

## Medical Matters.

### SYNOVITIS.



THIS term naturally includes cases of inflammation of all the synovial membranes which line the various joints of the human frame. The cases of the affection which come under the care of nurses are almost invariably those in which the knee or ankle joint are implicated and in which, therefore, the patient is disabled from locomotion. When the joints of the upper extremity are involved he can move about, the limb being supported in a sling. In the case of the knee, then, the cardinal signs of inflammation are present—redness, pain, and swelling. The skin over the joint is more or less discoloured, and is glazed and tense in consequence of the effusion of fluid into the cavity; and of course all attempts at movement cause more or less acute pain. Chief amongst the causes of the affection are acute rheumatism and gout. Next to these come injuries such as severe sprains of, or fractures into, the joints. The first essential in the nursing of every case is, of course, to keep the part at absolute rest.

### THE FACE IN DISEASE.

A valuable article has recently been published concerning the aspects of the face, which are characteristic of various diseases. These are easily recognised by the experienced, so far at least, as to suggest the disease to mind. The pallid face and lips, the anxious look, the restless eye, tell of loss of blood. The pinched nose, the sunken eyes, ashy-coloured countenance, with perhaps beads of sweat upon it, speak of suffering or blood poisoning. The pale face of chlorosis, the puffy, waxy, countenance of Bright's disease, the bloated, heavy look of myxœdema are not less characteristic than the bronzed hue of Addison's disease, the prominence of the eyeballs in Grave's disease, or the yellow tint of jaundice. In naso-pharyngeal adenoids there are a seeming prominence and puffiness of the cheeks and nasal bones, which cause the eyes to look heavy and sunken. The size of the face is often very considerably altered in disease. As a result of gout, we have the ruddy appearance of blooming health, which, when associated

with high tension in the arteries, is so suggestive of chronic nephritis. Pain in the head is indicated by contraction of the brows; in the chest, by sharpness of the nostrils; in the belly, by a drawing of the upper lip. And finally, the sinking of the eyes in abdominal cases is always a grave indication of danger.

### SCARLATINA.

THE diagnosis of eruptive fevers at the onset is often most difficult, so that it is useful to report the slightest symptoms. The occurrence in scarlet fever of vomiting is very typical, and entirely different from that observed in other eruptive fevers. The vomiting occurs very early, before any other manifestation, and in the absence of any previous gastric troubles. It may surprise the child in the midst of play and before the appearance of any headache, malaise, or fever. In a number of cases of scarlet fever without a rash, the diagnosis was decided solely by the vomiting. The proof that the symptom is due to the scarlet fever is regarded by some as unquestionable. It is curious, however, that the writers who have been discussing this subject make no allusion to a discovery made some thirty years ago by a well-known English physician, that there is a distinct affection of the stomach peculiar to scarlet fever.

### COFFEE.

There is a growing opinion on the part of medical men that coffee has not been utilised to its proper extent as a medicine. Its tonic power, especially on the nervous system is certainly remarkable, and it therefore possesses valuable powers in sustaining the nerve energy. Apart from its general utility, and its well-known value as an antidote to opium, it is of especial service after operations where anæsthetics have been used, and in states of exhaustion where alcohol has been pushed to excess. In many cases where death appeared to be imminent the use of coffee as an enema has been followed by rapid restorative results. Tea and coffee seem to be much alike in many respects, but the latter is greatly preferable as to its sustaining power. It would be a great advantage to the working classes, and a great help towards the further development of social sobriety if coffee were to become more popular, and if the ability to make it well could be acquired.

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