

all spare bile and all offensive matters out of the intestine is to give a mental cheerfulness which contrasts with the gloom which reigned before.

Where children are subject to constipation something palatable is required. Children, even more than adults, resent what has an objectionable taste. Castor-oil is detested in the nursery, and not without reason. Tincture of senna in a little tea is preferable. But of all forms of laxative a sweet ginger biscuit or cracker, containing a few grains of jalap, is the least repugnant to the childish palate. It should not be too hot, else the ginger offends. If such toothsome sweetmeat be granted as a reward for good behavior, the ruse will usually be successful; but if a shadow of a suspicion be excited that medicine lurks in the sweetmeat, a new line of attack at once becomes necessary. In other cases a little oatmeal or maize porridge to breakfast is enough. At other times a little stewed fruit, as figs, French plums, or even ordinary garden fruit, is found efficacious.

With many adults some treacle on whole-meal bread relieves the conditions which renders life a burden. The mechanical irritation set up by the particles of bran excites the vermicular action of the intestine, and all is well. Brown bread eaters are common everywhere. When travelling, such persons are liable to the presence of their bane, because brown bread is not always to be had. It will be well for these individuals to lay in a stock of pills in a travelling medicine chest, the now fashionable compound liquorice powder, or a bottle of some granular effervescent preparation.

When constipation is—as it very commonly is linked with inadequate action of the liver, the pure laxative should be linked with a hepatic stimulant. In the second edition of my *Practitioner's handbook of Treatment*, many of the prescriptions were altered, and the sulphate of soda substituted for sulphate of magnesia; the latter being a pure laxative, while the former possesses also a distinct action upon the liver. A certain very august personage is said to repose unlimited confidence in sulphate of soda, and certainly time has fully justified that confidence and demonstrated that it has not been misplaced. Others again find that phosphate of soda, familiarly known as "tasteless aperient salts," meets their requirements. Carlsbad salts also are in vogue.

The administration of an habitual laxative and the decision as to what agent or combination of agents, and what doses shall be employed, is one of the trials of prescribing. If the dose agrees at first in a week or a month it is either too potent or it loses its effect, and then an alteration of the dose, or the employment of some other agent or combination of agents, becomes imperative. Some persons have to keep "ringing the changes" and going a certain round, once more reverting to some compound that had lost its effect in past times. When a laxative has to be combined with tonics (or any drugs which have to be taken for some time) it is often well to give two prescriptions, one more

laxative than the other, and then let the patient arrange the doses as he or she requires. If this gives the patient a little trouble—well, the patient after all is the person who is benefited, and the trouble brings with it its own reward.—*Phil. Med. Register.*

SOME POINTS IN MINOR SURGERY AT THE PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL.

By THOMAS S. K. MORTON, M. D.,
Senior Resident Surgeon.

Shock is combated usually by warmth and stimulants. The former is applied by means of hot baths or water bags, generally the latter. The patient is surrounded by rubber bags filled with hot water. These we have had made for the purpose. They are round, from one and a half to two and a half feet long, from four to six inches in diameter, and have a filling-hole with a screw cap at one end, and a handle at the other. Atropia is freely used. Whiskey, ether, digitalis, aromatic spirits of ammonia, or, in desperate cases, aqua ammonia itself, are given. The injection of pure ammonia is, of course, always followed by local sloughing. Mustard, hot fomentations, large enemata, and drinks of warm fluids do good service. Previously warmed blankets are a great comfort as well as of benefit.

Ether is our standard anæsthetic, although the A.-C.-E. mixture is often employed; chloroform very seldom. A small amount of the latter is found useful to relax the muscular spasm which often remains in drunkards, even when ether is fully pushed. A few drops will often permanently stop it, when the ether can be continued. A.-C.-E. has given rise to no alarming symptoms in at least two hundred administrations from my hands, and I know of no untoward circumstance attending its use here. All general anæsthetics are administered from small, square-folded, very absorbent towels. Cone or apparatus are not used. The "rapid" and rectal methods have long since been abandoned as dangerous. The patent ink-bottle stopper is found convenient to pour ether from the bottle.

During the local anæsthetic action of cocaine, we have performed many minor amputations, circumcisions, and other small operations; but with us, at least, the field of the drug in this direction is becoming quite limited. Most eye operations, however, are performed under its influence.

Divided or torn muscles, tendons, and nerves, if their ends can be seen, are sutured with catgut. If not visible, they are freely cut for, and likewise sutured. Good function is the almost invariable result.

Subcutaneous operations, such as tenotomy, aspiration, and even exploration by needle, are performed with as much antiseptic precaution as if a large wound were made, for death has been known to occur from wound complication following each of