

Medical Matters.

THE ANTITOXIN TREATMENT.



A RECENT article in an American contemporary gives some striking figures concerning the results of the antitoxin treatment in cases of Diphtheria. In May, 1896, the Detroit Board of Health began to supply antitoxin for use amongst the poor of the city, gratuitously. From that time to February 28, 1897, the following is the record of the Board:

	Cases.	Deaths.	Mortality-rate.
With antitoxin	374	47	12.56 per cent.
Without antitoxin ..	467	163	34.90 per cent.

From March 1, 1897, up to December, the following cases came either under the notice or care of the Board:

	Cases.	Deaths.	Mortality-rate.
With antitoxin	305	32	10.49 per cent.
Without antitoxin ..	632	192	30.39 per cent.

It would be difficult to explain away these remarkable results. But it is somewhat surprising that with such facts before them the medical officers seem only to treat one-third of their cases of Diphtheria with antitoxin.

SUGAR.

A GERMAN writer has recently drawn public attention to the wonderful qualities of sugar. He points out that the negroes in South America refresh and strengthen their weary bodies by "sucking" the sugar cane. A Dutch army surgeon states that during an expedition in Sumatra, he found that the best means of maintaining his soldiers' vigour, especially during long marches, was to serve out to each man a generous allowance of sugar. The Swiss chamois hunters bear similar evidence in support of its powers of sustenance and invigoration after exhausting fatigue. Successful experiments have been made with sugar as a food for athletes by several Dutch rowing clubs, by pedestrians, cyclists, and others. Sugar is coming more and more into use in Holland in the course of training for physical contests, and its value in the dietary is being more appreciated in this country also. Negroes who consume sugar in such huge quantities, almost invariably have perfect teeth, a fact which is destructive of the popular belief that sweetmeats are fatal to children's teeth.

A PRACTICAL ICE DISH.

AN American Physician has described a practical dish for keeping crushed ice as follows:—"Take an ordinary unglazed, porous flower-pot that will hold two quarts or more, a quarter of a square yard of white flannel, a strong string and a flat-bottomed dish. Spread the flannel out over the top of the pot, then push the flannel down in the centre so as to make it funnel-shaped, but do not let the flannel go clear to the bottom of the pot. Tie the string around the flannel and pot near the top, set the pot in the dish. Put the ice between two layers of stout cloth, lay it on a solid surface, and pound it with the side of your hatchet until it is well crushed. Put the crushed ice in the funnel of flannel and you will be delighted to find that you can dip up a spoonful of ice without water. You will be surprised to find that in the hottest weather the supply of ice has lasted all night. The ice dish makes a very convenient place to put a glass of milk to keep it cool, if need be."

COINCIDENCES.

It is a curious and well-known fact that coincidences are very commonly met with in medical practice. Everyone who has worked in an accident ward knows how frequently cases of the same injury, from widely different causes, are admitted on the same day—one fractured thigh following another. So it is not difficult to believe the following extraordinary coincidences recently reported in a well-known medical journal. A patient at the age of ten years fractured his right index finger. It happened on August 26th. When thirteen years old he fractured his left leg below the knee, through falling from horseback, also on August 26th. When fourteen years of age, he fractured both bones of the left forearm by stumbling, his arm striking the edge of a brick, this also happened on August 26th. When fifteen years of age, on August 26th, he had a compound fracture of the left leg above the ankle, by his left foot being caught under an iron rod and his body falling forwards. Next year, again on the same date, August 26th, he had compound fracture of both legs. After this he did not work on August 26th for twenty-eight years; but in the year 1890 he forgot his fateful day and went to work, with the result that he sustained a compound fracture of the left leg. Since then he has studiously avoided working on August 26th, though never missing work at other times."

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