

Yet, after considering all points mentioned, I feel disposed to make the diagnosis of syringomyelia at least in a tentative way.

### Medical Matters.

#### THEATRE SICKNESS.



IT is a popular pleasure to discover new forms of disease and to endow them with wonderful peculiarities and remarkable symptoms. Very occasionally, medical journals follow the example to a certain extent, by publishing awe-inspiring denunciations of some particular habit to which ordinary mortals are prone; thus, for example, the dangers of eating mushrooms or of smoking cigarettes, of wearing tight corsets, or of running to catch a train, are painted in lurid colours. A sober-minded French contemporary has in like manner recently described an affection which hardly seems novel but which it has dignified with the name of "Theatre Sickness." Its symptom seems to be faintness, and even syncope, and, from the account given, it would appear to be most frequently noted amongst ladies who have had a hasty dinner at a restaurant before going to a place of entertainment. Without being hypercritical, it is permissible to believe that the symptoms complained of, and the cause to which they are ascribed, do not prove the existence of any new disease, but merely tell the old, old story of Indigestion. Seriously speaking, it seems a pity for professional journals to publish articles which can only be intended for popular consumption, inasmuch as they afford neither information nor indeed anything but amusement to their ordinary readers; and if such articles are intended to instruct or, shall we say, to alarm, the uninitiated, surely the end in view is neither useful nor particularly dignified.

#### MUD BATHS.

AT the present time, one of the fashionable methods of treating rheumatism and its allied diseases is by the use of mud baths. These are undoubtedly of great antiquity and of some utility, and depend for their efficacy upon the constitution and the temperature of the material employed. Hundreds of years ago, rheumatic patients were treated by being enveloped with hot sand, and that method has been lately revived with use-

fulness, as an application for enlarged and thickened joints. An interesting account has recently been published in an American paper, concerning the mud baths of New Mexico. These baths are always associated with hot springs, and are also found at Carlsbad, and in New Zealand. The mud found at the hot springs of New Mexico is stated to possess the same chemical constitution as that of Carlsbad. The mud is formed by the vegetation which has been washed down from the hills, perhaps a hundred years ago, and which has become decomposed and formed into a peaty material which is chiefly charcoal with magnesian, soda, and lithia salts. The peat is gathered, dried, and passed through a fine sieve, and is then as soft as flour. It is next mixed with the water from the hot springs in large tubs, until it is of a thin pasty consistence. In this mud, then, the patient is placed and allowed to remain for a period varying between ten minutes and half an hour, only the head being uncovered, and the material being maintained at an equable temperature. The mud, in fact, acts like a poultice, and certainly gives the most remarkable relief in suitable cases. The patient, on being removed from the bath, is placed for a short time in a bath drawn from the hot springs, and is then subjected to vigorous massage. The relief to rheumatic pains and thickenings is in many cases so marked that in popular estimation the effects are little short of miraculous.

#### ANTIKAMNIA.

THIS comparatively new drug is being largely employed in the treatment of patients suffering from severe pains, and cases have been placed on record in which even the agony of tubercular meningitis was promptly relieved by the employment of this drug. It seems to possess peculiar power in the severe headaches due to nerve causes. In cases of neuralgia, when ordinary remedies had completely failed, this drug has been found of definite benefit, and it is stated that in some patients suffering from typhoid fever, in whom severe headache was a prominent system, no remedy gave such prompt relief as small doses, frequently repeated, of antikamnia. Extended trials with this drug may of course prove that it is not suitable for all cases, but, if the results already reported are corroborated, it is certain that a valuable remedy has been added to the Pharmacopoeia.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)