition to X-rays, we may soon be enlightened or mystified by "Y-rays" or "Z-rays." Chromotherapy will perhaps be the next "craze." The daily press tells us of rooms arranged in one of the insane hospitals in a chromatic color scale where the patients may wander at will and have their meditations tintured by all the hues of the rainbow. Let us hope the new "bow of promise" will be one of performance, also. All of which reminds one of the marvels we were led to expect from "blue glass" a quarter of a century ago.

"Blue glass" has joined the immense array of *nostrums* and *placebos* to which frail humanity perpetually gives a fleeting fame, but which all alike have in them one enduring element of virtue and strength—the healing power which *mental* influences are undeniably capable of exerting.

It is a fact that not even the most charlatanic of the fads of these or other days lacks its list of wondrous cures, some of which are perfectly genuine. Nor is there perhaps any object in nature which may not under certain circumstances exert a healing power. We will not at this time enter upon the subject of mental therapeutics further than to advance, with some diffidence, the following suggestion as to the guiding principles for research in this field:

I. Abnormal or morbid ideas are capable of affecting unfavorably bodily as well as mental conditions.

II. Wherever, and in so far as, disease is caused or complicated by morbid ideas, healthy ideas are capable of bringing cure or relief.

The psychical element in disease has always been important and becomes increasingly so. This fact has been too much

ignored by the regular medical world and too much exploited by the half-world, the *demi-monde* of healing science. In the newer psychiatry we may expect to see a change in the extent to which the influence of the mind over the body will be utilized.

Leaving to a future time the discussion of the principles here concerned, we will descend to the more material and prosaic medical substances, and first draw our readers' attention to some of the forms and uses of Cascara.

Preparations of Cascara.—Cascara is a drug which in the professional experience accumulated during recent years has been more successful as a tonic laxative than any other. The preparations are numerous and vary so much that it is necessary to select from among them to obtain the best results in overcoming constipation, which in nervous and mental diseases is met with so constantly and whose consequences, immediate and remote, are so mischievous.

In many cases a good response is obtained from the fluid extract of cascara; this, however, is often objectionable from its acrid bitterness. To conceal this it may be exhibited in pill form or in a capsule or wafer, but many patients dislike this, and it often fails. There are fluid preparations which have the bitterness taken out but with this the efficiency seems to go also. It was formerly our frequent experience to be disappointed with one after another of the available combinations, but for six years past we have had with rare exceptions entire satisfaction from "Kasagra" (Ext. *Cascaræ Sagradae* fld. aromaticæ), prepared by a reliable and well-known house. This preparation is agreeable to the taste and efficient in small dose. It contains no purgative elements other than cascara. It seems not to be well known, and if on giving it a trial our readers' experience should correspond to our own, we feel sure they will appreciate having had their attention called to it. "Kasagra" is palatable. It has more action than any other preparation bulk for bulk. It has, equally with all good cascara preparations, a tonic effect upon the bowels so that it can be dispensed in diminishing doses and tends to serve as a cure for constipation.

Some detail regarding its use may be helpful. The dose is

from 1 to 4 drams, but the best results are obtained by giving it in divided doses, say a dram before breakfast, followed by a glass of hot water and one or two drams followed by water at bed time. In some cases larger doses may be desirable, when a dram or two may be given before the midday meal. It will always require less of the drug when administered in this manner. The dose can be gradually lessened. In each case the customary accessory forms of treatment should be resorted to and in some few instances adjuvant cathartic drugs may be required, especially where long standing and obstinate constipation exists.

In a list of one hundred and fifty cases reviewed for this department of the JOURNAL by Dr. Arthur W. Rogers and taken indiscriminately in the order of their case records, Kasagra operated successfully with remarkably few exceptions, which are noted below. This list was made up of neurasthenic and hysterical cases; cases of mania, acute and chronic melancholia and dementia, hebephrenia, "habit" cases, organic, brain, cardiac and kidney disease, paresis, etc. In many of these cases constipation was of a chronic character and with some almost a life-long habit, yet all of them were benefited with the exceptions to be noted, and a majority were relieved to such an extent that evacuations remained normal even after a discontinuance of the drug.

Of two patients not showing benefit, one was a case of chronic neurasthenia with hypochondriacal delusions where the patient was so irregular in habit and diet and so unable to cooperate in the treatment that favorable results could scarcely have been expected; the other was a case of Huntington's chorea where at first nothing but high enemata would furnish relief and no medicine taken internally would act (not even three drops of croton oil given in one dose). In this case after about two weeks the patient's bowels were kept regular by Kasagra and eventually all drugs were discontinued. In several cases of organic brain disease where there was progressive paralysis this remedy failed to a great extent. Still another class of cases among which it failed to act favorably was that of the senile melancholias and terminal dementias, yet the working in many of these was satisfactory. Approximately not over

and in all less than 10 cases out of the 150 proved wholly refractory to this treatment.

An unusual case benefited was one of specific brain disease. This man had at times gone two weeks without a bowel movement, yet in the course of two months his evacuations were normal with only an occasional dose of Kasagra.

One case of melancholia attonita in which the patient died of marasmus failed to be relieved at all as did also one case of simple melancholia.

Of unfavorable results except failure to act there were none except two cases where griping and bowel irritation seemed to be caused by the preparation.

Serum Treatment of Morphin Intoxication.—The question of the development of a curative antitoxin for drug addiction by the methods used in elaboration of diphtheria and other antitoxins possesses much interest. We present below an abstract of the researches of L. Hirschlaff taken from the Journal of the American Medical Association of January 31, 1903, and for the original source refer readers to the Berliner klinische Wochenschrift, XXXIX, 47.

162. *Serum Treatment of Morphin Intoxication.*—Hirschlaff reports experimental research on 85 rabbits treated for three weeks to five months with small doses of morphin, commencing with .015 gm. and increasing to .51, or a maximum of 1.2 gmm. a day. The animals thus received a total of 4.59 to 63.61 gm. of morphin and the rabbit serum acquired protecting power against otherwise fatal doses of morphin, both for rabbits and 100 mice. After thorough tests of the immunization thus attained, he used the serum for the treatment of one acute and five chronic cases of morphin intoxication. Some of the patients had been in the habit for years of receiving a subcutaneous injection every day, and all previous attempts at suspension of the drug had induced severe symptoms after one to three injections of the serum with abrupt suspension of the drug, no symptoms were observed. In the acute case a woman had taken 12.45 gm. of tincture of opium, and all the threatening symptoms rapidly passed away and the patient promptly recovered under the serum treatment.

A study of this subject would appear to be an appropriate form of research to be authorized and encouraged by such establishments as the Rockefeller Institute. The effect of morphin, cocain and other narcotics upon the tissues, especially

the nerve tissues, could doubtless be demonstrated and means of testing the secretions and the tissues elaborated which would furnish a certain knowledge in doubtful cases of addiction or poisoning.

Use of Iron of Animal Origin.—We translate from the Journal de Medecin de Paris for February 1, 1903, the following:

"Animal Iron in Hæmoglobin.—Hæmoglobin, given with success in anæmia and chlorosis, acts both by substitution and through the metallic iron it contains which is far from infinitesimal in quantity. It is worth while to remind the practitioner that he can administer as much iron in this form as by use of the usual formularies."

A soup spoon of syrup containing 2 gr. 50. of hæmoglobin contains 1 centigr. of iron. It is therefore possible to give 2 to 4 centigr. of the metal daily—an ample quantity, considering that the total mass of the blood contains less than 3 gr. of iron. The Journal quotes Dujardin-Beaumetz as reporting the use of this form of iron in 1835 and stating the results were remarkably good in anæmia and chlorosis. He could not sufficiently recommend this, the most powerful of the ferruginous preparations.

Mental Disturbances Due to Hypnotism.—The Prussian government recently requested of the Central Medical Chamber an opinion on hypnotism. We give below the substance of the report of a committee appointed to comply with the request of the government, of which committee Prof. Mendel was chairman, emphasizing the fact that hypnotism can cause as well as cure mental disorders. Mendel's report as given in the Journal of the American Medical Association for February 28, 1903, is as follows:

"Careful distinction must be made between the cure of an affection and the alleviation of its symptoms by hypnotism. No physician claims that it is possible to cure with it an organic affection susceptible of demonstration with our modern diagnostic measures. But hypnotic or waking suggestion is undoubtedly capable of banishing, usually temporarily but sometimes even permanently, the most widely diverse symptoms of the affection—but without curing it. Success is dependent in this case, as in all cases of suggestion, on the greater or less skill of the suggestor, his personality, on external circumstances and on the degree of receptivity of suggestion by the patient. A number of cases are

known in which mental disturbances developed in predisposed individuals under hypnotization. Some of these cases occurred with charlatans, but in others the hypnosis had been conducted by physicians."

Arteriosclerosis.—Prof. Heushard of Paris in the *Press Medicale* (quoted in Journal of the American Medical Association January 31, 1903) writes as follows, naming as known causes of arteriosclerosis:

Gout, diabetes, alimentary toxins, plumbism, arthritis, chronic rheumatism, heredity and senility. And he classifies the following as doubtful causes: Alcoholism, tobacco, syphilis and mental overstrain. The treatment consists of hygiene and alimentary regimen. Milk diet should form an important part of the alimentation, while such liquids as tea, coffee and liquors of every kind should be withheld; food containing ptomaines, such as fish, game, pork, and tinned meat should not be advised. All liquids should be taken in moderation in order that plethora of the vascular system will not occur, which would cause arterial hypertension. Intestinal antiseptics should be prescribed. The author advises some of the following for this purpose: naphthol, benzonaphthol and charcoal. If constipation is present proper evacuants must be employed. Other medical treatment consists in employing those preparations that tend to promote vaso-dilatation. Among these he mentions nitroglycerin and sodium or potassium iodid in small doses.

As an antidyspneic and diuretic the following is of value:

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| R. Tinct. grindeliæ robustæ | ℥ i | 30 |
| Tinct. convallariæ | 3 iiss | 10 |
| Tinct. scillæ | ℥ i | 4 |

M. Sig.: Fifteen drops three times a day in water.

Dyspnea being the principal sign of arteriosclerosis, and being of alimentary origin of a toxic nature, he institutes the following regimen for five or six months:

1. For eight days absolute milk diet, three quarts daily.
2. For the following week a mixed diet consisting of eggs, fruits, grapes, small quantity of meat each day, and never in the evening. This should be repeated every month during the remainder of the period.
3. Suppression of game, cheese, tea, alcohol, and tobacco.
4. The administration of a purgative at proper intervals.
5. During the periods of mixed diet theobromin in 10 gr. doses should be prescribed two or three times.
6. During the period of pure milk diet potassium iodid should be given.
7. In cases of cardiac insufficiency moderate doses of digitalis are recommended.