

symptoms may also arise, and little resistance is usually made to acute conditions, such as pneumonia or influenza.

We have to remember that "arterio-sclerosis" arises gradually. Some of the foregoing symptoms only may be present, some may never occur at all. This disease, though progressive, is not usually fatal: rather, some complication proves so. Here roughly is an outline of one of the most common conditions met with in advancing life: if not cut short it ends in the natural condition of failing body and mind termed "senile decay." We become again as little children, dependent on the ministrations of the following generation. When arterio-sclerosis occurs earlier in life, it is probably due to great nervous strain, a gouty heredity, or a moral abuse of life.

A very quiet life, free from worry and excitement, is of great benefit; if, however, this condition is produced by former nervous strain, this is very difficult to enforce, and the mental changes in the patient are perhaps the most trying symptoms to deal with.

Suspicion.—Here is one that creates great trouble, and often many heartburnings. I once knew an old lady who was always looking out for slights: her life was very narrow, full of village gossip. Whether real or imaginary, her sufferings were very real enough. Then there is restlessness (quite as trying as that of a healthy three years old child). Little can be done here other than to bear with patience the condition until it passes away. Often after a slight thrombosis, or apoplexy, the mind is greatly altered, spiritual touch with "things unseen" may be greatly clouded, unreasoning dislikes and likings may be taken, when neither justice nor mercy is extended, and an uncharitable outlook may take the place of former loving-kindness. Topics of conversation will be sought and tolerated that once would have been impossible. If these symptoms are recognised, little harm need be done. There is a charity in knowledge, and although pain may be caused, it is "charity" that covers all things. If, however, this state of mind is unrecognised, great and cruel injustice may be done.

I have known the lives of young men spoiled by the bitter and cynical outlook of an elder: old friends may be alienated and closer ties be broken; the beautiful, pure, unsullied outlook of a girl's mind may be shocked and altered, while pain and misunderstandings are bound to arise, and the loyalty to an elder (which is almost a creed) may be falsely jeopardised or strained almost to breaking point. Then

occurs injustice to friends and unnecessary suffering, and all this through crass ignorance, blindly pathetic. Let us recognise this condition as one of the saddest aspects of old age. Does not Shelley speak of the time "when the spirit's self has ceased to burn"? The change comes very slowly, to some never to the full extent to which I have alluded. "Childishness" supervenes first, or some kindly blessed forgetfulness, or the sleep of death.

CHRONIC BRIGHT'S DISEASE.

Where this is allied to arterio-sclerosis, or where found by itself, climate is of great importance: it should be mild and equable, freedom from cold or sudden changes of temperature being more beneficial for the health of the patient. Diet again must be more strictly restricted. Anæmia may need iron tonics, or warm packs and baths may be ordered to help the activity of the skin, while for dropsical symptoms purgatives and diaphoretics are usually ordered. There is a special odour from the Bright's disease patient, irrespective of great cleanliness, that is, to the initiated, diagnostic.

In the later stages of Bright's disease great care of the skin will be needed, and if the patient is confined to bed a water pillow will be required. In chronic Bright's disease we get degenerative changes in the kidneys, and albuminuria is always present.

THROMBOSIS.

When there is thrombosis as a complication of arterio-sclerosis, the onset is gradual. Blood will clot in the interior of a blood vessel, causing a blockage, with symptoms varying according to the position of the vessel affected: the optic or some other nerves may be affected. Apoplexy may arise from more than one cause, but hæmorrhage by rupture of a vessel is the most common, and this may cause symptoms varying in extent, while paralysis of one or more limbs may occur. There may be total unconsciousness, with stertorous breathing, which ends in coma and death, or partial physical and slight mental recovery, with a repetition of the condition which, after the third attack, may be fatal. This usually occurs within two years of the primary seizure.

M. SURTON.

Dr. H. Gordon Mackenzie, in a course of lectures to the Nurses' Missionary League, dwelt upon the tendencies of modern thought, showing that we live in a very critical age, and everything in the field of thought and conduct is called in question.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)