

the blood bad secretions and excretions, whilst an accidental arrest of one of the latter reacts through the blood on the assimilating powers. The forms of disease thus arising may be endless, but they may all be traced to the following causes:—

- "1. An improper quantity or quality of the food.
- "2. Circumstances preventing assimilation.
- "3. Altered quality or quantity of the exudation.
- "4. An anormal transformation of the exudation.
- "5. The accumulation of effete matters in the blood.
- "6. Obstacles to the excretion of these from the body.

"Examples in which each of these causes, separately or combined, have occasioned disease, must have occurred to every practitioner. It is true that all general diseases are accompanied by certain changes in the blood, but these changes are to be removed, not by operating on the blood directly, but by obviating or removing those circumstances which have deranged the state of nutrition primarily affected. For instance, a very intense form of disease may be produced in infants, from improper lactation. The remedy is obvious, and we procure a healthy nurse. Ischuria is followed by coma, from the accumulation of urea; we give diuretics to increase the flow of urine, and the symptoms subside. In the one case we furnish the elementary principles necessary for nutrition; in the other, we remove the residue of the process. In both cases the blood is diseased, but its restoration to health is produced by acting on a knowledge of the causes which led to its derangement.

"In the same manner we might illustrate the indications for rational practice in the other classes of causes tending to derange the blood, which we have enumerated. Thus, although there be a proper quantity or quality of the food, there may be circumstances which impede its assimilation; for instance, a too great acidity or irritability of the stomach—the use of alcoholic drinks—inflammation or cancer of the organ. It is the discovery and removal of these that constitute the chief indications of the rational practitioner. Again, the capillary vessels become over distended with blood, and the exudation of liquor sanguinis to an unusual amount takes place, constituting inflammation. How is this to be removed? In the early stage topical bleeding will diminish the congestion, and the application of cold will check the amount of exudation. But the exudation having once coagulated outside the vessels, acts as a foreign body, and the treatment must then be directed to furthering the transformations which take place in it, and facilitating the absorption and excretion of effete matter. This is accomplished by the local application of heat and moisture—the internal use of neutral salts to dissolve the increase of fibrin in the blood, and the employment of diuretics and purgatives to assist its excretion by urine or stool."

13. *Acute Spinal Myelitis*.—Several cases of acute myelitis treated in M. ROSTAN'S wards, have given this professor an opportunity of sketching the features of this affection, hitherto so obscure, and of methodising its principal therapeutic indications. A few only of the prominent points can be here noticed, those on which M. Rostan particularly insists, and which he believes sufficient for establishing the diagnosis. Of these, the summary is as follows: On the one hand, complete retention of the senses and intellectual functions; on the other, various derangements in the sensibility and power of motion in the extremities, and especially the lower extremities. But these derangements in the power of motion and the sensibility, are very variable according to the degrees and different periods of the disease, and it is owing to having for the most part, failed to take account of all the degrees and shades of these symptoms that this affection has been so often misunderstood at its commencement, that is, at the period when energetic treatment may avail to prevent its disastrous consequences. These first symptoms, by which myelitis is announced, are sometimes cramps, more or less frequent, and muscular contractions of longer or shorter duration; at other times pains in the extremities are the only symptoms complained of without any appearance of change in the contractility; in other cases muscular tremors, true convulsive movements come on; lastly, in some the loss of sense and motion appear at once from the commencement. Whatever may have been the initiatory symptoms, it is always by the more or less complete abolition of sensibility and

motion that the scene terminates. There is another symptom, to which M. Rostan attaches much importance, viz., the abolition of the erectile power in the male—the functions of the rectum and bladder, though often more or less affected, sometimes remain unaltered, so as to fail of affording diagnostic signs. And to pain on pressure over the spine as a diagnostic, M. Rostan attaches very little importance.

The antiphlogistic method forms the basis of this physician's treatment,—he has recourse to general and local evacuations of blood. But as detraction of blood is not always practicable in the requisite degree, or when practicable is insufficient, M. Rostan uses as subsidiary, blisters, setons, moxas, and purgatives; lastly, in the final resort, and after the insufficiency of the means already enumerated is manifest, he has recourse to strychnine, electricity, and the various excitants of the nervous system.

The following are among the cases recently treated by M. Rostan:—

I. *Acute myelitis—energetic antiphlogistic treatment—amelioration—sudden attack of meningo-encephalitis—death.*—A young man of a vigorous constitution, after having been exposed to wet, became affected with extreme weakness in the lower extremities. As this weakness went on increasing he came to the Hôtel Dieu, when the following symptoms were observed:—Fever, pulse 96, skin hot and dry. The intelligence is quite sound; no headache. The upper extremities are in a slight degree weakened. The lower extremities have lost entirely their sensibility, and the power of motion in them is quite gone. The bladder and rectum are unaffected. Pressure made with the fingers over the spinous processes of the vertebræ excites no uneasiness.

M. Rostan pronounced him to labour under acute myelitis, and prescribed an energetic antiphlogistic treatment; blood-lettings from the arm and cuppings over the spine were repeated for several days. On the third day of this treatment, the patient experienced an amelioration so great that he was already considered in a state of convalescence; the sensibility and power of motion were so fully recovered that he could walk and move about without support, when after exposing himself anew to cold, he was seized with otitis, accompanied with a purulent discharge from the ear, swelling in the region of the parotid, erythema of the neck and breast, then in succession with symptoms of meningo-encephalitis of the most intense description, which cut him off in two days.

On dissection, the spinal marrow was found slightly softened towards its lower part to the extent of between one and two inches (3 to 4 centimetres), and healthy everywhere besides. In the head were seen the anatomical characters of commencing meningo-encephalitis; vivid injection of the pia mater and arachnoid, adhering at some points to the cerebral pulp; convolutions turgid and prominent; punctuated injection of the cerebral pulp, &c.

II. *Acute myelitis—antiphlogistic treatment—rapid cure.*—A man of fifty years of age, robust, usually enjoying good health, was seized after a cold bath with general prostration, a sense of lassitude and weakness in the loins and extremities. This weakness augmenting, there soon arose a tingling in the feet, then an almost complete abolition of sensibility in the movements of the lower extremities; the upper extremities also were somewhat affected. Unequivocal entireness of intelligence and the senses; no headache; febrile excitement. The rectum and bladder were unaffected. No pain on pressure over the vertebral column. M. Rostan directed four bleedings from the arm within two days, and cuppings along the spine. There was an evident amelioration almost from the first bleeding. At the end of eight or ten days the cure was complete.—*M. J. Med. Sci.*, Nov. 1846, from *Gaz. Médicale de Paris*, Oct. 3, 1846.

14. *Curability of Hypertrophy of the Heart.*—M. ROSTAN, whilst prescribing for a young woman, now in his wards at the Hôtel-Dieu, declared that it was an error to suppose that this disease was beyond the resources of art. Experience has proved to him that it is radically curable in certain conditions where remedies can be tolerated, in proof of which he related the following case:

A blacksmith, aged twenty-seven years, robust, not fat, but powerfully muscular, with large shoulders, offering all the appearance of an athlete, entered some years ago, into the ward of M. Rostan, at the Hôtel Dieu, with hypertrophy of the heart. This organ was of enormous volume, raised the corresponding side of