

extent. It is exceedingly common in infants or young children due to some disorder of the stomach or bowels, or to the irritation of teething or of threadworms; with it there may be restlessness and slight fever. It occurs in patches on any part of the body or limbs, and usually fades in a few hours, but is very apt to reappear. For this variety a dose of castor oil or other mild purgative is all that is necessary, or the treatment for worms if they be present. Erythema may be the result of irritation of the skin by new flannel garments or by foul napkins, or napkins washed by a soap containing too much alkali or other irritant. The bites of insects may also produce it, or it may usher in a fever such as chickenpox, pneumonia, bloodpoisoning, scarlet fever, etc., so if there be the least suspicion of any general illness a doctor should be at once summoned.

Chilblains are a form of erythema, and a child who is subject to them should wear warm woollen stockings and well-fitting boots with thick soles. The parts affected may be painted over with equal parts of aconite liniment and tincture of iodine, but this should not be used if the skin be broken; in such a case zinc ointment is a better application.

Various kinds of erythema are very common in rheumatic children, one common variety being called *Erythema Nodosum*, which is most frequent over the front of the legs, but may also occur on the arms; it consists of raised tender lumps of various sizes, at first bright red, then becoming purple, and finally disappearing with various stainings like a bruise. The lumps burn and itch excessively. With this eruption there is often fever with rheumatic pains and sore throat, and in such a case a doctor should be summoned, as it is really a form of rheumatism, and the heart is quite likely to be affected. The child must be kept in bed on a light milk diet, the bowels kept open. Locally an evaporating lotion, or lead lotion on lint, may be put over the rash, while the medical man will probably prescribe some anti-rheumatic remedy, and later on a tonic will be of use.

Urticaria, or nettlerash, appears suddenly as red raised blotches, soon becoming white. They itch considerably, and soon disappear, but are succeeded by fresh crops. Sometimes they are accompanied by much swelling of the parts affected. They are, as a rule, due to some irritation of the digestive organs, such as worms, dyspepsia, etc. Fruits may be a cause,

or the taking of some sour milk, stale meat or fish, etc. The treatment is to clear out the digestive tract with a purge, and the portions of the rash which itch much may be dabbed with lead lotion, or with one in forty carbolic lotion, which will relieve the irritation.

Lichen urticatus, often called red or white gum, is a common eruption during dentition; it begins like urticaria, but soon papules appear, usually each night in crops, the itching of the rash causes scratching, which causes bleeding and scabbing. It is a very obstinate affection, and apt to recur from time to time. The cause is undoubtedly some irritant, either in the blood from digestive disturbances, or external, from want of cleanliness, parasites, or irritating clothing such as flannel, especially if dyed, or other causes. The treatment consists in absolute cleanliness, purgation, occasional doses of fluid magnesia or bicarbonate of soda, and locally some lotion containing lead, or Liquor Carbonis detergens, etc.

(To be continued.)

Medical Matters.

TREATMENT OF DIABETES.



Dr. Abraham Mayer (*Boston Med. and Surg. Jour.*) says:—Opium, arsenic, and bichloride of mercury are the drugs of most service. Opium, which is of the greatest general use in controlling various annoying symptoms, should not be used continually, but interruptedly. It should be given in small doses (not more than half a grain three times a day at first), and its constipating effect should be counteracted by cascara sagrada or other laxative. There are certain cases of diabetes, generally occurring in middle age, which are like a bacterial invasion or ptomaine poisoning. In these the bichloride of mercury has a certain, perhaps specific, value. The dose, at first small, should be increased to one-sixth of a grain. Even if the sugar is not entirely eliminated, many patients can get along very comfortably for years. The diabetic's attention should be diverted as much as possible from himself, and he should be free from professional or business cares and other sources of worry. He should wear warm clothing and avoid fatigue. Massage and carbonic-acid baths are often of great service. About 25 per cent. of diabetics die from phthisis.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)