

Medical Matters.

WHOOPIING COUGH.



Dr. Dunckel, of New York, records his large experience of this disease, as seen at the New York Dispensary, in the *Medical Record*.

There were 266 cases of whooping cough in 22,666 new cases of all diseases, and probably this was an underestimate, as no doubtful cases were recorded. Sixty per cent were females and 67 per cent. occurred between the ages of 6 months and 5 years. No child was older than 10 years. 25.6 per cent. showed complications, which may be divided into those dependent on the violence and strain of the paroxysm and those due to lesions associated with the disease. In the first group were Hæmoptysis 6, Epistaxis 2, subconjunctival hæmorrhage of both eyes 1, umbilical hernia 2, ulcer beneath the tongue 2. In the second group were Mild Bronchitis 2, Bronchitis of moderate severity 25. Severe general Bronchitis with involvement of the small bronchi 8. Bronchopneumonia 19, Tubercular meningitis, adenitis, pericarditis; and 8 of malnutrition and wasting. Measles coexisted in 2 cases, and scarlet fever in 1. 46 per cent. occurred in January, July and August, and during those months the complications were more numerous and severe.

Vomiting during the paroxysms was frequent. Relapses or recrudescences were noted in 5 cases. In only 2 cases was ulcer of the frenum linguæ seen. Convulsions only occurred in one case. Dr. Dunckel remarks that it is surprising that emphysema and tuberculosis are not more common; he suggests the severity of the cough may protect against a secure lodgment of the bacilli in the lung. In no cases was cardiac disease found. As to treatment, belladonna was much used, cod-liver oil and malt; but antipyrin, being found depressing, was rarely given. He had not tried Bromoform. The value of Bromoform in allaying the severity of the paroxysm and preventing mechanical complications or vomiting is very marked. Its action in some cases is very speedy—for instance, in a severe case of whooping cough the patient never had a severe paroxysm of cough after this treatment was begun; previously the patient had frequent attacks of

cough, each one followed by vomiting. It is most probable that it may not cut short the disease, but the relief of the prominent symptoms is, no doubt, quite as important.

THE TREATMENT OF SMALL-POX BY SALOL.

Drs. Biernacki and Napier Jones give their experiences of this method, advocated by Dr. Charles Begg (*British Medical Journal*, June 2nd, 1900).

Their observations refer especially to the action of the drug in averting pustulation, with consequent proportionate amelioration of secondary fever, and diminished scarring; also to its effect in preventing cutaneous irritation by its direct action on the skin, through which it finds partial elimination.

Over a score of patients were treated in hospital. All but eight cases were greatly modified by vaccination. The authors limit their remarks, therefore, to these eight cases, giving a brief account, accompanied by chart, of each case.

It appears from the above series of cases that Salol may practically avert general pustulation (for example, case 1), and even have a partial abortive effect when given after maturation has commenced (case 2). The influence of the treatment on maturation is, however, not constant in degree, and in one case was almost *nil*. Short of an abortive effect, it almost invariably hinders pustulation, so that the pustules form tardily, the process being imperfect in a much higher proportion than usual. The cutaneous inflammation is slight, and irritation commonly absent, even in confluent cases. There is generally an entire absence of unpleasant odour. Scarring is inconsiderable and often absent, the scabs falling off with great rapidity. The most remarkable result of the treatment is its effect on the secondary fever, which, if not absent altogether, is, as a rule, of little importance.

These favourable conclusions of the authors must, however, be discounted largely by the fact that the cases were chiefly those of young adults who had been vaccinated in infancy, and in whom, therefore, some virtue must be attributed to this circumstance. In case 1 referred to especially, 1 drachm only of the drug was given, a somewhat small cause to which to attribute so large a result.

Finally, the authors estimate the results as superior to those obtained by the red light treatment, a comparison one need not dispute.

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