

PSEUDO-MEMBRANEOUS LARYNGITIS TREATED BY MERCURIAL FUMIGATION.

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Thinking that the above subject would interest the Fellows, especially our country brethren whose operating cases and intubating instruments are not always at hand, I have concluded to write upon it.

For this advance in therapeutics we are all indebted to Dr. J. Corbin, of Brooklyn, N. Y., who, in 1881, read a paper on this subject before the Kings County Medical Society.

On March 30, 1890, I was called to see George H., three years old. On examination I found diphtheritic membrane on both tonsils. The disease ran a mild course for five days, when there was evident extension of the larynx. One forty-eighth of a grain of bichloride of mercury was given every three hours, and the oleate of mercury freely used by inunction. The vapors from slaking lime were faithfully used. Under this treatment the disease rapidly advanced, and twenty-four hours later it seemed to me that a fatal termination could not be long deferred. I then approached the father and told him that the only chance left was to perform tracheotomy or intubation. I could not do the latter operation, as I had no instruments to do it with, but if he was willing I said I would call in help and perform tracheotomy. He positively declined any operation. I was about to leave the house, and was warming my feet, for I had a good long ride of seven miles before me, when I recalled Dr. Corbin's suggestions and acted upon them at once.

The child was placed in an improvised tent, and thirty grains of calomel were burned under it every half hour for six hours, I having ordered it repeated as often as the character of respiration became alarming. The next morning the patient was decidedly better, and the intervals of fumigation were extended to three hours. The following night it was used twice; the next day once, and was not required after that; a good recovery followed.

Although the method of using mercurial fumigation is simple, it has been misused, and for that reason I venture to give a description recently given by Dr. Law, of Brooklyn. The apparatus consists of a tent and an alcohol lamp with arms to support a piece of sheet iron. A good tent may be quickly constructed in the following manner: Each post of the child's crib is extended by fastening to it in an upright position a bed slat; the frame is completed by cross-pieces above; sheets to cover the frame complete the tent. The child is placed in the crib at one end, the lamp is lighted, the sheet iron plate is adjusted and heated, and thirty grains of calomel are dropped upon it. The

lamp is then placed under cover at the end not occupied by the child; the vapor quickly rises and fills the tent. The usual time of each treatment is ten minutes, but may be varied of circumstances indicate. The attendants should be cautioned not to inhale the fumes unnecessarily, as mercurial poisoning is quite certain to result. In the patient, however, this effect does not follow. The temperature and humidity of the room should be the same as with any other treatment in the same disease. It is well to have the use of two rooms, reserving one to be used only while the treatment is in progress, and thoroughly airing it after using.

The prompt relief of stenosis I suppose to be due, partly at least, to the relaxation caused by the treatment, just as we see relief follow an emetic in membranous croup, even if no membrane is expelled. The cure is due doubtless, both to the local and to the constitutional action of the drug.—*Am. Practit.*

AN AID TO PALPATION.

Chlapowski finds that for palpation of tumors of the abdomen an excellent method is to put the patient into a well-filled bath tub. The advantages gained are several: the reflex contraction of the abdominal walls is overcome; it is very easy to change the position of the body without exertion on the part of the patient; and the pain on the pressure is diminished. The author has had especially good results in determining the nature of tumors in the region of the cæcum, and in mapping out infiltration due to old appendicitis. He has also been able to determine the nature of floating kidneys, splenic tumors and different new growths, where previously the contraction of the abdominal muscle had prevented satisfactory examination.—*Boston Med. and Surg. Journal*.—*Nashville Jour. of Med. and Surg.*

THE TREATMENT OF PHTHIRIASIS PUBIS.

Fournier in *L'Union Medicale* gives the following applications for the treatment of this troublesome condition:

R.	Distilled water,	12 ounces.
	Alcohol,	3 "
	Corrosive sublimate,	15 grains.
Or,		
R.	Vinegar	9 ounces.
	Corrosive sublimate,	15 grains.

Add to double this quantity of water and apply as a lotion. Sometimes applications of oil with beta-naphthol may be employed.—*Med. News.*