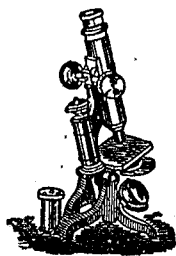


Medical Matters.

A TIMELY CAUTION.



The *Lancet* gives a timely caution to travellers who contemplate ascending mountains by means of railways:—

“Mountain railways constitute a source of grave danger to both persons in advanced life and those who, having weak hearts, imagine that by riding up the mountain all possibility of danger is avoided.

“Any elevation of over 3,000 ft. is frequently fatal to elderly persons, especially if this ascent is made by rail. It is not quite known how, in the absence of muscular exertion, this happens, but experience proves that an alarming pulse-rate is produced by these sudden changes.”

INTESTINAL DISEASES IN INFANTS.

Drs. Kerley and Hughes, in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, give the results of treatment of out-patients, whom they find more amenable to drugs than has generally been held. Their methods are to discontinue milk in all cases of vomiting or diarrhoea, regardless of the nature of the attack, whether mild or severe, and substitute a carbohydrate diet. They find that egg albumin water is dangerous as a milk substitute, and also beef-juice and other animal broths, which must be used sparingly. Every case of gastrointestinal disturbance, however slight, had the milk changed to barley-water, one tablespoonful to a pint, and a little castor-oil given in the intestinal cases, and calomel, $\frac{1}{10}$ of a grain, was given every hour until $\frac{1}{10}$ of a grain had been given in cases of vomiting. The stomach was washed, and, if there was diarrhoea, bismuth mixture given. They analyse cases and describe the methods of treatment, the roof garden, milk regulation and supply, &c.

BATHS IN ENTERIC FEVER.

Dr. Goodall in the *Medical Annual* says:—The cases which respond best to the bath treatment are the toxic ones. The effects produced are: reduction of temperature, stimulation of the circulation, cleansing of the mouth and tongue, and quieting of the cerebral centres. As there may be some difficulty in giving a bath in private practice, I draw attention to what appears to me to be a very simple form of bath, which could be quickly made. It is described by Dr. Bull, of Auckland, New Zealand, as follows:—“A piece of mackintosh

sheeting 8 ft. by 4 ft. is taken; the sides are looped to receive stretcher poles; the latter should be at least 8 ft. long, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. in diameter.

“In order to apply the bath, for example, in the case of a patient with enteric fever, lying on his back in the centre of an ordinary hospital bed, the patient is gently semi-rotated, so that he lies, say, on his left side and near the edge of the bed; the mackintosh sheeting, half rolled up, is introduced under him in the same way as a draw-sheet; he is now moved again on to his back, and thus lies in the centre of the sheeting. The stretcher poles are now run through the looped sides of the sheeting and secured to the ends of the bed—if rounded, by a simple sling, if square they rest on them. If the head and foot of the bed are not raised, a simple support of wood for the stretcher poles to rest on is all that is necessary. A pillow is now introduced under the patient's head, beneath the mackintosh, and the sheeting at the foot is secured by a safety pin. The bath is now ready, and water of the required temperature can be introduced in sufficient quantity, if necessary, to cover the patient's body entirely.

“When the bath is over, one of the stretcher poles is drawn out and the water allowed to flow into a receptacle at the side of the bed; this it does very readily if the bed be slightly tilted. The second stretcher pole is now drawn out, and the mackintosh sheeting removed in the reverse way to that in which it was placed beneath the patient.

“The form of bath which has been in use at the Coromandel Hospital for several years is thoroughly efficient, and possesses the following advantages:—Cheapness; simplicity of construction; it can be applied by one person, though two are preferable; is not regarded by the patient or his friends with the same suspicion as a movable metal bath (a valuable point in private practice); can be applied to any form of bed; is very portable; and it can be used with very slight movement of the patient (simply by one semi-rotation of the body before the bath, and a second after it).”

The contra-indications to the bath treatment are: marked cardiac failure, peritonitis and hæmorrhage. Children do not stand cold baths at all well, but there is no objection to giving them warm baths. Old age is also a contra-indication. Lung complications are benefited by bathing, with the exception of considerable pleuritic effusion.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)