

Medical Matters.

WHOOPIING COUGH.



ONE of the most distressing complaints to which children are subject, and upon which Nurses are called upon to attend, is whooping cough. Especially when the child is very young the violence of the paroxysms is most painful to witness and the exhaustion which follows each paroxysm is often dangerous to the little patient. There are two main lines of medical treatment of the disease, dependent upon whether the disease is believed to arise from the presence of a specific bacillus, or whether it is due to a nerve affection. Nowadays the former theory is most usually accepted, and in consequence the treatment which is adopted usually consists of antiseptics and germicides. Attention has been recently called to the beneficial effect of fresh air in the treatment of this complaint, and it is a clinical fact of much importance that in the middle sometimes of a most violent paroxysm if the child be taken to an open window so that the fresh air blows in upon it, it will take one or two deep breaths and the paroxysm will quickly cease. A German physician has recently pointed out that the influence of fresh air as an antiseptic is admittedly invaluable, and he therefore suggests that patients suffering from whooping cough should live as much as possible in the open air, even having their meals out of doors. It is, of course, a well-known fact that a patient will suffer from two or three times as many paroxysms when inside a house as when he is in the open air. The practical rule, therefore, should be to give children, suffering from whooping cough, all the fresh air possible.

PURE WATER.

THE cardinal importance of an abundant supply of pure water to the health of the people has once more been proved by the results which have followed the water famine in the East End of London. There, in consequence either of the drought during the spring, or from other causes not distinctly shown, the teeming myriads of the East End have been deprived of a sufficient supply of the first necessity of health. In consequence, fever has been rampant, and small-pox and typhoid have reached proportions to which there has been no parallel for many years. With the heavy rains which occurred at the beginning of August the sewers were

properly flushed, the water supply was increased, and the health of the district showed an immediate improvement. Facts such as these are of immense importance and give point to the often repeated question as to how long London must wait before its water supply can be placed upon an equality with that obtained by many provincial towns. The question of the Water Companies is assuming a very serious aspect, and it will be impossible for reform to be delayed much longer.

MIDDLE EAR DISEASE.

A NEW method of treating inflammation of the middle ear, especially when deafness is due to chronic adhesions in this region, consists of the injection through a Eustachian catheter of a small quantity of carefully sterilised liquid vaseline. It has been found that in the cases referred to, these injections are very useful and give much better results than are obtainable by the methods hitherto in vogue. The hearing is almost invariably improved, and the ringing in the ears which is so much complained of is lessened or even cured. In acute inflammation, however, the treatment does not appear to give good results.

ANTISEPTIC DUELS.

THE progress of antisepticism has at last affected the imagination of the novelist, and in a recent number of a French review, there is a description given of the duel of the future. The surgeons disinfect the blades of the swords with carbolic acid, and a table is prominently set forth covered with antiseptic bandages and vessels of carbolised water. The duel commences and one of the combatants is slightly wounded in the forearm, but only a small piece of iodoform wool is needed to dress it. The duel is about to be continued when the unwounded man inadvertently touches the ground with the point of his weapon, whereupon, with an exclamation of horror, his surgeon rushes forward and carefully disinfects the blade with carbolic water. In the next round, there is a slight wound given which is deemed sufficiently serious to necessitate it being washed with antiseptic solution and dressed with antiseptic gauze. Then the duel continues, and finally ends with "a penetrating wound of the chest at the level of the fourth left intercostal space." In future editions we would recommend this novelist to have his combatants thoroughly scrubbed and disinfected over night, and to insist upon their repairing to the place of meeting in sterilised shirts. Great is the progress of Science and it must prevail!

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