

The crude hydrochloric acid at this time had been impregnated with arsenic. The chemical expert rapidly explained how arsenical fumes would thus be given off, and the man fall a victim to one form of industrial poisoning.

Mrs. Byrne stood free. As Walter Hart had predicted, the crowd cheered her in spite of the prompt call of the court for order. They were both roundly cheered when he passed quickly to her side, for the judge immediately dismissed the case.

THE USES OF PETROLEUM IN THE TREATMENT OF CONSTIPATION AND OTHER DISEASES IN INFANTS*

BY ERIC PRITCHARD, M.A., M.D. (OXON.), M.R.C.P., ETC.

Physician to the Queen's Hospital for Children; Physician to Out-patients, City of London Hospital for Diseases of the Chest (Victoria Park); Hon. Physician for Infant Consultation, St. Marylebone General Dispensary, etc., etc., London.

The therapeutic uses of petroleum for internal administration are almost as old as history itself. Herodotus and Pliny both refer to it in their writings as a liquid with medicinal properties of considerable value. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, travellers in Russia, Roumania, Bavaria, South America and other countries where oil wells are situated refer in their writings to the consumption of liquid bitumen, white naphtha, or St. Quirinus's oil, by the natives as cures for various diseases. On the other hand, since the time that paraffin was introduced into Europe for lighting purposes, medical literature has abounded in references to cases of accidental poisoning and attempted suicide by swallowing of the crude oil. This fact explains the very natural prejudice many people at first evinced at taking the purified form of paraffin by the mouth for medicinal purposes.

My first acquaintance with the uses of the more refined and non-toxic varieties of paraffin dates from the year 1893, when petroleum in the form of an emulsion was brought to my notice as a substitute for cod liver oil in the treatment of consumption and wasting diseases. Under the late Dr. W. B. Cheadle's directions I gave this new emulsion a prolonged and careful trial in several cases of tuberculous disease in children who were warded in St. Mary's Hos-

* The American Practitioner.