ATOXYL IN THE TREATMENT OF SYPHILIS.

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During the last two years several authorities have advocated atoxyl in the treatment of syphilis, and it has been tried on the Continent with varying results. Thus whilst Salmon and Hellpeau speak in glowing terms of it as a specific, one come to take the place of mercury, Lessa states that during the last two years he has given the drug a very extensive trial, but found it very unsatisfactory as regards syphilis, and that many of the patients treated thus exhibited dangerous toxic symptoms. The following are the notes of four cases of syphilis treated by me with atoxyl at the Military Hospital, Rochester Row:

(1) Private B. was admitted into hospital on September 18th, 1907, suffering from indurated chancre on the glans penis, inguinal and cervical adenitis, roseolar rash on the body; he also suffered from afternoon pyrexia and headache.

Treatment up to date.—No mercury. Atoxyl by intra-muscular injections every second day: up to date (October 18th, 1907) he has received a total of 96 grains.

Progress.—Body weight increased 8 lbs.; rash disappeared, induration at site of sore gone; general health much improved. No toxic symptoms.

(2) Private K., old case of two years' standing, the disease having been contracted before enlistment. Apparently has had little or no previous treatment.

Admitted September 20th, 1907, with the following conditions: deep ulceration of throat, mucous patches on tongue, condylomata, alopecia, general glandular adenitis, loss of flesh and cachexia.

Treatment.—No mercury; atoxyl given since admission every second day by intra-muscular injections.

Progress.—Body weight increased by 7 lbs. Ulceration of throat healed; mucous patches disappeared and condylomata vanished. General health much improved. No toxic symptoms.

(3) Private L., admitted September 21st, 1907, with an indurated sore on prepuce, ulceration of throat, papular eruption on back and arms, and general glandular enlargement.

Treatment.—Since date of admission has received an intra-muscular injection of atoxyl every second day. Has had a total of 90 grains. No mercury.
Progress.—Has gained 6 lbs. in weight. Ulceration of throat healed, induration of sore less. General health improved. No toxic symptoms.

(4) Private G., an old and very obstinate case, in spite of very efficient treatment. During the last eighteen months has received a total of 40 grains of metallic mercury by intra-muscular injection, besides full courses of pot. iodi. and iodipin, with hot air baths regularly. Mercury has been stopped for some months.

Treatment.—Since September 23rd, 1907, the patient has been on atoxyl given in the manner described below, and up to date (October 18th, 1907), he has had a total of 115 grains of atoxyl.

Progress.—Although the patient has gained weight steadily, the treatment has not been otherwise satisfactory, some old scars of tubercular syphilis on the scalp, chest and back having broken out afresh. No toxic symptoms.

Procedure adopted.—The injections were given intra-muscularly into the buttock with the usual precautions.

Dosage.—In the first three cases 6 grains of atoxyl in 15 per cent. solution were given every second day. In the fourth, as recommended by P. Salmon, two injections of 0.75 cgr. at two days interval were given and 0.50 cgr. every second day.

Precautions.—The solution must be freshly made when required for use, and should be sterilised and slightly heated. Atoxyl should never be given at the same time as mercury, an interval of at least fourteen days being allowed to elapse between the time mercury has been stopped and atoxyl begun.

Remarks.—No definite conclusion can be arrived at as to the utility or otherwise of atoxyl in the treatment of syphilis from the above cases, as they have been under treatment for too short a time to warrant this; however, the progress made so far by three of these cases is encouraging, and further experience may show atoxyl to be as useful as is claimed. Two things will be noticed in connection with these cases, i.e., that they all gained weight in a remarkable manner and that not one of them showed any toxic effects of the drug, although it was given in far larger doses than has hitherto been the case.