

Medical Matters.

PICRIC ACID FOR BURNS.



A NEW and valuable treatment for burns has recently been described by a well-known French surgeon. He has found that by the application to a burn, as soon as possible after its occurrence, of a solution of picric acid, the pain is immediately alleviated or altogether removed. After extensive trials, he has proved that the remedy is not only valuable in this way in the relief of suffering, but that it is quite harmless, and that by saving the patient from the pain which is the first and great danger of burning, the depressant effects upon the nervous system are prevented; and, therefore, especially amongst children, cases of very severe injury by burning have, under this treatment, recovered speedily and without any ill effects. The yellow stains which are caused by the application of this remedy can be easily washed out by a solution of boracic acid. The remedy, therefore, appears to be one of great and practical value, and it would be well not only if it were extensively tried in Hospitals in this country, but if the medical officers of those factories or workshops where burns and scalds are frequent occurrences would direct that a solution of picric acid should be kept at hand, and if they would explain to the workers the methods of its application.

THYROID EXTRACT.

DURING the last few months extracts prepared from the thyroid gland have been largely used in experimental treatment of many different diseases. Amongst others, the drug has been employed in the treatment of skin affections, and a French physician has recently tested its efficacy in the treatment of patients suffering from psoriasis. The drug was given for periods varying between a fortnight and two months, in daily doses of from two to twenty grammes. The patients were found in every instance to lose flesh to a marked extent—a coincidence and consequence which has already often been pointed out. But unlike the results which have been gained by this treatment in this country, the affection of the skin in the patients in question was not materially benefited, and in three patients the drug showed no effects at all.

CYCLE CHAIRS.

THE latest development of the cycle consists of an apparatus resembling a bath chair propelled by a tricycle driven from behind. Whether this employment of the instrument is calculated to be altogether beneficial to the nerves of sick persons is an open question. All mankind is rapidly being divided into two great classes—those who ride on a cycle and those whom a cycle rides over. So the invalid in front of the cycle would probably live in a constant expectation either of being run down by some other vehicle or of running over someone else. Considering the number of cycle accidents which are rapidly increasing in London and elsewhere, the chances of such mental excitement, if not of bodily injury, to the invalid who chooses this method of propulsion in a town, are very considerable. If the machines were used only for country rides, however, there should be a great future before the Coventry Chair, because in it an invalid can be comfortably conveyed about at the rate of some five or six miles an hour at very small expense either of money or of labour. A still later development consists of a modified cab which is also driven by a tricycle, and it is stated that at least one metropolitan doctor is now employing this vehicle in order to visit his patients. In this case it would certainly seem to possess very considerable advantages.

A POCKET DISINFECTANT.

A WANT which has often been expressed, especially by clergymen, district visitors and others who have the fear of infection before their eyes, is some method of rapid disinfection when visiting neighbourhoods in which infectious diseases are rife, or even neighbourhoods in which there are many noxious smells. The Sanitas Company, Limited, whose valuable inventions are so well known to most Nurses, have recently produced an excellent invention which admirably meets such a want. It consists of a small globe of thin glass enclosed in a pledget of cotton wool and gauze; the globe is full of a powerful disinfectant and being broken easily in the handkerchief between the fingers, or by tapping it against a table, the vapour is liberated and completely covers any noxious odours, while it is actually destructive of any objectionable germs in the air. As a box of twelve globes only costs a shilling, the Sanitas Company may be congratulated upon producing an invention which will certainly prove both economical and effective.

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