

Medical Matters.

"BUTCHERY" v. SCIENTIFIC SURGERY.



The princely and noble personages who have honoured the Royal College of Surgeons by accepting its Honorary Fellowship appeared highly amused at the Centenary dinner at Lincoln's Inn, to find themselves in possession of a diploma to practise surgery.

The Prince of Wales struck a humorous note in responding to the toast of his health. His Royal Highness said he feared if allowed to practice he might be guilty of manslaughter—if not of murder, and he did not think even his friend the Lord Chancellor would be able help him out of the difficulty.

Lords Salisbury and Rosebery were evidently quite content to "operate" upon the "body politic," and indeed it is a long-suffering subject—which apparently does not resent experimentalisation—by the most prentice hands.

THE HOT-AIR TREATMENT.

Dr. Samuel Hyde, in the *Edinburgh Medical Journal*, describes the varieties of this treatment.

The *Tallerman apparatus* is a copper cylinder for the reception of a limb, or part of a limb, filled with dry superheated air. It is portable, and can be used from an ordinary gas burner or electric wires; it can also be modified so as to introduce superheated air into the lungs and other internal cavities.

The *Dowsing Radiant Heat Bath* is an arrangement for reflecting the heat of powerful incandescent lamps on to any part of the body. The advantages are that the air is not contaminated by the products of combustion, there is no risk of fire, and it can be applied to parts inaccessible to other methods. The heat is produced by electric lamps, and so can only be used where these are obtainable.

The *Greville Electro-thermic Generator* consists of a rectangular aluminium box and an internal perforated metal cylinder. Between these are numerous electric wires of high resistance, which can be connected by double wires with an ordinary electric light pendent by means of an adaptor. The heat produced may be 400 degrees F., but the temperature can be regulated at will. This, like the Tallerman treatment, is specially applicable to limbs.

Electro-Thermogen.—This is useful for the application of hot air locally in neuralgia and other painful affections. The apparatus is small and portable, and consists of a metal chamber containing a fan and a clockwork or electro-motor, which drives the air from a small chamber through a rubber-lined orifice, into which are inserted two glass tubes, one within the other, the outer being prolonged downwards and inserted into the orifice of the air-chamber; round the inner tube is a special wire which, when connected with a current of electricity, heats the current of air, which is then propelled against any part of the body.

The advantages of local heat, says the author, are that it does not lower the nervous tone or deprave nutrition like repeated courses of Turkish and other baths. He believes it to be the most valuable discovery of modern therapeutics in the treatment of chronic rheumatic or gouty nerve affections and in lumbago, sciatica or other painful nerve affections.

UREA AND URÆMIA.

In *Merk's Archives* for May, 1900, is an article on this subject by Dr. P. H. Coile. The author of this paper does not enter into the vexed question of the exact influence of different factors in causing uræmia; he assumes that uræmia is a poisoning of the blood by urea which is not got rid of, as it should be, by the kidneys. But he maintains that uræmia may occur when the kidneys are healthy and when the urine actually contains more than the normal quantity of this product of metabolism. A case of this kind is reported in which marked symptoms of uræmia were present; and yet the sp: gr: of the urine was no less than 1,038 and the quantity of urea was in no sense reduced. Such a case, of course, shows that the uræmic condition, although it may sometimes depend upon deficient removal of urea, can yet be caused by other and quite different agencies. The author does not accept the view that morphia is contra-indicated in uræmia. On the contrary, he found that, in the case quoted, much relief was afforded by the hypodermic use of the drug. Neither does he approve the method of treating the affection by means of diaphoresis, inasmuch as but little urea is got rid of by this means, and the blood is, by excessive sweating, rendered poor in water and salts, by which the morbid condition is rather made worse than amended.

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