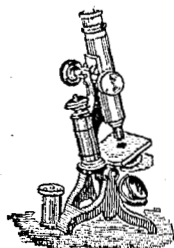


Medical Matters.

EFFECT OF A SLIGHT ABDOMINAL BLOW.



The following case, showing the serious effect of a slight abdominal blow, is reported as illustrating the danger of delay when surgery is indicated. The patient was injured while riding a bicycle by colliding with a cart, the shaft striking him full on the abdomen in the hypogastric region. The accident was considered trivial at the time, and the patient, though slightly shocked, presented no symptoms indicative of any serious intra-abdominal lesion. On the following day, however, his condition became serious, and there being every evidence of some intestinal injury, cœliotomy was performed thirty-three hours after the injury was sustained. Injuries were found in two places, one being a contusion of one of the coils of small intestine, the other a rent in the small intestine large enough to admit the tip of the little finger. The patient gradually grew weaker after the operation, and died just forty-eight hours after the reception of the injury. The case illustrates clearly the importance of an early diagnosis, for had the operation been performed twelve hours sooner, a different result might have been expected. A diagnosis of rupture of some viscus may be said to be sufficiently certain to justify immediate exploratory incision, when a train of symptoms such as the following is presented: excessive amount of shock; extreme depression and weak pulse; nausea, growing considerably worse and leading to vomiting; deep-seated pain in the intestines that is never absent, but shows violent paroxysms of increased intensity; abdominal distension rapidly becoming tympanitic, and a temperature but little above normal, or even at first below it.

MODERN IDEAS ABOUT CONSUMPTION.

The *Medical Brief* says:—Consumption is neither contagious nor infectious. The whole history of the disease is opposed to any such assumption. The record of consumption hospitals show that it is not contagious. Ninety per cent. of all physicians believe that it is not a communicable disease, and base their conclusions on clinical experience.

Consumption is a house disease. Wild animals do not have consumption. A majority of caged animals in our menageries die of the

disease. Confinement and bad air bring about malnutrition, associated with weakness and congestion of the lungs. Once these two unfavourable conditions are established, unless the environment is changed and nutrition improved, the individual progresses steadily toward a fatal termination. It is only a question of how long it will take to exhaust its vitality.

The bacillus tuberculosis is nothing but an incidental evidence of the tubercular process. Let the bacillus alone, and treat the individual along rational lines. Let him give up the business which keeps him confined to the house, and take up something which will enable him to live out of doors. Do not give him cough medicines. Use mild remedies which will help to build up nutrition by increasing the digestive secretions. Feed him well on blood-making foods. Keep him warmly dressed with wool next the skin. The habits should be regular, plenty of sleep, no stimulants, no coffee, tea, or tobacco.

Consumptives should not overdo the bathing business. Sponge baths are best, just often enough for cleanliness. Too much bathing is, undoubtedly, devitalising to delicate subjects. Consumption will never be legislated out of existence. To start a war on consumptives is an abuse of power—a piece of inhumanity—which will benefit no one except the political machines called Health Boards. To class it with small-pox and yellow-fever is the height of absurdity.

HOW DO MOSQUITOES HUM?

Everybody knows the aggressive hum which heralds the approach of the gnat—which is only mosquito writ small. Various opinions are held as to the way in which the sound is produced. Some writers consider it due to the rapid vibration of the wings, while others maintain that it is caused by the passage of air through the spiracles, or breathing-holes, on the side of the insect's body. A third explanation, recently put forward at a meeting of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, credits the malarial mosquito (and probably other species) with a musical apparatus, akin to that by which grasshoppers produce their familiar chirp. There is said to be at the base of the wings a bar furnished with projecting teeth, which strike against a series of ridges when the wings are moved in flight. The explanation is probable.

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