

## Medical Matters.

### THE OPEN-AIR TREATMENT OF PNEUMONIA.



Dr. W. P. Northrup, of New York City, has, says the *Journal of the American Medical Association* for over eleven years been using free ventilation and fresh air treatment in pneumonia, and during the last year he has followed the practice of putting his patients in the New York Presbyterian Hospital for six hours a day out on the roof in all weather in which harsh high winds, rain and snow, did not prevent. He gives histories of two cases, both serious, and in one of which he thinks the patient could not have recovered under other treatment. The hospital authorities are so well satisfied of the value of this method that they are making a colossal roof garden on the medical side of the hospital, to be an open air ward for these cases. The patients most favourably affected by open-air treatment are those with severe poisoning, with delirium, partial cyanosis or deep stupor. In Dr. Northrup's experience all patients do better in cool fresh air, which can be secured in private practice by screening off a portion of a room by an open window. None have been harmed, in his observation, and some have been greatly benefited and possibly saved by the cold fresh-air treatment. If pneumonia, due to an infecting agent, is thus benefited, the value of the treatment for other infectious diseases is suggested, and, in fact, he has tried it in many others, including typhoid fever with severe bronchitis, whooping cough with bronchitis and convulsions, with excellent results. He considers it, in fact, the ideal treatment for septic fevers. The only regulation is to keep the patient comfortable and especially to keep the feet warm.

### HIGH-SEATED HÆMORRHOIDS AS A CAUSE OF OCCULT INTESTINAL BLEEDING.

Dr. Goldmann, says the *British Medical Journal* reports two cases in support of the statements of Drs. Ewald and Nothnagel with regard to the importance of hidden hæmorrhoids as causes of serious anæmic conditions. In cases of this kind there is, the author asserts, a slight but almost continuous discharge of blood, which produces insidiously all the symptoms of grave anæmia. The effused blood is so intimately mixed with the stools, that it is not recognised until the medical attendant is led by the progressive debility of

his patient to make a careful examination of these excretions. According to Dr. Schreiber, both solitary and multiple venous tumours may be developed in the living subject at a distance of from 6 to 8 in. above the anus without any signs being apparent of hæmorrhoidal or other morbid affections of the mucous membrane in the terminal portion of the rectum. This surgeon found hidden vascular anomalies involving the small veins in not less than 10 per cent. of the patients on whom he had made examinations with the rectoscope. The author holds that in the face of these records, it is advisable in every case of ordinary internal or external hæmorrhoids to ascertain by rectoscopic examination the presence or absence of vascular swellings in the upper part of the rectum. Such swellings should, it is urged, be treated by operation. With the aid of the rectoscope the varices can be exposed to view, and then be readily destroyed or removed by the galvano-cautery.

The practical point for nurses to remember in connection with this is the necessity for the careful observation of excretions, and for reporting any deviation from the normal.

### CONSANGUINITY AND DEFECTIVE CHILDREN.

The report of the United States Census Bureau on the Blind and Deaf, by Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, is, says the *Lancet's* correspondent, a document of great interest, as it confirms the conclusions arrived at by Dr. Bell as the result of his studies of the causes of deafness. He had previously demonstrated that nearly three times as many deaf children are born of parents who are cousins compared with those born of parents not thus related. This average is confirmed by the statistics which have been collected very carefully for the present census report. With regard to the blind the state of affairs is even more deterrent as illustrated by the census report. Of these defectives who were born of consanguineous marriages—that is, parents related as closely as cousins—proportionately 3.67 times as many were born blind as in the case of the blind who were children of those not so related. In the case of both the deaf and the blind the census figures show that 4.5 per cent. of all cases are the offspring of parents who are cousins. With regard to the blind, altogether some 60,000 cases have been analysed, with results that leave no doubt that the conclusions arrived at are amply justified.

It is only necessary to observe the consequences of inter-marriage between cousins to realise its undesirability from the public health point of view.

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