

The medicines we have at command for checking the life of disease-germs are quinine, resorcin, kairine, salicine, carbolic acid, boracic acid, ether, etc. In the treatment of puerperal septicæmia quinine is particularly useful, inasmuch as it is not only a strong germicide, but also produces a contractile effect on the uterus and prevents absorption. It is a good plan to administer from two to three grains of quinine with five minims of tinct. digitalis, and from three to five grains of resorcin alternately, every two hours.

If necessary to bring down the temperature rapidly, an ice-bag may be applied to the head and one to the spine, while the body may be sponged with vinegar and water. The uterus should be well syringed out with permanganate of potash (a drachm of Condly to the pint of water) three or four times daily, while the temperature remains high. Plenty of good liquid nourishment should be given, and brandy must be administered according to the severity of the disease. By the adoption of these means most cases may be led on to a favorable termination.

A CASE OF ACTINOMYCOSIS

Dr. W. Knight Treves reports the following case in the *Lancet*, for January 19, 1884 :

P. C., aged 45, was admitted to hospital August 17, 1883, supposed to be suffering from a scrofulous affection of the glands of the neck. He is a muscular man with a good family history. His illness began sixteen months before admission, with inflammation about the neck and angles of the jaw, which, however, only kept him from work for two or three days. He has lived well, and never had cattle to look after. A lump by the angle of the jaw followed the inflammation, which was incised. Subsequently other swellings formed. Over the angle of the jaw, and in the posterior triangle of the neck were three ulcerated and fungating surfaces, those by the angle of the jaw being about one inch and that in the posterior triangle about two inches in diameter. There were tumors over the collar bone, the second rib, and the fourth costal cartilage near the sternum, each of which was in a direct line, and had followed in regular order the one described as existing in the posterior triangle. These tumors resemble each other in appearance ; they are smooth and evenly formed, and are in shape as nearly as possible a half a sphere ; the upper one is two inches in diameter, the lower one an inch, and the middle one intermediate in size ; they have an elastic, semi-fluctuating feel ; the skin over the upper one is thin, red, and evidently about to give way ; the skin of the middle one is also discolored ; that of the lowest is normal. To the right and left of these tumors are two nodules about the size of a marble, apparently the same

thing in process of formation. The discharge was thin and serous, and contained minute yellowish masses, and disintegrated tissue, and had a peculiarly offensive and sour smell. The patient declined operative interference. He remained in the hospital till December 7, the progress of the case being gradual loss of flesh, formation of the lumps on the other side of the neck, and in the axilla. The three tumors described became broken down, and he presented before his discharge the appearance given in the woodcut which is from a photograph. The appearance of these tumors resembled nothing that I had ever seen before. The case was certainly not scrofulous, nor was it like any new growth with which I was familiar. I arrived at the conclusion that it was an example of the disease known as actinomycosis. This diagnosis was confirmed by the discovery under the microscope of bodies which I believed to resemble the fungus described as peculiar to this disease. So far as I can ascertain, this is the first case of actinomycosis described in this country.

THE BEST TIME FOR ADMINISTERING MEDICINES.

The Midland Medical Miscellany has the following article on this subject : Before or after meals ? Such is the question often asked of the doctor, but the answer is not always ready. Medicines that are irritating should be given after meals, when the stomach is full, viz., the salts of copper, zinc, iron and arsenic, in large doses. Small doses, intended to act on the stomach terminals of the vagi, must be given when the organ is empty. Chemical reasons also have their influence ; thus, oxide and nitrate of silver, intended for local action, should appear in the stomach during its period of inactivity, lest, at other times, chemical reactions destroy the special attributes for which these remedies are prescribed. Iodines and the iodides further illustrate this point. Given on an empty stomach they promptly diffuse into the blood, but if digestion is going on, the acids and starch form products of inferior activity, and thus the purpose which they were intended to subserve is defeated. Substances prescribed to have a local action on the mucous membrane, or for prompt diffusion unaltered, are preferably given before meals. The condition of the stomach veins after meals is such as to lessen the activity of diffusion of poisons, and hinders their passage through the liver. It follows that active medicaments in doses near the danger-line, are more safely administered after meals.

When shall acids and alkalies be given, before or after meals ? First, as to acids. When acids are prescribed with the view to check the excessive formation of the acids of the gastric juice, they may be given before meals—as, by the laws of