

a patient, and that we are confronted with problems which we have to try and solve; the various difficulties that meet us we will discuss in detail according to the different forms. The first thing which has to be recognized is that this disease presents certain well-marked differences corresponding to different ages in life. I shall divide the subject in this way: (1) the eczema of the infant; (2) the eczema of the young child; (3) eczema at the age of puberty; (4) eczema in the adult; (5) eczema in the adult woman at the change of life; and (6) eczema in the aged.

ECZEMA IN INFANCY.

First, with regard to eczema in the infant. We will suppose that the practitioner has attended a woman in her confinement, and that after the child is born the nurse calls his attention to the fact that there is a little circular patch on the scalp. The patch is generally about the size of half-a-crown, or a little bigger, of a dirty-brown color, and composed of greasy material which is very adherent to the scalp. The nurse asks what is to be done. The usual answer, or at any rate a very common answer, is that it is of no consequence—that it is nothing, and that it will disappear in the course of time. This little patch is a patch of sub-orrhea; sebaceous matter has been secreted and has dried. This little patch is of the greatest possible importance, and it will therefore be well if the practitioner pays considerable attention to it. It is very often the focus from which an eczema of the scalp in an infant will start. The first thing that happens if it is left alone is that around the brownish patch in the centre of the scalp a red areola appears, and from that red areola other circular patches will appear on other parts of the scalp. Now if care is taken to treat this in the very earliest stage I believe that a considerable amount of eczema in the young child will easily disappear. The question is how it should be treated. We have first of all to recognize the fact that in the child there is a great blood-supply to the brain. It is necessary that this should be so, as abundant nutritive material is required for the formation of bone and the building of the brain. Owing to the great vascularity of the scalp the slightest irritant is very likely to convert what is in the first instance a trivial condition into a very acute one, and to make the eczema spread from that particular spot. As a rule nurses are very fond of scrubbing the infant very freely with soap and water. I think that is much overdone, and I think a word of warning should be uttered by the practitioner, especially if the child has the slightest sign of irritation of the scalp. Washing should not be done with any violence. If a