

Medical Matters.**INDICATIONS AND CONTRA-INDICATIONS FOR MASSAGE OF THE ABDOMEN.**

THIS method of treatment is now being widely employed in the United States where it has received careful attention. A well-known physician has recently published a valuable article on the subject in which he points out that the method may prove most harmful in unsuitable cases. He summarises, as the results of his experience, that cases in which massage may do good are:—1. Chronic gastritis in all its forms excepting those accompanied by hyperchlorhydria. 2. An acidity or subacidity, except when dependent upon acute gastritis or carcinoma. 3. Gastrectasia not dependent on cancer. 4. Atonic conditions of the stomach walls, whether progressed to the stage of dilatation or not. 5. Displacements of the various abdominal organs, including (a) Gastropptosis; (b) Nephropptosis, except in cases where the displaced kidney has become excessively tender on pressure; (c) Enteropptosis. 6. Chronic intestinal catarrh, not complicated by deep ulceration. 7. Dilatation of the intestines. 8. Constipation from unknown causes. In many such cases, massage often succeeds. 9. In a group of symptoms which comprise especially tenderness over a region three or four inches in diameter including the umbilicus as its centre and a marked pulsation of the abdominal aorta in the entire epigastric region. These symptoms have been assumed, with how much of truth one is not prepared to say, to denote congestion of the solar plexus. They are often met with in practice and may be the result of auto-infection from the gastro-intestinal tract. His experience shows that these symptoms are usually benefited by gentle kneading of the abdomen in connection with careful attention to diet. The principal contra-indications for massage of the abdomen, are, in like manner summarised as follows:—1. Ulceration in any part of the stomach or intestines. 2. Cancer of any of the abdominal organs. 3. Acute inflammation in any part of the gastro-intestinal tract. 4. Hyperchlorhydria. 5. Prolapsed kidneys which are acutely sensitive to palpation. Such an elaboration of the subject proves how carefully this method has been tried in the United States.

THE CHANCES OF DEATH IN WAR.

THE fact that generals have more to fear from disease amongst their troops than from the enemy's shot and shell is well pointed out in the *Medical Times*. On an average it seems that about a ton of shot is expended for every man killed. For instance, in the Crimean War the allied troops expended 45,000,000 projectiles and with these killed 51,000 Russians, whilst the latter caused the death of about 46,000 British and French with an expenditure of 50,000,000 shot and shell; that is to say, each death cost 1,087 shots fired. In the American Civil War, the Federal and Confederate losses were about seven per cent. of the forces engaged, the result of an expenditure of nearly 22 hundred-weight of shot per man. In the Franco-Prussian War, the Germans threw 197,000 projectiles into Mezieres and killed less than 400 people. At Trouville, 27,000 and odd shells only killed two people. At Sedan, however, more execution was done, for 240,000 shots killed nearly 9,000 men. More recently, during the Spanish-American War, an enormous amount of projectiles were fired with but little result. There was plenty of damage done, but the mortality was not excessive. When the American marines landed at Santiago they used, in two nights, 25,000 rounds of ammunition, but only killed 68 Spaniards. In our recent wars we have not done much better, for, during the Matabele campaign, Lobengula's warriors were subjected to a terrible Maxim fire (probably the most effective on record, for the enemy advanced in solid masses), and yet the mortality was very small considering the expenditure of ammunition. This fact, however, was partly accounted for by the Matabele bodies, some of which contained 50 bullets each. Again, during the attack on a laager about twenty miles south of Buluwayo, 14,000 rounds of ammunition only killed 346 of the enemy. Statistics show that, on an average, 45 per cent. of wounds occur in the legs, 33 per cent. in the abdomen, 21 per cent. in the arms and chest, and only 1 per cent. in the head. Apropos of this, painters of battlescenes might very usefully note these facts, and make the display of heads bound with bloody handkerchiefs less lavish. It will be seen from the foregoing that, provided a man can avoid enteric, dysentery, pneumonia, fatigue, bad food, and water which has been described as "essence of microbes," he has not, after all, so much to fear from the bullets of the enemy.

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