

## Medical Matters.

### THROAT COUGHS.



THE causes of coughs may almost be said to be legion, and it is in many instances a most difficult point to decide from what origin a troublesome hacking cough has arisen, in patients who show no evidence of disease in the lungs or throat. In the case of patients whose cough is clearly due to irritation of the latter organ, it is, of course, of extreme importance to discover the cause of the affection, because, so long as this remains undiscovered, and its recurrence therefore unprevented, its cure may be not only incomplete but impossible. A very common cause of throat cough is due to the inhalation of irritating dust or vapours, and sometimes this cause escapes attention. A gentleman whose office adjoined a tobacco factory, and who suffered from frequent paroxysms of coughs, was so accustomed to the smell of tobacco that he failed to realise the fact that his office was pervaded by a fine dust, and it was only when he was persuaded to change his office to another locality that he could be, as he was immediately, cured of his throat affection. The cough of alcoholism is very significant, because it is usually a sign that the quantity of spirits taken is very large, and the irritation of the throat generally passes on to intense irritability of the surrounding structures. The patient therefore suffers from almost constant nausea and intolerance of food. Another curious form of cough is evidently of nervous origin, because it is due to some irritation in the ear. Passing a feather down the outer ear-canal excites, in some people, a paroxysm of coughing, and many patients are only cured of a persistent cough by syringing the ears and thus removing from it irritating plugs of wax.

### CROWD PANIC.

It is a well-known fact that a number of people gathered together in a crowd are much more subject to unreasoning attacks of fear than the same people would be if they were alone. There is nothing so contagious as panic; and at the same time in a large crowd there are sure to be some whose nervous systems are less under control than those of

others. Such persons becoming alarmed may communicate their fear to others who under ordinary circumstances would not be affected by it, but who being crowded together are undoubtedly more easily impressionable to external impressions than they would otherwise be. The history of all panics shows that the number of people gathered in a confined space was very great, and that the very reason of the gathering predisposed each individual present to be in a strained and tense condition of mental activity, and consequently peculiarly susceptible to nervous impressions. The moral of every crowd panic is that an immense amount of injury can be wrought in cases where the prevention of all injury would be easy, if only the crowd could be led to exercise individually a little of the self-control which every member of the crowd standing alone would, under similar circumstances, probably employ.

### ANOTHER DANGER OF MEDICAL PRACTICE.

IF we are to believe implicitly one of the latest stories from New York, the difficulties, not to say the dangers, of medical practice in the United States must be somewhat considerable. The story is told of a gentleman in Chicago who was forced to go out in the middle of a very dark night to obtain medical assistance for one of his children. He took his revolver with him, which seems to be the custom in Chicago on dark nights; turning a corner, he was violently jostled by an individual, and, believing him to be a thief, he felt for his watch and found it gone. Presenting his revolver at his assailant, he threatened to shoot him unless he returned his watch. After some protestation and demur the stranger produced a timepiece, and the gentleman hurried to the physician's house. Returning home, he told his wife of his adventure, and was somewhat mystified when she informed him that she herself had removed his watch from his pocket before he left home. Shortly afterwards, the physician arrived, in a very excited state, and told how, in returning home from another patient, he had been stopped by a villain who threatened to shoot him unless he gave up his watch! Most people will think the coincidence was a curious one, but our New York friends will probably reply that facts are stranger than fiction.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)