

**Medical Matters.****RUPTURED CYSTS.**

AN important article on the rupture of ovarian cysts has recently been published in a French contemporary. The author points out that it is by no means infrequent for cysts of the ovary to become ruptured, even during an ordinary examination, or after the patient has been subjected to some unusual exertion. Formerly, it was considered that such an accident must necessarily be fatal, and that so much peritonitis would be set up as to cause death. It is now known that the accident may occur without any injurious effect, and that its worst result then is to convey the impression to the patient that a mistake in diagnosis had been made in the condition from which she was suffering. Even medical men are occasionally misled by this occurrence, as was proved in a case recently seen by the writer, of a lady who presented the typical signs of an ovarian cyst. But shortly after seeing her, the abdomen, which had been distinctly enlarged, gradually became reduced in size, and finally assumed its normal appearance. The rare condition, in fact, had occurred, which is known as spontaneous rupture, the fluid slowly draining away from the cyst through some minute perforation into the abdominal cavity, from which it was absorbed by the blood vessels of the peritoneum. Finally, the cyst having shrunk to small dimensions became imperceptible on examination; and those who saw the patient a short time subsequently, were firmly convinced that she could not have suffered from a cystic growth at all. However, the perforation healed, the fluid re-accumulated, and once more the abdomen became distended; an operation was then performed and an ordinary ovarian cyst removed. Such cases are somewhat rare, but as the French observers referred to have pointed out, this rupture and disappearance of ovarian cysts occurs with sufficient frequency to render the fact important.

**VASELINE FOR ERYSIPELAS.**

A GERMAN contemporary has recently published records of a large number of cases of erysipelas treated by the application of vaseline. It was for some time claimed that by painting the affected parts twice daily with vaseline, the duration of the disease was greatly shortened, and its contagiousness diminished.

In Germany, however, it has been tested most carefully, and it has been proved that the results obtained by the treatment are in no way more favourable than those gained by other and more ordinary methods. In fact, the old-fashioned treatment by the continual application of an evaporating lead lotion has not yet been excelled. But the importance of general, as well as local treatment of these cases, is perhaps better understood, and, therefore, not only are medicines more usually given to improve the patient's condition, but the importance of good nursing and proper feeding in these cases, is more strongly insisted upon than was formerly the case.

**THE SERUM TREATMENT OF CANCER.**

AN Italian physician has recently published the results which he has obtained by treating patients suffering from cancer with serum derived from the blood of animals into whom the filtered juice of cancerous growths had been injected. It will be within the memory of our readers that this suggested treatment was described at some length, in these columns, some months ago. So far, in England, the success which has been gained by this method has not been sufficiently great to encourage similar experiments; but in America, and even in Italy, it would appear that marked benefit has, in some cases, been observed. Whether it be that the preparation of the serum is not yet sufficiently understood, or whether the treatment is really of no avail, it is at any rate certain that the results have not justified the anticipations originally indulged in. On the other hand, the treatment of cancerous growths by the injection of the toxins of erysipelas have appeared to be more favourable; and in well-marked cases, the progress of the disease has appeared to be checked during the continuance of the treatment in question. So far, however, the final result even of this treatment has not been conclusive. It is, at any rate, a curious fact, and one which may prove hereafter to be of the utmost importance, that patients suffering from undoubted and advanced cancer, are improved in general health and strength, as well as perhaps in their local condition, by injections of a morbid material which does not produce in these patients the symptoms of its special disease.

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