

## Medical Matters.

## LUPUS.



THIS painful and disfiguring disease of the skin consists of more or less nodular growths which ulcerate and slowly destroy the surrounding tissue, leaving under the most favourable conditions deep and persistent scars. It is believed to be closely associated with tubercular disease. It will be remembered that it was found during the trial of Professor Koch's remedy for consumption, that even in cases in which no evident impression was made upon the lung disease, from which the patient suffered, nodules of Lupus, which existed at the same time in the skin, were cured. A more simple remedy, however, has recently been described in a French contemporary; a Parisian physician having discovered that marked improvement was effected in these cases by the application of strong solutions of permanganate of potash—in other words, of Condy's Fluid. His experiments lead him to believe that this remedy not only brings about an arrest of Lupoid growths, but even effects an actual cure of the disease. He has used compresses saturated with a 2 per cent, solution of the permanganate, continued for ten or fifteen minutes every day, and states that at the end of a fortnight of such treatment the nodules were shrunk, covered with a thin blackish crust, and apparently were destroyed. The application seems to have caused some pain for a short period, but this was quickly relieved by cocaine. He has employed the remedy in 11 cases, and in each with the same good results. He does not claim that so insufficient a number entitles anyone to affirm that Lupus can be cured completely and permanently by this application; but at any rate he is confident that the progress of the disease has been arrested in every instance in his experience. This fact therefore gives good reason for the hope that an extended trial of the remedy may lead to important results in the treatment of a disease which has so far been most unsatisfactory and rebellious to other remedies.

## SERUM TREATMENT.

It is a remarkable feature of the age how the serum treatment of disease is being extended in every direction. During the last few weeks, there has been a most marked development. In the treatment of plague, it is stated that the serum employed by Professor Yersin has given unexpected results in the apparent prevention of disease; and it seems probable that the experiments in this direction about to be made in India will yield knowledge of the utmost importance, not only in the treatment of this dreaded complaint, but also in establishing the principle of serum treatment upon a more secure basis than it has hitherto attained. Professor Haffkin is also attempting to utilise the bacilli of plague as a vaccine protective against the disease. It will be remembered that he obtained with cholera inoculations very remarkable results in preventing the spread of that disease; and if the principle is correct in one, it is justifiable to argue that it may hold good in any other, disease. It is moreover certain that if Professor Haffkin proves his case, it will be much more powerful as a measure of protection to vaccinate against the plague than to use the serum of the disease as a merely temporary remedy. The next serum cure comes from Berlin, where it appears that Professor Koch has succeeded in obtaining a serum protective against the Rinderpest which is so virulently destructive of animal life in South Africa. This, if conclusively proved, will not only strengthen the serum theory but will be of enormous commercial value. In this connection, it is important to note that it is stated that an injection of the bile of cattle, dying from Rinderpest, into healthy animals acts as a complete protective against the disease—a fact the importance of which can hardly be over-estimated. The third serum, to which we have alluded, comes from Buda-Pesth, where it has been found that the blood of swine dying from swine fever contains an antitoxin which is said to be most powerfully protective against the same disease.

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