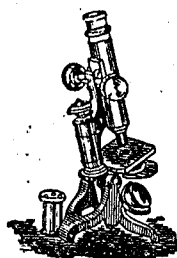


Medical Matters.

DR. FINSEN'S REPORT.



Dr. Finsen has transmitted to the Paris Academy of Sciences a tabulated list of the cases of lupus on which the Finsen Light cure method has been tried. There have been 804 cases. Of these there have been 412 cases pronounced "cured." Of the cured cases there are 124 in which no sign of recrudescence of the malady has been perceived after a period of two to six years. The other 288 cases are more recent; but no sign of recrudescence has appeared in them, and they are believed to be cured. Dr. Finsen's results are proved and above suspicion, and they present a very gratifying record.

HYDROTHERAPY.

The stimulating effect of water is described in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* by Dr. Baruch, whose confidence in this agent has been gained after years of study and observation. The first diseases in which he mentions its use especially are phthisis and neurasthenia. In the former the use of douches and systematic hydrotherapeutic treatment often seem to be very effective. In neurasthenia he believes that the methodical employment of hydrotherapy in combination with proper diet and environment will work wonders in many cases. The most useful procedures are the dry pack, which consists in the snug wrapping of the patient in heavy woollen blankets for about an hour, followed by uncovering of successive parts of the trunk, then treated to a rapid and brisk rubbing with a bath glove or washrag squeezed out of water at 85° Fahr. After drying and friction the patient is sent into the air for general exercise. The process is repeated daily, the water temperature being reduced two or more degrees each day until 60° Fahr. is reached. When the patient bears this well, he is subjected to more decided measures. Standing in water at 100° Fahr., in a warm bath-room, the patient may be subjected to affusions from a foot-tub containing water at a temperature of 80° Fahr., daily reducing it 2 or 3 degrees until the temperature of 60° Fahr. is reached. Water is dipped and thrown with force on the back and shoulders with a long-handled basin or large

tin dipper. If this is done forcibly, followed by rapid drying and dressing and exercise, the patient will not be chilled. Every day larger quantities of water may be used, always avoiding chattering of the teeth and cyanosis. He thinks this method can be applied at home, and that the stimulant arouses the depreciated neurons, increases the vascular activity of the brain, and improves general and local nutrition. Those cases of neurasthenia in which insomnia is prominent are specially amenable to hydrotherapy judiciously added to treatment of the general condition. Diabetes is another disease in which he finds hydrotherapy of decided benefit. He has frequently observed that strict dietetic rules may be relaxed if systematic exercise is added to the treatment of diabetes. Nervous dyspepsia, hysteria, obstinate neuralgia, sciatica, neuritis, lumbago, and allied diseases are relieved by cold applications. Spasmodic and bronchial asthma, which has resisted other treatment, is remarkably relieved under hydrotherapy, and all are aware of what has been done in the Nauheim method of treatment of cardiac disease. In angina pectoris, which is more often of the false than the true type, hydrotherapy has often relieved after failure of other methods employed by his colleagues and himself. In gouty rheumatism and lithæmic disease remarkable cures are effected by the judicious application of baths and douches under the direction of a skilful physician in watering places. Their treatment may be imitated at home, wherever douches under pressure of twenty to thirty pounds can be had.

This treatment stimulates the emunctories, especially when combined with abundant and methodical drinking of water. He has observed great relief in this type of patients and often complete restoration obtained under hot bath and douche and massage treatment at home. His deductions are from an experience of more than 100,000 recorded procedures in neurasthenia, hysteria, some of the psychoses, phthisis, gout, rheumatism, dyspepsia, cardiac diseases, sciatica and other neuralgias, obesity, and neuritis. He cautions, however, against the empirical application of treatment or its use in unskilled hands. If water is to be a valuable remedy, it must be only in the hands of the medical man; its theory and practice must be taught in our schools, and its application in our hospitals.

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