

Medical Matters.

LOCKJAW.



A RARE case of lockjaw has recently been reported in a German medical journal. A man of twenty-four suddenly discovered that he could not open his mouth as widely as usual. There was no evidence pointing to tetanus, and the general health continued good, but the difficulty of opening the mouth increased steadily until the patient was unable even to separate his teeth. All kinds of treatment were pursued for four years without any benefit, and then it was discovered that the right wisdom tooth in the upper jaw had grown directly outwards, and had so pressed against the lower jawbone that it could not move. The tooth having been removed with considerable difficulty the lower jaw could be partially depressed at once. But, in consequence of the long continued loss of movement, it was nearly eight weeks before the mouth could be naturally and easily opened.

SALTS IN BLEEDING.

It has been well-known for many years that an active aperient is a valuable method of treating various hæmorrhages. The drain of the serum from the blood vessels of the intestines diminishes the fluidity of the blood, and therefore, increases its tendency to coagulate, and so checks bleeding from an open vessel. The cause and effect is easily explainable upon physiological principles. But a recent article in a Swiss medical journal points out that small doses of sulphate of soda given very frequently are of advantage in checking hæmorrhage, especially when this is of a venous or capillary character. The drug answers best when it is given by the stomach, and does not produce the same effect if it is merely injected under the skin. This consequence can easily be understood from the reasoning already given, and we imagine that the facts are neither so new nor so remarkable as our contemporary appears to consider.

AUSTRALIAN MARRIAGES.

THE New South Wales census, taken on April 5th, 1891, showed at that date there were, in the Colony, 141,656 married couples living together. The majority of the marriages

had been contracted by persons between the ages of 20 and 34, but in some cases there was a great disparity between the ages of the contracting parties, and the figures also disclose not a few very youthful unions. For instance, a child of 14 years was married to a man over 21 years of age; two girls of 15, to men over 30 years of age; and two girls of 16, to men over 40 years of age. In three cases of wives aged 17 years, still greater disparities were observable; in two of the cases the husband being over 50 years, and in the third case over 70 years of age; while it was also disclosed that three girls of 19 were married to men over 50 years of age, a woman under 30 to a man over 80, and a woman under 40 to a man over 85 years old. On the other hand, in several cases, the wife was a great deal older than the husband. Thus, two women over 75 years of age were mated with men under 45; a woman over 70 was married to a man under 40; and another, over 65, to a man not yet 30 years of age. Three husbands were set down as over 100 years of age, and there were five wives over 95 years of age. The youngest husbands were three of 17 years, each of whom was married to a girl slightly older than himself; in fact, the united ages of the three couples only amounted to 108. The youngest wife was 14 years; there were 12 wives of 15 years of age; and 92 of 16 years of age. The average age of husbands was 41.50 years, and that of wives 37.00 years, showing a difference of four years and a half in favour of the wives. The average age of widows was 55 years. There were 8 widows under 20 years of age; 4091 between 20 and 40 years of age; 11,417 between 40 and 60 years of age; 10,227 over 60 years of age; and 56 whose ages were not stated.

COCAINE BLISTERS.

A GERMAN contemporary has recently devoted considerable attention to a case reported in its columns, in which the application of a preparation of cocaine, caused the formation of pustules, and, in fact, acted as a blister. Of course cocaine very rarely produces such an effect, but most medical practitioners are well aware that many individuals have some idiosyncrasy to some particular drug, in other words, that the drug will produce upon them effects totally different from those which usually follow its use.

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