

Medical Matters.

PETROLEUM FOR DIPHTHERIA.



A Russian contemporary recently published an important article upon the treatment of diphtheritic sore throats by painting the affected surface with petroleum oil. Five cases were quoted in which this treatment was adopted after other measures had conspicuously failed to afford relief. The painting was carried out about four times a day, and, in every case, a rapid recovery ensued. The theory of the treatment is that kerosene acts partly by destroying the bacilli and partly by dissolving the false membrane. It was noticed that after an application the swab was coated with broken-down and blood-stained membrane, and there can be no question as to the powerful antiseptic qualities of the petroleum compounds. The same observer reports very unfavourably as to the success of pyoktanin in these cases. He employed a solution of one per cent. of this drug as an application to the affected area, and carried out the procedure three or four times daily for some days. In no case did the application appear to effect any beneficial change, and in one case it almost seemed to accentuate the disease, the false membrane becoming confluent and more malignant in its appearance and other characteristics.

CHLORALOSE.

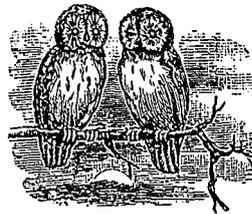
A recent investigation has proved that chloralose is an efficient and valuable soporific; the sleep which is produced by its use being calm and refreshing, although the patient can be easily awakened. It seems to cause no unpleasant or dangerous symptoms, and the temperature is slightly lowered. It may be given in doses of from two to six grains, and is best administered in milk or in cachets. The drug appears to act, according to the patient and the dose, in from half an hour to an hour, and sleep lasts, according to the quantity taken, from four to ten hours. It is most strongly recommended in forms of functional sleeplessness or that from mental excitement or overwork. It does not answer, apparently, in the insomnia of alcoholism, or that due to organic disease or cerebral mischief.

PLASTIC SURGERY.

An influential lay American contemporary recently gave an account of some conservative surgery, about which, although the details are somewhat meagre, there is no inherent improbability. It quotes the occurrence as "a marvellous piece of

needlework by surgeons." It appears that a labourer who came unexpectedly upon an explosion caused for the blasting of heavy rocks was, in consequence, according to our contemporary's graphic account, "walled into the cliff." His left arm, and a large part of his scalp, apparently disappeared into space. He was picked out of the cliff for dead, and fragmentary portions of his body including the intestines—the front of the abdomen having been blown quite open—were conveyed with him to the nearest town. There were twelve lacerations of the small intestine, parts of his clothing were imbedded against the spine, a silver watch had been "forced into his stomach" and "a piece of the watch chain had torn into the bladder," while a brass button had excavated the liver. These trifling accidents having been remedied, and the various lacerations sewn up, the patient recovered, although the reporter delicately hints that he somewhat presented the appearance of a patchwork quilt. After this, who will say that modern surgery is not conservative.

The Matrons' Council.



MADAM,—Perhaps I am not an impartial critic, but Miss Kenealy's answer to my letter respecting the Matrons' Council struck me as being curiously illogical and beside the mark. She speaks about leaving out of consideration, as unworthy of notice, the "accident of position." Granted. Then why, pray, call the Council a "Matrons' Council," which implies the recognition of a position? why not the Nursing or Woman's Council, or some other neutral name?

Position of any kind, that of a crossing sweeper or an American president, for instance, may be very much an "accident"; still, the "accident" remains a very tangible and unanswerable fact, not easily to be put on one side, or explained away, and not without its weight in the world.

That there are hundreds, nay thousands, of better women than I am in the ranks of the nursing profession I do not, for one moment, question. I never did. Miss Kenealy is very much mistaken if she thinks I arrogate to myself the proud title of "little tin god on wheels." I don't. I am about the last person in the world to do so; still, I am a Matron, unworthy though I be, and the Sisters and Charge Nurses are not.

We all know they are the Coming Race, and a very splendid Race I trust they will be; but so, for the matter of that, are the Probationers also. And, to carry the argument to its logical conclusion, I doubt not but that somewhere the future Matron of St. Bartholomew's herself lies sucking her thumb in blissful unconsciousness of her coming greatness. The Matrons' Council, I hold, should be a Council of

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