

## Medical Matters.

### MANCHINEAL POISONING.



An interesting case is reported by Dr. Caddy, of a child five years old admitted under his care into the Government Hospital at Carriacou, in the West Indies. The child had eaten some manchineal, and when seen some hours afterwards, having been violently sick, unable to swallow, and quite delirious, was found to be in a state of collapse, the temperature being only 96° and the pulse imperceptible. The lips and tongue were very swollen and blistered, and the abdomen was very tender, especially over the stomach. The treatment adopted was the injection subcutaneously of 25 drops of sulphuric ether, and the child was put to bed and surrounded by hot bottles. It gradually rallied, and opium, chlorate of potash, and bismuth were given in small doses, while the child was fed by enemata and nutrient suppositories. A month later, the patient was still unable to swallow, but after this, gradually improved, and was finally discharged quite cured.

### ICHTHYOL IN ECZEMA.

Very good results have been obtained by the treatment of various skin diseases with this comparatively new drug, and cases have been recorded in which especial benefit has been gained from the use of camphoid ichthyol, in the form of ointment, applied to the affected surface in cases of obstinate eczema. There is no doubt that it yields good results in cases which are most intractable to ordinary treatment. An important point for Nurses to remember in these cases, is, that the first essential in the treatment of eczema is absolute cleanliness. No application is of any avail unless the affected surface is carefully cleansed both from the starchy secretion which covers it, and from all previous applications. It is by no means unusual to find ointments applied upon lint to cases of skin disease that no benefit results, for the simple reason that the affected surface was not cleansed before the new application is made.

### ANTITOXIN IN DIPHTHERIA.

A very interesting series of eighty cases, treated with this new remedy, was brought last week before the Clinical Society of London. The treatment extended over about a month, every case was examined by bacteriological methods, and in a third of the cases this was alone sufficient to prove the diagnosis, while in sixty-one out of the eighty cases the typical bacilli of diphtheria were found,

the other cases being diagnosed upon their clinical features. One important practical conclusion is, that the fewer the bacteria in the exudation the better appears to be the prognosis of the case. Antitoxin was used in the form of injections into the flank, the amounts varying from five to thirty cubic centimetres; the smallest amount altogether used being five cubic centimetres, and the largest ninety. A usual dose was twenty cubic centimetres, followed by another ten cubic centimetres in from eighteen to twenty-four hours afterwards. An interesting comparative table of mortality in diphtheria cases was given, showing that the ordinary average death-rate was slightly below forty per cent. Seventy-two cases were treated according to ordinary methods, just before the antitoxin treatment was commenced, and amongst these there was a mortality of a little over thirty-eight per cent. The results obtained by the antitoxin in this series of eighty cases were a lessening in the amount of membrane exuded, a notable fall in the pulse rate, an improvement in the general condition, and a fall of temperature, while the mortality equalled nineteen per cent., or in other words, almost exactly half the death-rate of the series treated without antitoxin. These results are fully borne out by those obtained by other physicians, and it may therefore be taken for granted that, on the lowest computation, the mortality from diphtheria under this treatment is at least half of that which occurs when routine medicinal means are employed; and, furthermore, that the cases in which recovery ensues get well much sooner and are much less liable to the ordinary sequelæ, such as the various paralyses. In brief, therefore, evidence of the most important kind is being accumulated in support of the value of antitoxin in the treatment of diphtheria.

### KIDNEY ENLARGEMENT IN A CHILD.

A curious case has been recorded of a child four years old who appeared to be in perfect health, who was taken ill one night and died in two-and-half hours, without any evident cause. The post-mortem examination showed that the right kidney was enlarged to an enormous size, weighing 25 ounces. Its substance was completely destroyed, the capsule was almost an eighth of an inch in thickness, and on microscopical examination, the new growth proved to be a sarcoma. The curious point is, that the boy had apparently experienced no discomfort, had never complained of pain, and had shown no symptoms pointing to kidney disease. He was generally considered to be a strong child, although it was thought after the event, that he had grown somewhat thinner during the preceding few weeks. The case is a curious one, both on account of the rarity of the disease in children, and of the complete absence of symptoms or physical signs.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)