

## Medical Matters.

### APPENDICITIS.



INFLAMMATION and ulceration of the *Appendix vermiformis*—the small blind prolongation downwards of the commencement of the large intestine—has within recent years received much greater consideration than was formerly the case. The cause of the disease is usually the presence in the little *cul de-sac* of foreign bodies, cherry stones being by no means infrequently found therein, but it also may occur merely from inflammation after exposure of the patient to cold or wet. The chief symptoms upon which the diagnosis is based are the presence of pain in the right iliac region and back, rigidity of the same region of the abdominal walls, frequent nausea or vomiting, some elevation of temperature, intense thirst and increased pulse rate. When in the recumbent position the patient, as a rule, experiences most comfort when the thigh is flexed upon the abdomen. Sometimes after an acute attack the symptoms may pass off, the treatment may result in clearing the canal and there may be no recurrence. But as a rule, the attacks of inflammatory mischief recur again and again and the patient becomes more or less an invalid. The treatment which is adopted at the present time for these cases is to open the abdomen and to remove if possible the appendix itself, if it be free; or to open and drain the abscess cavity which is in many cases found surrounding the site of the original mischief, and which is often set up by ulceration of the *appendix* and its perforation. After operation, the nursing of the patient is carried out on exactly the same principles as those involved in any other abdominal operation.

### THE TREATMENT OF PHTHISIS BY PEPPERMINT.

THE use of inhalations of peppermint vapour in the treatment of consumption has been very widely tried in America and elsewhere, and it has been found that undoubted benefit has resulted even in advanced cases, the breathing becoming more easy and the expectoration diminished. It has been found that the best results were obtained when the inhalation of menthol vapour was combined with the internal administration of increasing doses of creasote. It is recommended that these should commence

with a dose of one drop and be increased until a dose of fifteen drops could be safely administered. It was found that irritation of the stomach which was caused in many cases by the drug, could be either prevented altogether, or at any rate diminished by giving the creasote in mucilage of acacia. Practically this treatment is only another illustration of the theory that phthisis is a septic disease and should therefore be treated by anti-septic remedies.

### HYDROPATHY.

THERE are many who strongly believe in the use of water both internally and externally as a chief remedy in the treatment of disease, and while it has been proved, for example, that copious draughts of boiled water are of undoubted advantage in the treatment of typhoid fever and other intestinal diseases, partly perhaps by their merely mechanical action in cleansing the inflamed surfaces, so the employment of douches in the treatment of neuralgia is now being strongly advocated. The most successful plan has been the use in the form of a hot douche upon the affected part, followed by the application of a stream of cold water. The remedy has given especially good results in patients suffering from sciatica who had been treated without any effect by the ordinary therapeutic measures, and it is recommended therefore as advisable before more severe measures are adopted.

### BUTTER AND DISEASE.

A Swiss physician has produced some facts, recently, which have tended to throw the gravest discredit upon butter. He examined twenty samples of butter, bought in twenty different places, and with only two exceptions, found that these contained the bacilli of tubercle, which, inoculated into guinea-pigs, caused the development in every case of distinct tuberculosis. An Italian observer was thereupon led to make similar experiments with a large number of butters in Turin, and with little better results, because he discovered that 80 per cent. of the samples were tuberculous. It is stated that there is no known method of sterilising milk which does not totally destroy its butter-making properties, and consequently that it is impossible to adopt preventive measures in order to secure that milk drawn from tuberculous animals shall not be a source of infection when made into butter. The matter is of such great importance that it would be well that a similar investigation should be made into the freedom of English butters from tubercular bacilli.

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