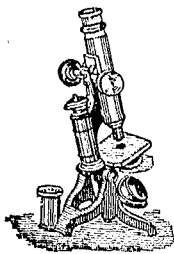


**Medical Matters.****THE SLEEPING SICKNESS.**

This disease which is the popular name for a malady characterised by slowly increasing lethargy and other nervous phenomena, has attacked the natives of Uganda, who are reported to be dying in considerable numbers. The cause of the disease is not known. Dr. Patrick Manson suggests that it may be due to a parasite (the *filaria perstans*) which may operate by interfering with the nutrition of the brain as by blocking the vessels, or by destroying some organ, as the pituitary gland, necessary to the nutrition of the brain. Whatever may be the cause, this curious illness, which is confined to negro countries though not to negro races, invariably terminates fatally. So far, in Africa it has been limited apparently to the basins of the Senegal, the Niger, and the Congo, where it is endemic and occasionally epidemic. Its appearance in Uganda is therefore a serious matter.

The occurrence of the disease is erratic. After decimating a village, it may disappear and crop up in a neighbouring village. It is regarded with great terror by the natives, who will abandon their villages on its appearance. The disease attacks persons of all ages and either sex, and appears to be uninfluenced by occupation, temperament, food or heredity. For some time the overpowering sleepiness is the most prominent symptom, but later loss of flesh, muscular tremors and choreic movements may occur, with localized or general convulsions, followed by paralysis of the convulsed parts. Bed sores form, the lips swell, and saliva dribbles from the mouth. In the end the patient may become comatose and die, or death may occur from asthenia, or convulsions.

**AN EXPERIMENTAL HOSPITAL SCHOOL.**

An experiment as to the effect of certain foods upon the physical and mental development of children is, says the *Lancet*, now being conducted at the Chicago Hospital School for Nervous and Delicate Children. The main purpose of the research is to formulate, if possible, a dietary for children of from five to fifteen years of age. Foods are prepared according to certain prescribed recipes, and the

children are permitted to eat sparingly or generously as they themselves may choose. All foods are analyzed before cooking, and, later, each child is served with carefully weighed portions best suited to his individual tastes, need, and capacity; the uneaten portion is weighed, so as to ascertain accurately the amount of food consumed. Each day the urine and fæces are carefully examined by medical men, and the accompanying mental and physical phenomena are carefully watched and daily recorded to show the deviation from the normal. Special teachers and trained nurses make these observations. The school was founded two years ago, and it serves as a pathological laboratory for the Chicago University—the only university which has a pathological laboratory of this sort.

**DISINFECTANTS.**

Dr. H. W. G. Macleod discusses in the *Medical Times* the report published by the London County Council on experiments for testing the value of the various agents in use as "disinfectants." The organisms experimented on were *B. Anthracis* (spores), *B. Tuberculosis* (human), *B. Diphtheriæ*, *Vibrio Cholerae*, *Staphylococcus Pyogenes Aureus* and *B. Pyocyaneus*. The tests applied were as practical as possible. "Condy's fluid" was found to be unsatisfactory—the organisms were not destroyed. Sulphur dioxide was of no use for tuberculous sputum or anthrax, even after twenty-four hours, but destroyed the others. Bleaching powder (one per cent. solution) gave bad results, after one hour's exposure, and even after a longer period only acted on the less resistant microbes. Formalin vapours and corrosive sublimate solution (1 in 1,000) were the most satisfactory re-agents, although the former did not kill the *B. Tuberculosis* on wood or cloth. Carbolic acid in a five per cent. solution destroyed all bacteria in twenty-four hours except anthrax spores.

**POLAR AIR FOR CONSUMPTIVES.**

Dr. Bunge, a Russian medical man, advocates the establishment of sanatoria for consumptives in Polar regions. Bronchitis, laryngitis, and influenza are unknown in exceedingly cold districts. Dr. Bunge has noticed that members of exploration parties returning from the Polar regions are always in perfect health owing to the purity of the air. The suggestion is interesting, if rather heroic.

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