

times so frequent that it destroys the patient's rest. And, at the same time, nothing so injures the general strength and the powers of the nervous system, as want of sleep. In many cases in which the secretion from the mucous membrane is very free, the patient is, on the other hand, injured by sleeping too long; because the tubes become blocked by the mucus, and the difficulty of breathing and of expectoration when he awakes is therefore intensified. The nurse must therefore very carefully observe the effects of any sedatives which are administered in the medicines prescribed, and must report to the doctor at once if the patient sleeps heavily for long periods or is aroused with any difficulty. Opium especially, in these cases, often produces very exaggerated effects.

As a general rule, it is better in severe cases of capillary bronchitis, especially in children, not to allow them to sleep for more than three hours at a time. If they are then aroused and given food or stimulants and are enabled by coughing to clear a certain amount of mucus from their bronchial tubes, they will probably go to sleep again and obtain more refreshing and valuable rest than if they were permitted to continue sleeping for a long period without nourishment, and without clearing the bronchial tubes. In old people, the same rule holds equally good, because, as it has already been pointed out, their strength should be maintained by frequent doses of food and stimulants.

Finally, one word is necessary with regard to counter-irritants—an old-fashioned but excellent remedy for relieving the congestion of the deeper tissues in cases of bronchitis. These are usually applied, either by means of poultices or powerful liniments; and the nurse should remember that there is an immense diversity amongst patients in the susceptibility of the skin to such agents. Some persons, and especially children, can hardly bear the slightest application without considerable pain, and the redness of the skin which is caused may even go on to the formation of blisters, and of a raw surface. Whatever is applied, then, should be used in the case of a child, after the opinion of its mother or its nurse has been obtained as to the usual effect of such remedies; and it is worthy of remembrance that while an application which proves too weak can always be repeated and made stronger, one which has in the first instance been so strong as to injure the skin may do actual harm by increasing the patient's discomfort, and by preventing the repetition of the treatment, however desirable it might be.

Medical Matters.

THE PREVENTION OF CONSUMPTION.



THE active measures which are now being taken to prevent Consumption are arousing considerable public as well as professional interest. It appears to excite surprise amongst the laity that, if Consumption is a preventible disease, steps have not been previously taken for the attainment of that end. As a matter of fact, however, our knowledge concerning the causes and treatment of Consumption is comparatively recent. Formerly, the disease was regarded as chiefly hereditary, and almost hopeless. Now it is known to be, to a large extent, dependent upon bacterial changes; and, if taken in the earlier stages, to be very amenable to treatment. It is also understood that Consumption comprises tubercular disease in other organs than the Lungs, a fact which has naturally led to extensive changes in its treatment. With the advance of abdominal surgery, for example, it has been found that tubercular peritonitis, which was formerly regarded as utterly hopeless, can be in many cases cured, by opening the peritoneal cavity and draining away any fluids. On the other hand, the treatment of diseases of the Lungs has been greatly modified by sanitary and hygienic improvements. So, at the present day, when it is clearly understood that to a large extent Consumption can be prevented, and that by proper treatment tubercular diseases even when fully developed, can be rendered comparatively free from the danger of being conveyed to the healthy, it is justifiable to argue that Consumption could be stamped out. His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales is taking an active part in this movement and could scarcely give his invaluable assistance to an object more worthy of his support or more important to the whole community.

APPENDICITIS.

A VERY valuable article has recently been published in an American journal giving the results of some seven hundred and fifty cases of this disease. Most trained nurses are aware that the appendix is the worm-like extremity which exists at the junction of the large and the small intestines; and that it not infrequently happens that small excretions lodge in this

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