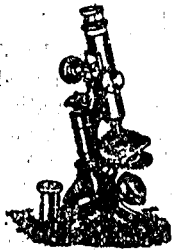


Medical Matters.

ALCOHOL AND PHYSICAL DETERIORATION.



At a medical conference held last week at Leicester there was a general consensus of opinion that alcohol is playing an important part in the physical deterioration of the nation. The conclusion arrived at by Professor Sims Woodhead, of Cambridge, who has made extensive observations of the effect of alcohol on the human system, is that instead of being a stimulant, alcohol is, in reality, a paralysing agent.

He is of opinion that the relationship between alcohol and physical deterioration is a matter of the gravest importance to England. In France, side by side with the upward trend in the consumption of drink, is to be found an increase in lunacy and suicide, and also in the percentage of conscripts refused for service on the ground of physical unfitness.

GOLD AIR IN PNEUMONIA.

Dr. W. P. Northrup reports a case in the *Medical Record* of pneumonia in a delicate little girl, fourteen months old, which he treated with open windows in December. The temperature of the room was at times 28 deg. F. The child's temperature, 105 deg.; pulse, 140 to 180; respiration, 40 to 60. He sums up his conclusions as follows:—

"How to Cure a Baby with Broncho-pneumonia.—1. Castor-oil to clear the field of operation. It is the first aid to the injured.

"2. Fresh air, cool and flowing. It reddens the blood, stimulates the heart, improves digestion, quiets restlessness, aids against toxæmia. Regulate the temperature of the air in the room inversely to that of the child. The patient's feet must always be warm and the head cool.

"3. Water, plenty, inside and outside. Temperature of the water as indicated by child's temperature.

"4. Quiet and rest. Tranquillising influences about patient. Undisturbed sleep.

"5. Correct the feedings to prevent fermentation and the formation of gas in the abdomen. If there is need, give high hot salines.

"6. Antipyretic: Water; no coal-tar products.

"7. Heart stimulants: Fresh air, hot foot-baths, relieving tympanites and crowding.

Hot foot-baths and hot salines can be given in a cold room; both can be given under the bedclothes.

"S. Drugs: Whiskey and strychnine. These are the first drugs mentioned, unless that household remedy, castor-oil, be included. Promote general comfort in every rational way.

"How to Kill a Baby with Pneumonia.—Crib in far corner of room with canopy over it. Steam kettle; gas stove (leaky tubing); room at 80 deg. F. Many gas-jets burning. Friends in the room, also the pug dog. Chest tightly enveloped in waistcoat poultice. If child's temperature is 105 deg. F., make a poultice thick, hot, and tight. Blanket the windows, shut the doors. If these do not do it, give coal-tar antipyretics and wait."

Dr. Northrup says: "I asked the nurses what they thought of the fresh-air treatment for pneumonia, and they confessed that at first they were horrified, and thought they themselves would catch cold and get sick. To their relief they soon found that they endured their vigils much better, were fresher, and wider awake from having constant good air. They were truly delighted. They declared that my prognosis was fully justified, and believed that the patient passed through with less exhaustion than any other they had ever known."

NERVOUS EXHAUSTION IN INFANTS.

The *Journal of the American Medical Association* says:—"Attention has lately been called to this condition, and a case is cited of a four-months' baby suffering from nervous exhaustion, nervous dyspepsia, and prostration, the condition being cured finally by instituting rest treatment and by providing an intelligent nurse. The baby made a good start in life, but after a few months social demands began to wear on the mother and the milk suffered. In addition to all this was the incessant wear on the child's nerves by the noise made by trolley-cars and other street traffic and injudicious excitement, such as waking it from sleep, jumping it in the air, &c. Quiet surroundings were provided, the infant was fed in a dark room, all unnecessary noises were either muffled or reduced, and, above all, a wise nurse was given sole charge of the infant. The result was that in a fortnight the baby was feeding on maximum diet, sleeping perfectly, and gaining in weight. It has thrived ever since."

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