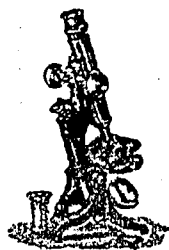


Medical Matters.



THYROID EXTRACT IN INSANITY.

THIS treatment has been extensively carried out in more than one large Asylum in the United States, and it is beyond question that remarkable results have been obtained. In some cases, the improvement in the mental condition of the patient was most rapid and marked; and in one instance, at any rate, in a woman whose case had been regarded as incurable, this was so complete that she returned to her home apparently cured. She was most noisy, turbulent, and destructive, and the use of the thyroid gland, in a dessicated form, was tried rather for the purpose of observation than with any hope of effecting an alteration in her state. But, from the first dose, the improvement was remarkable and continuous. During the last three years, many failures have followed this method of treatment, but, at the same time, sufficient success has been gained to make further trials with the drug absolutely advisable. When cases so widely differing from each other as those of chronic mania, dementia, and melancholia have all yielded in greater or less degree to the influence of the drug, and have all shown more or less marked improvement in their mental state, it is impossible not to feel that the treatment, carefully carried out, has much to commend it; and that in extreme cases, even if its use were attended with more danger than it is, it would be justifiable to give the patient the opportunity of such great benefit.

CYCLING FOR WOMEN.

IT is said by old-fashioned people that doctors have much to answer for in the matter of cycling. Medical men have given their cordial approval to the exercise as suitable for women, and this has, undoubtedly, had much effect in promoting its almost universal adoption. There is even a substratum of truth in the statement which has been made that cycling is more beneficial to women than to men; because, until lately, the great majority of women led a more or less sedentary life, and therefore suffered more than men from varicose veins, from intestinal troubles, and from all the complaints due to enfeebled

muscular powers. The transformation of such women into cyclists, therefore, worked an incalculable amount of physical good. The exercise develops the attenuated muscles, increases respiratory efforts, and therefore the amount of oxygen inhaled into the blood; improves every tissue to which better oxygenated blood is conveyed, and removes the varicosities of weakened veins. Cycling, in fact, has come to women as a health-giving revelation, just as tennis brought their elder sisters into the open air out of stuffy sitting-rooms, and so benefited their health. The only danger is that the exertion may be excessive, and that harm instead of good may at first be caused. For example, many women cyclists suffer from violent palpitation or faintness after riding up hill or against the wind; the exercise throwing too severe a strain upon their hearts' muscle, with the result that irritability instead of strength is caused. Moderation should therefore be a golden rule for women cyclists, both as regards speed and distance covered.

CONSTIPATION IN INFANTS.

THIS is one of the most difficult conditions to treat, and requires the careful attention of the Nurse. It is a practical point of great importance, which has been recently proved, that infants suffer from constipation in a large number of cases because of some deficiency of fat in their food. Especially when they are brought up by hand this is liable to occur; the cow's milk being either too much diluted or having been deprived of its fair share of cream. An easy way, therefore, not only of better nourishing the child, but also of preventing constipation, is to add to its diet a few tablespoonfuls of cream. An "old wife's" remedy is based on the same principle, for it consists of putting a small piece of mutton fat in the child's bottle as a cure for obstinate constipation, a curious illustration of ancient rule-of-thumb practice, which is explainable by the latest discoveries of modern physiology. The same fact doubtless explains the benefit of Cod Liver Oil in curing constipation in young children. Even a small teaspoonful administered night and morning sometimes effects a cure, after a few days, of cases which appeared rebellious to all the ordinary aperients. It is also often forgotten that some children, like many adults, suffer from this complaint because they do not drink a sufficient amount of liquids to lubricate the intestinal canal.

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