

and he thought that one could obtain all the benefits required by the gentle use of the positive pole, either in the form of platinum, zinc or copper in the uterus, which dried up the bleeding mucous membrane, and by its tonic action upon the muscular tissue through which the blood vessels pass to supply the bleeding mucous membrane cut off the blood supply just as surely as though we tied the ovarian arteries. The action of the electric current, he said, as applied to fibroids was threefold. The first was not mysterious, but was but the arrest of circulation in the dilated capillaries, by electro-chemical cautery. The second is no more difficult to understand than the action of ergot or strychnine; it not only tones up the vasomotor system, making the calibre of the arteries less, but it calls into play the special and remarkable power which the uterus possesses of controlling its own circulation when it has the strength to contract.

The third effect of the current, its electrolytic action is, he admitted, as mysterious as it has ever been, but not more so than the invariable absorption of syphilitic gummatous deposits following the administration of iodide of potassium. Whether what we call electrolysis means the actual breaking up of an organic tissue into inorganic atoms, or whether it means, as seems more likely to me, that the growth deprived of its blood supply undergoes fatty degeneration and is partly eaten up by phagocytosis, stimulated to greater activity by the trophic nerves, no one with a large experience with this subtle fluid can deny that a uterus infiltration with and enlarged by the deposit of fibrous tissue, whether localized in the form of fibroids or diffused as in areolar hyperplasia, so that the sound will enter four or five inches, will invariably diminish in depth by means of electrical treatment.

Then again what is the enormously enlarged uterus after delivery but a bleeding myoma? Does it not stop bleeding when the arteries which supply it with blood are squeezed by its contract-walls? Does it not rapidly get smaller when, for the want of blood and exercise that immense mass of muscular silently undergoes fatty degeneration and returns to the blood from whence it came.

Wonderful and almost incredible as the total disappearance of a fibroid or myoma may seem to some, it is no more mysterious than this wonder-

ful process of nature which we call involution. Have those who doubt and even worse, deny the power of electricity to work a change in fibroids, never reduced the size and weight of a uterus which nature had failed to involute? Has Emmett never reduced its size by repairing a lacerated cervix? Have Churchill and Athill and ten thousand others with honored names never reduced the quantity of tissue in the uterus by the application of iodine? Have not a hundred thousand others reduced the weight of blood and muscle and areolar tissue in the heavy uterus, by means of glycerine and hot water and other therapeutic measures?

Then why in the name of reason and justice deny that an agent which we can see blanching tissues before our eyes, and making muscles of every kind contract, why deny, he said, that it can diminish the blood supply too, and favor the fatty degeneration and absorption of the fibrous or myomatous uterus?

The electrical treatment of fibroids, reduced to the above simple equation, and stripped of all the extravagant claims which were at first made for it, stands to-day upon a foundation so strong and true that it will find an honorable place in the treatment of fibroids as long as women shall dread to die by the surgeon's knife.

Selected Articles.

THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE DIPHTHERIA QUESTION.

Much can be learned from a study of the present status of the diphtheria question. What is more important, a proper direction may thereby be given to future work. It is strange how the minutiae of diseases escape careful consideration until some special line of research calls for the most exact examination of all details. Future work on diphtheria can be made more rapidly productive of results when the questions to be solved are accurately outlined. Certain it is that the diphtheria problem cannot be reduced to the same simple formula in man as in the lower animals. In the artificial diphtheria of animals the Loeffler bacillus is the exciting cause, the antitoxine is the neutralizing agent—and there the matter ends. In man, however, many etiologic factors remain yet to be solved.

The use of Loeffler's culture-serum for diagnostic purposes, though adapted to clinical ends,