

in heavily, for an inch or more in width all around the ring. But should any obstacle interpose to render its application difficult by the finger, the extract is dissolved in a little warm water, and applied by the aid of a vaginal syringe. The application of the belladonna may occasionally require one or two repetitions, at intervals of half an hour. In most cases, however, before the expiration of that time, the ring suddenly becomes soft and thickened, yielding kindly to the pressure of the head: dilatation occurs with wonderful rapidity, the pains become protracted and expulsive, the nervous irritability subsides, the patient returns with alacrity to the task in hand, and a speedy delivery is the result.

Nor is it less useful in a *rigid perinæum*, if smeared on the parts. But strict care should be observed to support the perinæum through every pain, as the dilatation occurs so suddenly, and in most cases commences to develop its effects at the posterior margin of the perinæum before the meatus is impressed; and in this condition a violent pain might cause the head to pierce the perinæum and tear its way through. I am not quite sure but a free use of belladonna increases liability to post partum hemorrhage. This should be guarded against.

In *dysmenorrhœa* belladonna is eminently useful, especially in that form of it dependent upon a constriction of the cervix and os uteri, a narrowing of their canal, and a dense, hardened and unyielding condition of their tissues. It was extensively used by my preceptor and former partner, Dr. H. V. Wooten, and subsequently by myself, in the formula recommended by Drs. Cartwright and Holmes, of Mississippi.

B. Powder camphor ..... 135 grains.

Extr. belladonna ..... 27 "

Sulph. quinine..... 27 "

Mix and make seventy-two pills.

On the incursion of the pain give one of these pills, and repeat it every half hour until the violence of the attack abates or a pungent, acrid taste in the throat, resembling tobacco, and dimness of vision, from dilatation of the pupil, warn the medical attendant of the development of the effects of the drug, and point to the propriety of its discontinuance. Relief from pain will surely follow. Occasionally, but not often, the pain returns before the close of that catamenial period, and if so the pills should be repeated. So pointed is the relief from this preparation, that several of my female friends are unwilling to meet these periods unless provided with this combination or some modification of it.

Belladonna often disappoints the profession, because of the carelessness or dishonesty of druggists. Be sure you have a reliable preparation, fresh and pure, and you will find it will do all, and more, than I have claimed for it.

## THE SPECIFIC TREATMENT OF DIPHTHERIA AND CROUP.

Dr. George A. Lynn, of Monongahela City, Pa., read a paper on this subject before the last meeting of the American Medical Association, wherein he stated that the object of his paper was to show the proper method of using the bichloride of mercury as a specific in the treatment of diphtheria. The mere use of a remedy does not necessarily constitute its use as a specific. For instance if one should attempt to control a malarial fever with  $\frac{1}{4}$  grain doses of sulph. of quinia given two or three times a day, it would most signally fail, and he might say that he had tried the remedy and it had failed in his hands.

So in using the bichloride of mercury as a specific in diphtheria, the dose, time of giving, and stage of the disease, are as important as the remedy itself.

"Without entering into a discussion of the pathology of the disease, I may point out what seems to have escaped the notice of most writers on diphtheria, that there are two distinct stages in the disease; one the disease proper, which lasts from three to five days, and terminates in the full development of the membrane and the generation in it of a deadly poison, the other the effects of the absorption of this poison, which is generated in the membrane only, and not in the blood, but when absorbed in sufficient quantity destroys the red corpuscles of the blood. Patients do not die in the first stages of the disease (except in the croupous form) but only from the effects of the poison absorbed from the membrane.

"Taking this view of the case to use the bichloride as a specific:

1st. It must be given in the first stages of the disease.

2d. It must be given in large doses, frequently repeated.

"The effect of the large doses of this remedy, given in the early stage of the disease, is to reduce the temperature, relieve pain in the head, back, and limbs, unlock the secretions, lessen the soreness in the throat; in time, to relieve the nausea and vomiting, restore the appetite; and, most of all, it prevents the generation of the poison in the membrane; in mild cases it checks the formation of membrane at once, and causes what is formed to speedily disappear.

"Now, as I claim that the greatest virtue of this medicine consists in its preventing the generation of the poison in the membrane, the absolute necessity of giving it early in the disease becomes evident.

"It will take physicians a long time to find out the value of this remedy, if they persist in only trying it after everything else has failed, and their patient is in a moribund condition; yet even in such cases I have known it to prove successful.

"In using a medicine of so great power, the manner of exhibiting is of some importance. It is best given in solution, so that when excessive