

the uterus failed to respond to hot injections after delivery.

In regard to danger to the cervix, he had not observed any; but, granting that it might exist, it was equally great with other methods, and taking the risk was justifiable in an attempt to save the child.—*Medical Review*.

### THE EFFECT OF ERGOT ON THE INVOLUTION OF THE UTERUS DURING THE LYING-IN PERIOD.

Mr. G. Ernest Herman writes as follows to the London *Lancet*: In the Transactions of the Obstetrical Society of London, vol. xxx, for 1888, will be found a paper by Dr. C. Owen Fowler and myself, in which observations are detailed pointing to this general conclusion: "That the administration of an ergot mixture during the first fortnight of the lying-in period appreciably increases the rapidity with which the diminution in size of the uterus goes on." This conclusion was reached by comparing the average rate of involution (*a*) in a number of cases, taken without selection, in which ergot was given, with (*b*) the average rate of involution in an equivalent number of cases, also taken without selection, in which ergot was not given. In the *Annales de Gynecologie*, vol. xxix., for 1888, p. 175, is published an investigation by Dr. Emile Blanc of Lyons, conducted in a very similar way, but which led him to the conclusion that "ergotine administered during the first five or ten days of the lying-in period exerts no favorable influence on uterine involution." Dr. Blanc's research was quoted at the time in several English journals. These two investigations seem to contradict one another. I desire to point out that they do not, but that, on the contrary, they confirm one another and show the real value of ergot in the lying-in period. The reason that Dr. Blanc's conclusion differs from that of Dr. Fowler and myself is this, that he chose the cases in which to test the effect of ergot. He took only cases of "normal delivery at full term, excluding premature labors, cases with febrile disturbance, and all cases needing any intervention" (p. 177). These cases excluded are just those in which the causes known to hinder involution are present. Dr. Fowler and I took cases without any selection, and therefore among ours were included cases in which the causes of subinvolution were present. Dr. Blanc's research shows that in a normal lying-in the uterus completes its involution as well without ergot as with it. The paper by Dr. Fowler and myself shows the beneficial effect of ergot in counteracting the causes which retard involution. Dr. Blanc's paper contains nothing in opposition

to this view; on the contrary, he expressly says: "Against secondary hemorrhage the drug maintains its position. Its action is more efficacious the nearer the delivery." The practical conclusion is, that while in a perfectly normal lying in ergot, is not required, yet when any case of imperfect involution is present, or suspected to be present, ergot given throughout the lying-in period will counteract its influence, will promote involution, and should be given.—*Medical Review*.

### MERCURIAL POISONING.

Prof. Albert reported a case where the patient had evidently succumbed from the disinfection practised at the operation, which had been done with sublimate.

Prof. Ludwig had made an analysis of the urine twenty four hours before death, and found a large quantity of mercury in this secretion. The symptoms were dyspepsia, the nails were pale and tender, and three formerly good teeth had fallen out. He thought such an example should warn surgeons of the danger associated with this disinfectant.

### CARCINOMA.

Schnitzler showed a case of this refractory disease on the upper jaw of a patient who had come to Prof. Albert's clinic. Two years ago a periostitis commenced, forming a swelling on the gum; it burst and discharged, leaving an irregular opening; and the tissue was found to be composed of flat epithelial and carcinomatous cells.

Prof. Kundrat said this was a peculiar form of substitution and shrinking that did not occur in epithelioma, although often seen in endothelioma.

### NEWS ITEM.

The "American Text Book of Surgery," edited by Professors Keen and White of Philadelphia, which has only been issued a few months, is already a phenomenal success. It has been adopted as a "Text Book" by forty-nine of our leading Medical Colleges and Universities. Nearly five thousand copies have been placed in physicians' libraries, and every indication points to a sale of at least as many copies more in the next six months.

Dr. Nicholas Senn, of Chicago, is now preparing a "Syllabus of Lectures on the Practice of Surgery," arranged in conformity with the "American Text-Book of Surgery," which will be a valuable aid to all who have this great book.