

## Medical Matters.

### THE PROSPECTS OF MEDICAL WOMEN.



Women doctors are now diplomatised in most European countries, and in the United States they are, it is stated, numbered by hundreds. In this country they have lived down the opposition to which they were at first exposed, and all medical men meet them and treat them as colleagues, so that for some years they have had a fair field. It would, therefore, be interesting and very instructive to know whether they have met with much public favour—that is to say, professional success. It was claimed for them at the outset of their career that there were a large number of women who would greatly prefer to be treated by one of their own sex, and inasmuch as the major part of the population of these islands are of the feminine gender, the field before lady doctors is surely large enough. It is stated that at present there are only about 100 qualified medical women at work in this country, as compared with some 30,000 medical men, so that the demand for the services of the former can hardly have been very large, or the supply would certainly have been considerably greater than it is. Nor does it appear that the success of the present select few can have been very conspicuous, or it may be taken for granted that larger numbers would have been induced to enter the profession. We refrain from detailing facts within our personal knowledge, which go to prove that, although the medical women, who are now in practice, are far above the average of their sex in intellect, courage and perseverance, those of them who have attained a financial result, which would be considered success by their male colleagues, can be counted on the fingers of one hand. We do not comment upon, nor attempt to explain, this; we only state a fact, which we do not believe will be controverted. The reports concerning lady doctors, which come from abroad, are to the same effect. Dr. Laskowski, of the University of Geneva, for example, has recently stated that 175 women have been admitted to its medical faculty during the past 17 years. Of these only 12 have taken their doctor's degree, and two more have gone to Paris to complete their studies. What has happened to the remaining 161 students is not said, but of the doctors, one has died, two have married and given up practice, four "earn a bare subsistence," and three "have achieved a certain measure of success."

### INTRAVENOUS INJECTIONS IN CHOLERA.

The treatment of Cholera by the injection of a solution of salt into the veins has been extensively tried in Germany and Russia during the past three

years, and a valuable summary of the results which have been thus obtained has recently been published in the St. Petersburg medical weekly paper. The net result is that inpatients who were moribund, or who were very dangerously ill, slight improvement followed, which was, however, temporary, and was not regained after a second injection; patients who were certainly collapsed revived greatly after one injection, but died of complications subsequently; and, finally, only about 15 per cent. of the cases—and those, being patients who might, perhaps, have recovered without treatment—were restored to health. It cannot, therefore, be said that the method has proved itself so successful as to demand a trial in every case—and, indeed, it would seem to be chiefly useful, as a last resource, in cases where the patient is young and healthy, and the increased supply of fluid to the depleted blood vessels may just enable him to rally and recover.

### ANOTHER POISONING CASE.

Yet another death from accidental poisoning is reported this week, and again the mistake has been made by a Nurse. A patient at the Marylebone Infirmary was ordered a drachm and a half of bromidia, and he was instead given an ounce and a half. The particularly lame excuse was advanced at the inquest, that medicines were always given at this Infirmary in doses of the latter amount, so that, presumably, if laudanum had been prescribed, a similar dose would have been administered. It is a sad thing that it should be necessary for a life to be sacrificed, and an inquest held, in order that means should be taken to enforce the importance of accuracy in giving medicines. It is earnestly to be hoped that in future the Nurses at this Infirmary will be properly trained and taught the elementary facts that some drugs are more powerful than others, and that drachms and ounces are very different measures.

### HEROIC TREATMENT.

A French medical contemporary contains a description of a treatment which can only be described as heroic—that is to say, desperate. A baby of one month old was attacked with whooping cough, and, from the account which is given, was apparently dying, when, by the doctor's orders, it was plunged into tepid water in which two handfuls of mustard had been placed. The child's skin, it is stated, immediately became red, and it began to cry—facts which are scarcely surprising. An hour later, the baby became torpid again, and was, this time, placed in colder water, and so on, every two hours until it became much better. The poor infant, however, then developed pneumonia, and did not finally recover for four months. Altogether, it is more than doubtful whether the remedy would not, in most cases, be rather worse than the disease.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)