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BY

W. J. Peake

W. T. BERRY & CO,
BOOKSELLERS AND STATIONERS,
NASHVILLE, TENN.
Hydrops may be defined to be an accumulation of serum in the cellular tissue or cavities of the body; in the consideration of all diseases the point to which we should pay particular attention is to their pathology.

As the pathology of disease is intimately connected with the treatment; and in fact as the rational mode of treatment is based on the pathology of the disease, it is of high importance that we should be well acquainted with the true pathology of the disease so that we may be able to direct our treatment according to the principles of science and of reason. Otherwise it will be mere empiricism. The first pathological state to which we shall direct our attention is irritation.
It is a well known fact, that secretion is greatly increased by irritation until it reaches a certain point when it has advanced beyond this point it decreases. This result is in all probability brought about by an increased flow of arterial blood to the part so irritated. Or perhaps it may be owing in some degree to an increased amount of nervous power directed to that particular tissue or from both these causes combined. Secretion occurring in a case of this kind, might very properly be denominated active. But on the other hand we may have irritation and a relaxation of tissue of the part, then secretion would take place in a passive manner.
It is quite probable that dropsy does not occur very often from the effect of irritation, unless it and the same time should be associated with a relaxed state of the system. The most pathological condition which we shall notice is that of venous congestion. This is one of the most frequent pathological conditions of dropsy. It may result under various circumstances. It may result in an anemic condition or in a phlegmotic condition of the system. When the congestion takes place in a debilitated state of the system, the dropsy generally commences in the lower extremities, and depends in the first place on the relaxed condition of the blood vessels owing to a want of the necessary stimulating
Qualities of the circulating fluid. The venous blood accumulating still farther favors this condition. Until at length the blood vessels permit the blood to be forced through, or to pass through by mechanical exudation. The effusion may be in part owing to the downward pressure of the blood, the valves being obliterated; and it is probably owing a great deal more to this than to the force of the blood from behind. We will take up next venous congestion of the portal circulation. These circumstances at attending this which differ materially from the preceding, and which require particular notice.
Venous congestion of the porta circulation is the pathological condition of ascites. It is generally caused by inflammation of the liver or some malignant disease of the liver, obstructing the blood in the radicles of the venous porta, and causing it to accumulate in the venous radicles supplying the venous porta. This condition may occur in a pathological state differing entirely as respects the condition of the system. It may occur in an ascitic or in a pectinate condition of the system. We can very easily account for the effusion, taking place by remembering that duly oxygenated blood is necessary in certain limits to give tone to the
t. Circulating apparatus and that when ever this is disturbed by any means the vessels become relaxed, in part from the want of this stimulus and in part to the delusive influence of blood saturated with carbon. In this manner the blood or its more fluid parts are permitted to thorough by the force of the blood from behind and as I think by mechanical exudation owing about as much to the pressure of blood in the veins and other circumstances which favor the arrangement accumulation of semen in this form of congestion is that the absorption is principally carried on by means of the veins these becoming eas
congested can no longer absorb the effused serum. What absorption does take place is principally carried on by means of the lymphatics. It would be reasonable to suppose that absorption would be diminished if there were no accumulation of blood in the absorbed veins because of their relaxed condition. This relaxed state owing to a deficient supply of arterial blood.

Deficient absorption is mentioned by writers as being one of the pathological conditions of dropsy. It is true that absorption is diminished in dropsy and the same pathological condition that produces the diminished absorption increases the offensive and dropsy would take place provided absorption should not in the least be diminished.
We have passed over what we conceive to be the pathological conditions in dropsy, we shall consider next the causes on which these conditions depend. The causes of irritation among the causes of irritation may be mentioned cold when in a state of perspiration—the transpiration of goods or rheumatism—long continued disease as intermittent fever or chronic inflammation of the liver—these latter acting as a cause by debilitating the tissues and impoverishing the blood. Among the causes of a refuse congestion are impoverished condition of the blood acting indirectly by impoverishing the tissues, the obstruction by stones, and disease of the heart, and of the liver are among the most frequent causes, after merely mentioning...
Some of the causes I will remark that we may have almost any one of these causes acting on the system and yet dropsy will not be the result and is generally associated with more than one of the pathological conditions mentioned.

The prognosis is favorable or unfavorable according to the cause if it depend on derangement of the further organ we may regard it as favorable while on the other hand if it depend on organic lesion of some important organ as the heart lungs or liver it is uncertain.

Treatment in the treatment of disease we should in the first place endeavor to remove the cause of the disease for as long
The cause remains it will be impossible to eradicate the disease. For the treatment of dropsy we might reasonably expect the treatment to be as variable as the pathologial condition are on which it depends. And knowing that the systems may be placed under quite different circumstances, we would readily come to the conclusion that no routine of treatment is applicable or can be adopted with success.

The first remedy which we shall bring forward in the treatment of dropsy is venesection. Now it may sound almost strange to hear talk of bloodletting in this disease associated as it is generally with an anemic state of the system. Indeed it is scarcely ever indicated, yet we think it there
are certain conditions in which
it would be of great benefit
as in irritation with active con-
gestion. in a case of this kind it would
act beneficially by diminishing the quantity
and the force of the blood. in irritation the
section depends on the stimulating
effects of an increased amount of
arterial blood being directed to the part
by bleeding we in the first place
lessen the amount of blood sent to
the part as well as in the whole system.
and at the same time promote the abso-
rption of the effused fluid which ren-
deres the blood less stimulating and
by this means lessen the irritation
which keeps up the congestion.
Another condition in which it might
be employed with advantage is
Where we have distension of the blood vessels with impure blood, by bleeding we would decrease the exhalation by relieving the distended vessels, then by giving tonics and diuretics we should expect to relieve the system of the disease. If the irritation depends on a debilitated state of the system and a relaxation of the tissues, then we should give diuretics to promote absorption while we at the same give tonics to invigorate the system, and improve the condition of the blood. In dropsy produced by the gouty or rheumatic diathesis we might expect advantage in the use of colchicum. From the good effects it is capable of
of producing in these diseases.
In the treatment of dropsy depending on congestion of the portal circulation our treatment would differ materially from that caused by debility in a great many cases of this kind we will find the system able to sustain pretty active depletion, two indications are to be fulfilled one to remove the cause the other to effect the absorption; if the disease depends on chronic inflammation of the liver we would direct our remedies to the liver while we at the same time should give other remedies to relieve the congestion, we would direct a dose of calomel or blue pill at night, followed a drastic cathartic in the morning next.
as gasthuge, the cream of tartar
in combination with gallop and
if there should be irritation a dose of
donor powder would be advantageous
if not in relieving irritation it
would be by directing action to the
skin. If the disease results from
organic derangement of the liver
such as tuberculosis or other malignant
forms of disease we could not
hope for a cure — our treatment
could only be palliative. We might
go on to state a great many other reas-
sons which are said to have performed
cures, but the true pathological condition
should ever be our guide, and following the
indications we should scarcely ever

Respectfully submitted to the faculty
C. F. Webber, M.D.