

the condition of his brain, and the words come forth slowly and with stammering, or he becomes confused and forgets entirely what he intended to say. It is not until symptoms of reaction set in, or, as the popular phrase has it, "until he gets warmed up," that fluency and ease is acquired. I have found a minute dose of morphia or a few whiffs of ether useful in this most embarrassing condition. Let me add the caution, that too large a dose produces the opposite condition of the vessels, quite as fatal to a successful result. I dare say alcohol acts similarly on some constitutions.

I feel, in closing, that my limited experience prevents me from doing justice to the subject about which I have chosen to express a few ideas.

Progress of Medical Science.

A STUDY OF THE CASES OF DISEASE OF THE SKIN TREATED AT DEMILT DISPENSARY, DURING THE YEAR 1875.*

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The number of cases of diseases of the skin which have come under my care in the Demilt Dispensary during the past year, and which I propose to analyze in the present paper, is six hundred and seventeen.

I. *Eczema*.—Of the two hundred and eighteen cases of eczema, one hundred and eleven were in male and one hundred and seven in female subjects, giving a preponderance of four males.

In regard to the location of the disease, in seventy-one cases where this was noted it occurred in the following order: Head, eighteen, hands, thirteen, legs, thirteen; ears, eight, beard, four; face, four; palms, three; arms, two; hands and arms, two; scrotum, two, lip, one; eyelid, one. Of eleven cases in which the side of the body was recorded, the disease affected the left side in eight, and the right in three.

In the treatment of eczema I have, of course, followed, to a greater or less degree, the accepted and well known methods as indicated in the textbooks; but in the two hundred and eighteen cases, probably at least fifty modes of treatment have been required; for no disease of the skin exemplifies more than eczema the error of a routine habit of prescribing, and none exhibits more clearly the necessity of studying the case, and not simply ordering this or that accepted remedy irrespective of the particular requirements of the patient, or, as I have elsewhere stated, eczema requires management quite as much as treatment.

The treatment of eczema in children, of which we have seen that there were one hundred and two

cases of ten years or less of age, offers a field of great interest for the study of the therapeutics of the disease. Every phase of it is here seen—acute, sub-acute and chronic, moist, pustular, squamous and papular; and the measures applicable to one form do positive harm in another. While, therefore, I can not discuss in full the treatment, I will mention a few of the more salient features of the disease as they have presented themselves in this clinic during the past year. I will not, however, reiterate points made in my analysis of the preceding year, and would refer those interested in the subject to that, as expressive of much that would be said at the present time did space permit. I have ordered poultices to the heads of infants with eczema vesicoidum (I believe but twice) at the Dispensary during the year, and then only a *single application* of the same, and that after the eruption had been left alone for a while, with only the repeated application of an ointment. The object of the poultice is to remove an incrustation; and after a single application over night, the head is to be washed in borax and lukewarm water, two drachms to a pint, no soap; and the appropriate ointment is to be reapplied as often as necessary in order to keep the parts thoroughly protected. I therefore order no more poultices nor washings, unless absolutely required; for, as a rule, the crusts which form afterwards will separate in a few days under the continued soaking with a soft ointment or cod liver or almond oil.

Last year I mentioned the use of tannin in ointment, one drachm to the ounce, as having given me good results; this year habit, perhaps, and the desire to test the value of different remedies, has led me to employ largely the bismuth subnitrate in ointment, half a drachm or one drachm to an ounce; and with many skins it acts very much better than the zinc ointment. I have also returned, in a measure, to the employment of the old unguentum picis or tar ointment of the pharmacopœia, diluted two, three or even more times, either with simple or rose ointment, or in combination with oxide of zinc ointment, and I find that it does not merit the neglect into which it appears to have fallen. I have no new experience to add in regard to the tannin ointment before recommended, when used it has proved serviceable.

I have employed baths more than formerly in the treatment of eczema, both in children and adults, among the poor, and they have at times rendered great service. As is well known, the application of simple water to eczematous skin does harm, and is to be avoided as far as possible; but the same does not hold true in regard to water medicated so as to offer a soothing element, by means of the carbonate of potash and soda, borax, acetate of potash, etc., combined with starch.

In a case of eczema of the scrotum in a boy, very great relief was obtained by soaking in a warm bath every night in an ordinary wash-tub half full, with something over an ounce of carbonate of soda, with