

Having procured the thorough evacuation of the bowels of the patient, place her upon her back, with the hips near the edge of the bed, and when she is profoundly anæsthetized introduce a three-bladed, self-retaining speculum; seize the os uteri with a double-hooked tenaculum, draw it down towards the vulva, and then introduce a metal bougie as large as the canal will admit, following it in rapid succession by others of larger size, until one is reached which represent the size of the dilator. Then insert the dilator and stretch the cervix in every direction until it is enlarged sufficiently to admit a No. 16 bougie, which is all that is generally necessary. Then introduce a hollow gum-elastic uterine pessary of about that size, and retain it in position, by a stem secured outside the vulva, for about a week, in which time it has done its work and is ready to be removed. During this time the patient should be kept perfectly quiet, and usually upon her back. Dr. Ball claims that the operation saves a great deal of time, causes much less constitutional disturbance than the use of tents, and is not only safer than the metro-tome, but is free from some serious objections to the use of the latter, there being no resulting cicatrix to interfere with the dilatation of the parts, and the condition of the patient after an unsuccessful operation being no worse than before. He says that it relieves the constriction entirely, by breaking up all the adhesions, which are often firm and unyielding; that, acting as a derivative, it cures the hyperæmia of the cervix; and that, further, it establishes a radical change in the nutrition of the whole organ.

He details nine cases of stricture of the os and cervix complicated with vaginismus, chronic endocervicitis, version, sterility, dismenorrhœa, etc., in all of which very great relief or permanent restoration to health was effected by rapid and forcible dilatation. In a foot-note the editor of the *New York Medical Journal* quotes Dr. Ellinger, of Stuttgart as recommending the operation,—1, in stricture of the cervical canal; 2, stenosis due to flexions; 3, metrorrhagia in a flabby, swollen uterus, but without new growths; 4, retained catarrhal secretions; 5, for exploration of the uterine cavity; 6, replacement of a flexed uterus; 7, sterility. Dr. Ellinger declares that he has never had reason to regret rapid dilatation, and urges it, where dilatation is justifiable at all, to the exclusion of all other methods.

Treatment of Disease in Children. By EUSTACE SMITH, M.D., Lond., Physician to His Majesty the King of the Belgians.

There is one class of remedies which is of singular value in the treatment of the diseases of young children—viz., the alkalies. In all children (in infants especially) there is constant tendency to an acid fermentation of their food. This arises partly from the nature of their diet, into which milk and farinaceous matters enter so largely; partly from the peculiar activity of their mucous glands, which pour out an alkaline secretion in such large quantities. An excess of farinaceous food, therefore, soon begins to ferment, and an acid is generated, which stimulates the mucous

membrane to further secretion. In all chronic diseases, and in many of the acute disorders, this sour condition of the stomach and bowels is present. Alkalies are therefore useful—Firstly, in neutralizing the acid products of this fermentation; and secondly, in checking the too abundant secretion from the mucous glands. A few grains of soda or potash, given an hour or two after taking food, will quickly remedy this derangement and remove the distressing symptoms which arise from it. In the chronic diseases, indeed, attention to this point is of especial importance: for by placing the stomach and bowels in a healthy state, and insuring a proper digestion of food, we put the child in a fair way of recovery, and prepare the way for the administration of tonic and strengthening medicines, by which his restoration to health is to be brought about.

In prescribing for infants, an aromatic should always be included in the mixture. The aromatics are useful, not only for their flavouring properties, but also for their value in all those cases of abdominal derangement where flatulence, pain, and spasm, resulting from vitiated secretions and undigested food, are present to increase the discomfort of the patient. Such dyspeptic phenomena are usually relieved rapidly by the use of these agents; and aniseed, cinnamon, caraway-seed, or even tincture of capsicum in minute doses, will be found important additions to the prescription in all cases where alkalies are required.

In prescribing for children, the proper dose of a medicine cannot always be calculated according to the age of the child, and does not in all cases bear the same proportion to the quantity suitable for an adult. For certain drugs children show a remarkable tolerance, while to the action of others they show as remarkable a susceptibility. Thus, opium, it is well known, acts upon a child more powerfully than would be expected, judging from the mere difference of age. It should therefore be given to infants with a certain caution, especially if the child be enfeebled by disease. It is, however, a medicine which is of especial value in the treatment of the diseases of infancy, and may be given without fear if care be taken not to repeat the dose too frequently. Belladonna, on the contrary, can be taken by children in large quantities. A child of two or three years old will bear without inconvenience a dose which in an adult might produce very uncomfortable symptoms.¹ Lobelia, again, is a remedy which is very well borne by children. Dr. Ringer has given it to "very young children" in doses of five minims every hour, and in no case has he noticed any ill effects to follow its administration. Arsenic should be given to children over five years of age in the same dose as that used to adults, and infants of a month or two old will take one drop of Fowler's solution three times a day with great benefit in cases of gastric catarrh. The influence of mercury upon young children deserves remark. It seldom in them produces stomatitis or salivation; but an excess of the drug is not therefore harmless: its influence is seen in the irritation of the alimentary canal which

¹ It is important to remember this in giving belladonna for its sedative effects, as in pertussis.