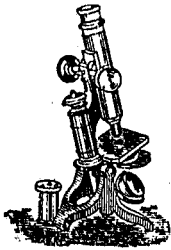


Medical Matters.

INCONTINENCE OF URINE IN CHILDREN.



The occurrence of nocturnal incontinence of urine in children is a condition which is frequently associated with precocious development and extreme activity of the mental faculties. The act is quite unconscious, but during deep sleep, in spite of all precautions, a quantity of urine is discharged every night by the child, who is quite unable to control the occurrence, however desirous may be the disposition to do so. The habit appears to be caused by reflex action of the muscular coats of the bladder when this organ becomes distended, not because of its inability to retain the ordinary quantity of urine, but owing to its undue excitability and readiness to contract, so that the urine is passed during sleep whilst consciousness is suspended. The habit may be set up during the highly impressionable period of early childhood, and persist through force of custom long after the original cause has disappeared. It follows that a child is in no way to blame for a habit beyond its control, and that harsh treatment and punishment are not only futile and cruel, but are likely, by intensifying the nervous condition which is a predisposing cause to incontinence in children, to increase its persistence. Kind and judicious treatment is alone of use, the employment of any other method being as senseless and wantonly cruel as that formerly meted out to lunatics, who, for want of a sympathetic understanding of their condition, were regarded as criminals, and treated accordingly.

THE BITE OF THE TARANTULA.

It is popularly supposed that the bite of the tarantula spider (*Lycosa tarantula*) causes a dancing mania, a superstition which is, in Spain, carefully fostered by those whose living is made by playing to the bitten victims. The careful report, however, of Dr. Boyers in the *Fort Wayne Journal-Magazine* reveals the true results of a wound from these spiders and demonstrates how very dangerous the symptoms may be. The patient was bitten on the right index finger whilst pulling bananas from a banana stock. The spider that bit him was five inches long and of a brown colour. In about two minutes the man was in a dazed

condition. A crucial incision was made to the bone and the finger rubbed under hydrant, and then a saturated solution of permanganate of potash applied. The pulse could scarcely be felt at the wrist; there was a spasmodic difficulty of breathing, in which the respiratory muscles seemed almost completely paralysed, lasting from one to two minutes, and returning at first every ten minutes. Complexion ashen, extremities cold and wet, pupils slightly dilated, hearing impaired. Treatment at first was $\frac{1}{30}$ gr. of strychnine, with $\frac{1}{100}$ gr. of nitro-glycerine, hypodermically, and during the first two or three hours after the bite he was given, in all, by mouth and hypodermically, in small doses frequently repeated, $\frac{1}{15}$ gr. of strychnine, $\frac{1}{33}$ gr. nitro-glycerine, $\frac{1}{33}$ gr. atropine, $\frac{1}{8}$ gr. morphine, 1 oz. of aromatic spirits of ammonia, and 6 oz. of brandy, besides using artificial heat. Bowels, kidneys, and skin were kept active. In nine hours the pulse was nearly normal, and consciousness restored. In four or five days he was completely recovered.

SUCKING UP THE WEFT.

An addition to the diseases caused by occupations has lately been made by the instance of gold-miner's phthisis, which is contracted in the deep level mines of the Rand. It is akin to gannister-miner's disease, gannister being a form of silica used in lining steel retorts; and in each case the dynamite blasting scatters the dust to such an extent that the atmosphere of the working becomes impregnated with it. So in time do the miner's lungs, and even when tuberculosis does not follow there are fibroid changes in the lungs which pave the way for it. Hardly less curious is the tubercular affection caused by the practice in the weaving trade of "sucking up the weft." When a shuttle is empty the weaver draws the thread of the new bobbin through the eye of the shuttle by sucking at the orifice. Besides the weft, he sucks up also whatever dirt or dust may be in the shuttle's eye; and, seeing that each operative has three looms and replenishes each of them every five minutes, the repetition of this practice carries grave dangers with it. These are not lessened by the fact that weavers sometimes take charge of one another's looms, or change looms. Modern science is making plain many dangers in connection with trades which before were unsuspected, and it behoves all employers of labour, when these points are pointed out, to see that their employes are not subjected to any unnecessary risks.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)