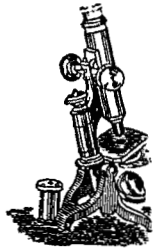


Medical Matters.

SLEEPING-SICKNESS IN UGANDA.



The advance of this disease in Uganda has assumed alarming proportions, and with commendable alacrity the Royal Society are sending out Lieutenant-Colonel Bruce, R.A.M.C., and Dr. Nabarro to inquire into the reported discovery by Dr. Castellani, a member of the former commission, of a streptococcus which he met with in pure culture, both after death and by lumbar puncture during life, in persons suffering from the disease. As this organism is not believed to be identical with that discovered by a Portuguese expert, who is also working at the pathology of sleeping-sickness, it is necessary to have further inquiry to settle the matter if possible.

It will be remembered that the condition named sleeping-sickness was at one time confined to West Africa; but within the last two years this terrible scourge has crossed from the Congo basin into the watershed of the Nile, and, as it is a fatal disease and widespread in Uganda, the necessity for trying to arrest its progress is imperative.

At one time the disease was attributed to the presence of *Filaria perstans* in the blood, but this has been absolutely disproved by Dr. G. C. Low, one of the members of the previous commission. Dr. Low found sleeping-sickness present in persons who had no filaria in their blood, and also found filaria present when there were no signs of sleeping-sickness. We hope Colonel Bruce's mission will prove successful in stemming one of the most terrible diseases known to man.

DOLCOATH ANÆMIA.

With increased facilities for travel we have undoubtedly increased the range of diseases from which we are liable to suffer. Last week we reported the occurrence of cases of bilharzia in this country. Recently the prevalence of a disease in Cornish mines termed "Dolcoath anæmia," so called from the large and important mine where the disease was most prevalent, has occasioned an inquiry on behalf of the Home Office by Dr. J. S. Haldane, F.R.S., and Mr. J. S. Martin, His Majesty's Inspector of Mines. The disease is characterised by paleness of the face and lips, itching of the skin, and pustular eruptions,

locally called bunches. In neglected cases there is a danger of heart failure, and death may occur from pneumonia or phthisis. Patients usually improve rapidly when employed above ground, where daily re-infection is impossible. Dr. Haldane came to the conclusion that the men were suffering from ankylostomiasis, a disease which in this country has only been observed by Dr. Patrick Manson amongst Lascars at the docks. It is caused by a small worm inhabiting the upper part of the small intestine, and is a frequent cause of disease in tropical and sub-tropical countries all over the world. Cornish miners frequently go abroad, but generally return to their old employment sooner or later. It is supposed that they brought the disease, and that the conditions in the mine principally affected were favourable to its spread; amongst other things the temperature was high. Once the disease is recognised, it is treated without difficulty by the administration of thymol. Disinfection of the mine and precautions as to cleanliness and ventilation are of course essential.

A HAIR OF THE DOG.

It has now been discovered that snakes' poison is the remedy for snake bites. Not long since a village in Cochin China was depopulated by the sudden appearance, in great numbers, of a very venomous type of snake. Numbers of people were bitten and died, and ultimately Dr. Calmette, a noted French bacteriologist, was consulted. At considerable peril ninety of these deadly snakes were secured alive and shipped to him, and he found that both animals and human beings could be rendered immune by being treated first with infinitesimal doses of the poison, and then with increasing quantities. The discovery is one of great practical importance.

CARE OF THE TEETH.

Dr. Palmer, of Ohio, recommends the application of iodine to the green stained surfaces of the teeth, to be followed by the application of a weak ammonia solution. These measures must be repeated until the stain disappears. To prevent tartar, Dr. Pierce, in the *International Dental Journal*, recommends rinsing the mouth every day with water in which a pinch of alum is dissolved. This is said to be uninjurious to the teeth, and to keep the gums in good condition, as well as to prevent the formation of tartar.

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