

physiology, based on the experimental evidence furnished to us by the true Hahnemannian method.

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DISEASES OF THE KIDNEYS

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I.—*Anatomy*.—The kidneys are two flattened, reddish-brown organs with rounded ends, shaped like a kidney bean. They are symmetrically placed below the diaphragm, outside of the last thoracic and the three upper lumbar vertebræ. Their outer margin is convex, their inner margin irregular, forming the so-called hilum, through which the blood and lymph vessels enter the organ. The hilum unites with the ureter, which runs downwards to the bladder, whence the urine is emptied through the urethra.

Thus a direct canal is formed—kidney, pelvis, ureter, bladder, urethra—and it is this canal, through which, under certain circumstances, dangerous infections may reach the kidneys.

The kidneys are wrapped in layers of fat and areolar tissue. They are not too firmly fixed in position, thus they are apt to move or float.

In cases of so-called *movable* or *floating* kidney, the organ may sink into the abdominal cavity or even into the pelvis, giving rise to the most serious subjective symptoms.

Each kidney has a firm fibrous capsule, which, in a healthy kidney, can easily be stripped off. The size

of a normal kidney corresponds, roughly speaking, to the width of the clenched fist of the individual.

The kidneys are, microscopically, the most complex glands of the body.

Longitudinally divided from hilum to outer edge, the cut surface is seen to consist of two parts: an outer layer, the cortex, and an inner part, the medulla. The latter consists of a series of 8 to 16 pyramids. Their apices of papillæ project into the pelvis of the kidney, where they are surrounded by membranous tubes (calices), which, by their union, make up the ureter.

II.—*Physiology*.—The main task of the kidney is to filter the blood and to eliminate from it all harmful and poisonous waste-products.

How is it done? The renal artery brings the blood, laden with nutritious as well as with poisoning waste matter into the kidneys. Its capillary-ends curl themselves into thousands and thousands of clusters—each like a ball of wool. These clusters fit into a round membranous capsule, which is the bulbous closed end of a urinary tubule. These tubules first curl, then they loop U-fashion, then they run back and forwards and twist in spirals. Thus the blood-stream becomes delayed in order to give the renal cells sufficient time to extract the waste-products or whatever they want. When this task is achieved, the blood gets out as quickly as possible, thus the purely excreting tubules are quite straight membranous tubes, which, by their union, make up the ureter.

III.—Diseases of the kidneys are the most

thorough branch of medicine. The invention of cystoscopy by the German physician, Nitze, of the art of catheterizing the ureters, introduced by my teacher, Casper, who at the same time, developed the so-called functional tests of the kidneys, enable us to get an exact knowledge of the anatomical, physiological and pathological conditions of each kidney separately. The development of the X-ray examination added to the progress of our knowledge. Thus we can safely state that an experienced physician is capable of diagnosing any disease of the kidneys in its earliest period. We know, by now, that diseases of the kidneys do not necessarily give any local subjective or objective symptoms. But we are well aware of the significance of general symptoms, such as loss of weight, digestive disorders, impaired vision, sleeplessness, general fatigue, which are often the first symptoms of a serious chronic disease of the kidneys.

The most common diseases of the kidneys comprise such ailments as included under the general term, "Bright's Disease".

The English physician, Dr. Richard Bright of Guy's Hospital, published in 1827, his research work proving that many cases of dropsy, coupled with albuminuria, are specific symptoms of inflammation of the kidneys. His observations have been confirmed and extended by all other following authorities. In honour of Bright, all inflammatory diseases of the kidneys have been termed Bright's Disease, in spite of the fact, that the anatomical changes in the kidneys are of the most different character.

We should differentiate between the following three types of ailments :

1. The so-called *nephroses*, their clinical symptoms being a great amount of albumin and fatty substances in the urine and general dropsy, due to the diminished function of the kidneys. There is scarcely any blood in the urine. The acute form of these: nephroses is a common complication of many acute infectious diseases, such as diphtheria, typhoid fever, pneumonia, cholera, etc. The chronic nephroses are on the whole, coupled with chronic septic or infectious ailments, such as malaria, syphilis, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever. Some cases are due to endocrine disorders, such as diabetes mellitus, exophthalmic goitre, whilst other cases are following burns, or poisoning of the body by permanganate of potassium or carbonic oxide. The quantity of urine in these cases is always diminished. The urine itself is cloudy, its colour greyish-yellow or brownish, the specific gravity high (1030-1050), the reaction, acid or alkaline. The urine nearly always contains a great amount of uric acid deposits.

The increased loss of albumin with the urine (up to 20 gr. or even more daily) causes general anæmia with decrease of the red blood cells. There is always loss of appetite, vomiting or diarrhoea, which inevitably leads to progressive deterioration of the general health. All these patients are characterized by their pale, greyish skin.

Total stoppage of the urine (anuria) is the threatening danger in all these cases. It is mostly

preceded by progressive diminution of the daily quantity of urine, coupled with increased dropsy. Hence the importance of careful daily examination of the urine's quantity. Strict diet with plenty of fresh water, which helps to dissolve the poisonous products circulating in the blood is the best preventive remedy. If, however, the patient is becoming very dropsical, the fluid taken should be restricted. The quantity of the drinks should thus be regulated according to the daily quantity of urine. The diet should be almost salt-free. Condiments, however, such as onions, dill, parsley, should be given freely. The diet should always contain albumin or even meat in order to replace the daily loss of albumen. Too much milk is injurious. All kinds of vegetables and green salads, egg dishes, rice, groats, oats, fats and sweets may be given to the patient's liking.

2. Catarrhal or parenchymatous inflammation of the kidneys (diffuse glomerulonephritis).

This kind of inflammation affects mostly the secreting structures of the kidneys. The kidneys are at first enlarged; their colour in acute cases are, is on the whole, redder than under normal conditions. In chronic cases, however, the colour is rather pale. With the progress of the disease, the kidneys gradually diminish in size, and thus resemble the cirrhotic form of Bright's disease. Catarrhal inflammation of the kidneys is a common complication of pregnancy as well as of acute infectious diseases, especially of scarlet fever. It is often due to exposure to cold. Acute fever, chilliness, headache, pains in the region of the

kidneys, vomiting, dropsy, especially around the eyes, diminished bloody urine, which contains tube-casts and albumin and general prostration are the most characteristic symptoms of the disease. The gravity of the disease depends upon the always threatening danger of complete stoppage of the urine (anuria), which in a few days inevitably leads to uræmia. We should, therefore, carefully watch the preliminary symptoms, such as irregular pulse, headache, dizziness, impaired vision and dropsy.

Repeated vigorous bleeding up to 500-800 c.cm. is our most effective treatment. It is especially indicated in cases following scarlet fever and should always be combined with fruit fasting cures, to be followed by a pure vegetarian diet with plenty of fresh fruit and "All Bran". Hot compresses around the region of the kidneys and around the shanks, hot baths of the arms and hands should regularly be given.

3. The waxy or lardaceous degeneration of the kidneys. This type of kidney disease was first described by Virchow. Like waxy degeneration in other organs, especially in the liver, it is nearly always due to syphilis or prolonged suppuration in any vital organ. It is clinically characterized by greatly increased quantity of urine, dropsy, progressive emaciation and anæmia. The urine contains blood and albumin. The disease is a common symptom in the terminal period of tuberculosis or cancer.

Homoeopathic Treatment of Kidney Diseases.—The following remedies should be considered in accordance with the general homoeopathic principles :

Solidago 2x. The "Golden Rod" should be given in the majority of all cases of kidney troubles. It has been introduced into Homœopathy by Rademacher and was always known among the people as an efficient herb for inward bruises. Its key symptoms are pains in the kidneys, cloudy urine, difficult urination in old people, gravel or stone in the urine, foul smelling urine with blood.

Juniperus ^o is another most reliable drug in all cases of kidney troubles. It strengthens the function of the kidneys. It is especially indicated in dropsy and urinary colics. It was regarded in olden times as a specific remedy to break stones in the kidneys.

Coccus cacti 3x is an almost specific drug for kidney diseases, recommended by Rademacher. It is the remedy for chilly patients, suffering from gravel in the urine, flatulency, constipation and a peculiar cough, which is always aggravated when entering a warm room, coupled with difficulty in raising the sputum. The drug is especially indicated in cases of Bright's disease with bloody, diminished urine.

Equisetum hyemale 2x specific drug for kidney and bladder diseases, especially indicated in acute inflammation with colicky pains and decreased quantity of urine, containing blood and albumin as well as gravel.

Apis 6x : dropsy, thirst, anæmia, nausea, great fatigue.

Apocynum cannabinum 2x : irregular, hard, weak pulse, thirst, constipation, diminished urine, sensation of pressure in the heart, heart failure.

Arsenicum album 6x : violent thirst, chilliness,

dropsy, burning pains, extremely anæmic skin, difficult respiration, diminished bloody urine, aggravation of all symptoms at midnight.

Calcarea arsenicosum 5x : chronic Bright's disease, characterized by headache, with sudden congestions, weakness of the heart, dizziness, thirst, vomiting, emaciation, diarrhoea, skin eruptions, diminished urine.

Cantharis 6x : high fever, burning pains in the kidneys, great thirst, anxiety, restlessness, threatening uræmia.

China 3x : periodicity of all symptoms, pale face, prostration, dropsy, ascites.

Cuprum arsenicosum 4x : thirst, vomiting, diarrhoea, very little urine, containing blood and albumin, attacks of suffocation and delirium.

Helonias dioica 1x : general depression, irritability, sensation of weakness in the loins, vomiting, diarrhoea, disorders of the genital organs, frequent urination, urine containing a great amount of albumin.

Kalium carbonicum 3x : anæmia, dropsy of the lower eye lids, increased quantity of urine. The *Kalium carbonicum* patients are very liable to get colds.

Phosphorus 6x : the drug for the last period of kidney diseases, characterized by bleeding, venous congestion of the lungs and weakness of the heart.

Plumbum iodatum 4x : high blood-pressure, dizziness, sleepiness, disorders of vision, loss of appetite, thirst, foul smelling breath, constipation, extreme anæmia.

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