

patient suspended. For this purpose he uses a gallows devised by Ducroquet, of Paris, which may be turned round, and the plaster conveniently applied to any part of the patient.

THE APPLICATION OF THE PLASTER.

In the first place, in suspending the child, a bridle is made for each particular case. The point of suspension particularly holds in cases of dorsal caries or cervical caries. The point of traction is between the ear and the eye, and the more anterior this point, the more the head will be over extended. It is, therefore, desirable to have a fresh bridle for every particular case, to secure the best attitude. At Alton a vest is put on the child which can be much more closely applied to the patient than could an ordinary bandage, and it is infinitely more comfortable. There is also placed over the abdomen, but under the vest, a piece of wool, so that after the plaster is applied, and until it is properly set, there is ample room for the distension of the abdomen.

THE PREPARATION OF THE PATIENT.

Before a child is put up in plaster Mr. Gauvain teaches that he should be prepared in much the same way as for an ordinary operation; that is to say, his diet requires regulation and his bowels attention. The food should be such that the abdomen is not unduly distended. For two days before being put up in the plaster he is very carefully dieted, so that no pain will be caused by excessive abdominal pressure afterwards. Not infrequently, if this precaution is not taken, there is distension of the abdomen, and the result is great sickness and pain. That can be immediately relieved by having the plaster cut

out; but as it is desirable to get a proper set, the plaster should not be cut out for two days. Then it is cut out and large windows are made.

If a jacket is put on efficiently, and is properly moulded, there is, Mr. Gauvain says, no form of support which will so immobilise the spine as the plaster jacket; and it has this advantage also, that it is quite porous, and it can be kept on for a very long period. When it is taken off, if it has been properly applied, the child will be found to have no sores under the skin at all, his skin is quite sweet and fresh, and he has greatly benefited by this method of support.

There are a great number of points in the technique of plaster application. A plaster jacket cannot be applied by a novice with any likelihood of success. Its application should be practised assiduously for a very long period before it can be efficiently undertaken, otherwise disappointment is bound to ensue. Sores are bound to occur, immobilisation will be imperfect, and probably the surgeon will be so disgusted with the result that he will abandon it altogether, and allow a surgical instrument



PATIENT CONVALESCING FROM CERVICO-DORSAL CARIES, IMMOBILISED IN A CELLULOID JACKET.

maker, who knows nothing whatever about the patient, or even what the patient is suffering from, to put on an utterly unsuitable jacket.

In plaster work Mr. Gauvain usually uses cold water. The plaster takes a little longer to set, but the crystals that are formed when cold water is used are very much more stable than those formed when hot water is used, and the result is a much stronger jacket. Further, the jacket can be re-inforced in any way desired to meet excessive strain at any

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