

## The Therapeutic Value of Virol in Certain Diseases of Infancy and Childhood.

A valuable article on this subject was recently published in the *Medical Times* by Dr. James Burnet, of Edinburgh. He points out that the suggestion that petroleum emulsion should be used instead of cod-liver oil has never been one that met with much approval. Those who profess to obtain good results from petroleum emulsion seem to forget that petroleum oil is a mineral one, and, therefore, cannot possibly be absorbed; that it may act as a lubricant, but nothing more, and it is not a lubricant which is required in cases of rachitis or of tuberculosis, but a powerful nutritive stimulant.

Recently, in view of the fact that genuine cod-liver oil is so difficult to obtain, and also on account of its cost, the writer has been experimenting with a compound known as Virol. This is a brown paste possessing a faint lemon odour, which is put up in wide-mouthed jars. It consists essentially of three very valuable constituents—viz., eggs, red-bone marrow, and extract of malt. It thus presents in combination not only fat, but also iron, albuminoids, and phosphates, while the fact of its containing malt extract renders it of special value in those cases where amylic dyspepsia exists. Compared with cod-liver oil, virol may be said to differ in its being a fat and something more. Accordingly, it would naturally seem indicated in those very conditions where cod-liver oil is found serviceable. Dr. Burnet then quotes a few selected cases which he has had under treatment with virol for the past few months. These comprise cases of anæmic rachitis. The patients are usually fair, with clear skin, showing the superficial veins well marked. The spleen is usually found to be more or less enlarged in such cases, and the child is distinctly pale. Dr. Burnet quotes a number of cases in which marked improvement followed the administration of virol.

Dr. Burnet also narrates cases of debility and simple anæmia arising from various causes, children above the age of three years suffering from debility associated with tuberculous cervical glands, or of tardy convalescence after measles and other diseases. Thirdly, he describes cases of ordinary rickets where cod-liver oil was always vomited, and in both these two classes of cases virol was well taken, and the children in every case rapidly improved in health.

Dr. Burnet summarises his results of the use of virol thus:—

1. *Virol can be given when ordinary cod-liver oil or cod-liver oil emulsion is vomited.*

2. *Virol can be given in hot weather.*—The importance of this where rachitic children are concerned cannot be over-estimated. In many of these cases it is essential that the patient should have some fatty substance continuously. In the hot weather

of the summer and autumn months many infants are unable to go on taking cod-liver oil, which is apt to upset the digestion, and may even produce vomiting and diarrhoea. Virol, on the other hand, can be taken at any time, as it has little or no tendency to interfere with the gastro-intestinal tract.

3. *Virol never causes distaste for food*, whereas cod-liver oil frequently does produce this result.

4. *Virol is palatable.*—No one will say that cod-liver oil has a pleasant taste. Virol, being flavoured with lemon syrup, has a very agreeable taste; while it also possesses a pleasant odour, which is another point in its favour.

5. *Virol is a reliable preparation.*—Cod-liver oil at the present time cannot be relied on. Substitution is frequently practised, whereas in virol we have a standard food substance which never varies in its composition.

As to the mode of prescribing virol, a few words must suffice. It may be given to quite young infants. The amount ordered may vary from an eggspoonful to a small teaspoonful thrice daily, immediately after food. It may, however, be given in the food; and may, if thought advisable, be spread upon bread. It can be mixed with milk, with which it readily forms a perfect emulsion.

## Lemco Dishes for all Seasons.

An excellent little book, by Miss Eva Tuite, bearing the above title, contains many excellent recipes, not only for ordinary menus, but also for invalid dishes. Lemco, of course, all readers of this Journal know, stands for Liebig's Extract of Meat Company, and its value and usefulness in preparing many dishes is widely recognised. He is a recipe for a savoury custard which may tempt some invalid who is tired of eggs prepared in more ordinary ways:—"Whisk the white of one and the yolk of two eggs together in a basin, have ready half a teaspoonful of Lemco dissolved in a gill of boiling water and allowed to go cold, season with salt. Grease a cup, mix the eggs and Lemco, and pour in, cover with a buttered paper. Place the cup in a pan of boiling water and steam slowly for about twenty minutes, taking care not to shake the cup or allow the water to get over the top. Turn out when ready and serve hot."

In connection with the book, the Lemco Company are offering prizes for new ideas for using Lemco to the value of £250, varying in value from £50 to £5. The competition is open until June 30th next, and the result will be published at the end of July. There is no limit to the number of recipes which may be sent in. The book is issued by Lemco at 4, Lloyd's Avenue, London, E.C., from which address information as to the conditions governing the prize competition may be obtained.

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