

### Medical Matters.

#### CANCER OF THE CERVIX COMPLICATED BY PREGNANCY.



AN American writer in a valuable article on this subject, gives it as his opinion that when the cancer appears before the termination of the fourth month of pregnancy and is limited to the cervix, the sole consideration must be the welfare of the mother, and hysterectomy must be performed, usually per vaginam. Whenever disease has extended to the vagina and possibly neighbouring structures, rendering the condition inoperable, the efforts should be entirely on behalf of the child; the mother must be sustained until the end of term if possible, or until the child is viable. Delivery by the natural channel is fraught with such formidable dangers—laceration, hæmorrhage, infection with peritonitis—that Cæsarian section should always be resorted to as less perilous. When the disease is discovered after the fourth month and remains limited to the cervix, immediate ablation of the uterus is demanded if the disease is progressing with rapidity; if slowly, postponement until the completion of the seventh month or later, when a Cæsarian section may save both mother and child, is to be advised.

In theory, this is excellent; in practice, the most skilful and the most experienced cannot tell whether the disease is invading the deeper tissues and spreading along the lymphatics, quickly or slowly. The only reliable, because the only common-sense course to pursue, is to remove the whole uterus and cervix as soon as the diagnosis is established. It is the mother's life which is at stake, and her safety is the one object to be secured.

#### MASSAGE FOR DEFICIENT LACTEAL SECRETION.

A French physician has recently pointed out that massage of the abdomen will increase deficient secretion of milk in a nursing mother. The treatment consists of movements made upward from the pelvis to the breasts for half an hour daily, associated with massage of the breasts. The explanation of this result, as given by the author, is that the function of the mammary glands is intimately connected with the amount of blood brought to these glands through the blood vessels of the abdominal walls.

#### PROLAPSUS ANI IN CHILDREN.

A French physician speaks very highly of the use of ice tampons in the treatment of prolapse of the rectum in children. The method advocated is the introduction into the rectum of cone-shaped fragments of ice during the manipulation required for the reduction of the prolapse. The ice suppositories can be artificially frozen in moulds and should be three inches in length and having a diameter of at least one inch at the base. The ice is wrapped in a piece of iodoform gauze, and then introduced into the centre of the prolapse. By pushing it up gradually and steadily, the ice is eventually carried up into the bowel when the reduction has been completed. As a rule, there is no attendant pain, and the ice is retained until it has melted. Each time the bowels act, an ice tampon should be introduced after the part has been cleansed. It is contended that the presence of the ice in the rectum reduces the venous congestion and thus braces up the relaxed tissues.

#### PART PLAYED BY ANIMALS IN THE DIFFUSION OF PLAGUE.

Dr. Mattei, in a communication to the Academy of Catania, East Sicily (*Journal d'Hygiène*) reports the results of experiments made to ascertain in what way cats and rats spread the infection of plague. Inoculated and healthy rats were confined together in the same cage. The inoculated rats died in from two to four days, but the others did not take the malady. This rather went to show that though rats are very susceptible to this disease, yet merely living together is not sufficient to communicate the infection. It is of greater interest to know that Dr. Mattei is of opinion that cats, with which we are brought more into contact than with rats, do not take infection either when fed on rats which have died from plague, or when they have been inoculated with the pathogenic virus. They seem to be able to throw off the bacilli in their excretions, and thus may be a vehicle for the propagation of the disease. From their habit of scratching they may be a means of inoculating persons with the virus which may be on their paws. He recommends that, when plague threatens to invade a district, the cats as well as the rats should be destroyed. It would, however, go hard with many who proposed to destroy pet pussies, and the danger of contracting infection through them is infinitesimal, as most domestic cats disdain a meal of rat.

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