

## Medical Matters.

### NOVEL SKIN-GRAFTING.



A NOVEL example of the advantages of skin-grafting has recently been reported from the United States. The case was that of a mason who sustained a severe burn of the conjunctiva of one eye from a splash of lime. The burn caused a painful cicatrix, and constant watering of the eye. A curious result followed whenever cocaine was placed on the eye in order to relieve this pain. The patient became quite maniacal, and required to be tied down in bed for three days and nights. Palliative measures being impossible, it was determined to graft a small piece of skin taken from the adjacent temple upon the eyeball, all the cicatricial tissue being first dissected from the latter. The result was excellent, and it is reported that the patient has a fairly good-looking eye, and that the pain and lachrymation have quite disappeared.

### BILIOUSNESS.

AN eminent medical man once defined this affection as "the condition which is cured by blue pill." It has recently, however, been pointed out that in an ordinary bilious attack it is not the liver but the stomach which is chiefly in fault, because it is merely a result of irritating contents upon the stomach walls. A bilious attack, then, is only the effort of Nature to draw attention to the congested condition of the stomach, and the treatment by blue pill is effectual partly because it tends to remove from the stomach the offending material, and to reduce the congestion of the mucous membrane. For this reason, again, the treatment adopted by many practical physicians of the administration of a tumblerful of hot water containing a drachm of bi-carbonate of soda, has the same effect by dissolving the irritating mucus, and so soothing the inflamed surfaces.

### RECTAL DILATATION.

Two American surgeons have recently proposed a method which may prove to be of wide application in the restoration of persons apparently dying from chloroform inhalation, or in the case of infants suffering from asphyxia at birth. They call attention to the marked reflex nerve disturbances caused by rapid dilatation of the anal orifice, and suggest that such a measure, especially in the cases to which we have alluded, would so stimulate the respira-

tory nerve centres as to revive those who are apparently at the point of death. They claim that in various instances they have proved their theory to be practically valuable, and in face of the many chloroform fatalities which are now every week reported, and of the difficulty oftentimes of resuscitating new-born children, the method proposed certainly deserves, and will probably receive, a very careful trial.

### THRUSH IN CHILDREN.

ONE of the most important evidences of malnutrition in infants is the presence of the eczematous condition of the perineum which is known under the popular name of thrush. It is due to the fact that the excretions are in a morbid state, causing them to act as skin irritants, and when it is found in the case of a child who is rapidly wasting flesh, it is proof positive that the cause of the affection is mal-digestion, and most probably caused by some improper diet. It is well to remember that when this condition is found the skin should be well washed with water with which a little oatmeal has been mixed—not with soap. Then, having been well dried, the skin should be freely covered with Matthews's fuller's earth, or Sanitary Rose Powder. It is a great mistake to use the ordinary starch powders in these cases, because they tend to cake upon the skin, and so increase the already existing irritation. Together with the local treatment, the diet must be most carefully regulated, and the source of the derangement thus removed. *Apropos* of this, it is well for Nurses to remember that a large number of cases occur in which children appear to be wasting to death from abdominal diseases, and in which a condition exists to which the public have given the name of "consumption of the bowels." This title, however, is usually most misleading. It implies that tubercular disease is present, and that the case, therefore, is incurable. Now, as a matter of fact, it is very rare to find tubercular disease of the abdominal organs in children until after they are 3 or 4 years old. And, on the other hand, a considerable number of these cases completely recover under a rational system of treatment. It is almost invariably the dietary which is at fault in such cases, and when the child is treated on this supposition, and its diet regulated on scientific principles, comparatively little medicine is required. This is especially the case when the infant suffers from diarrhoea—a condition which is almost invariably due to improper food, and which, more quickly than any other cause, brings about wasting and death amongst young infants.

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