

Medical Matters.

GOAT'S MILK.



Although, says the *British Medical Journal*, those who keep goats have always been ready to protest that the goat is a profitable animal and its milk a palatable article of human diet, goat's milk has never gained much favour in this country, or, indeed, in most parts of Europe and America. It is largely used in the Alps, both on the Swiss and on the Italian side, and goat keepers assert that the peculiar taste, which is so objectionable to many people, can be prevented by proper care in herding. Dr. Finley Bell, of New Jersey, recently read before the New York Academy of Medicine a paper in which he gave reasons for recommending the more extensive use of goat's milk in the feeding of infants. Having been struck by the fact that the fat of goat's milk remained fluid after cooling, while that of cow's milk became solid, he made a more detailed examination and found that the melting point of goat's milk was 2 deg. to 3 deg. C., or more, below that of cow's milk, and very nearly the same, or a little lower than that of human milk. These results were confirmed by Dr. Beebe of the Loomis Laboratory. Further chemical investigations are in progress, but it is believed that the fat of goat's milk and human milk contains much less stearin than the fat of cow's milk, probably owing to a larger proportion of olein. Dr. Pawlow and his assistants have shown that fat diminishes the amount of gastric juice secreted after a meal and lowers its digestive power, and they have suggested that this may be due either to the fat covering the mucous membrane of the stomach and so preventing the excitation of the nerve endings, or that it acts in a reflex way, stimulating the inhibitory nerves. On the other hand, the ingestion of fats increases the secretion of pancreatic juice, and probably the proportion of steapsin in it. Dr. Bell reports two cases of wasting infants in whom improvement began as soon as they were put upon a mixture of goat's milk and water in place of cow's milk modified in various ways, and suggests that the fat of goat's milk being fluid at a point below the normal temperature of the body may interfere less with gastric secretion, while it is not less digestible by the pancreatic juice. Other advantages which he claims for the goat are, to quote his own words: "She is more docile, less excitable, not subject to tuberculosis or other disease in this climate. Being browsers rather

than grazers, they will thrive when cows would not, and, above all, she is cleanly. . . . She can be easily washed (tubbed if necessary) and aproned for milking. I believe an assured non-contaminated goat's milk supply is not only commercially possible but profitable." In ordering goat's milk for a delicate infant, it must be remembered that it probably contains rather more fat than cow's milk, and that the proportion of proteid constituents is three times as great as in human milk.

LEPROSY FROM MOSQUITOES.

It is stated, on good authority, that Dr. W. J. Goodhue, medical superintendent of the leper settlement at Molokai, Hawaii, has discovered the germ of leprosy in the mosquito.

DIET IN NEPHRITIS.

Dr. F. C. Shattuck lays down the following as the leading principles pertaining to the dietetic treatment of nephritis: 1. Such control as we may have to-day of nephritis lies in the diet and mode of life rather than in drugs. 2. Such drugs as are useful are so in their effect on the general organism and the heart rather than on the kidneys directly. 3. In all cases of nephritis the main aim is to spare the kidneys unnecessary work, remembering that the urinary system is but one, of the many, making up the body. 4. In acute nephritis, as well as in the acute exacerbations of the chronic forms, Doctors, Diet, and Quiet should work together. Starvation for a few days, regulated by the intensity of the process and the strength of the patient, is the keynote here. 5. In the chronic forms the aim is to lighten and to lengthen life. Especially in the contracted form of kidney disease, many years of life and comfort may depend on the physician's skill in adapting sound principles to the particular case and in securing the co-operation of the patient in persistently carrying out the directions given. Dietary restriction should, in the main, be quantitative rather than qualitative. Alcohol in moderation is not necessarily a poison and may be an aid to digestion. 6. The excess of proteid, not proteid itself, is harmful to the chronically sick kidney. 7. A varied diet is more likely, than a monotonous one, to promote the making of good blood and improve the general nutrition, and that of the myocardium in particular. 8. The amount of albumin is in itself no guide as to the extent of dietary restriction. Dr. Shattuck remarks the advisability of a relatively dry diet in dropsical cases, proportioned to the degree of dropsy. In cases of contracted kidney, even without dropsy, he thinks physicians have erred in forcing water.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)