

THE TREATMENT OF INCONTINENCE OF URINE IN CHILDREN.

There is scarcely any disease occurring among children more annoying and troublesome than incontinence of urine. It is particularly vexatious to parents, and is often regarded by them as an incurable infirmity. After their patience has been long tried, they abandon one remedy after another and look forward to puberty, when, they are told, the disease may depart, never to return. According to Dr. Day failure in treatment is frequently owing to an erroneous diagnosis of the affection; to the inefficiency with which the treatment is carried out; to its being discontinued too soon. Among the causes of enuresis, the following may be enumerated: If the urine is excessively acid or loaded with urates, the bladder becomes over-stimulated and readily discharges its contents; if the bowels be habitually constipated, or there be worms in the intestines, vesical irritation may ensue; or, if the child be guilty of masturbation, there will be no chance of a cure till the habit is corrected. Weakness of the muscular coat of the bladder from general debility or anæmia is a common cause; the bladder, not being able to tolerate any quantity of urine, readily excites the motor apparatus. Dr. Day has known a troublesome case follow typhoid fever in a boy ten years of age. If the disease be owing to a long prepuce, causing phimosis, it should be removed. Sometimes no cause can be ascertained. Children two or three years of age frequently wet the bed, either from laziness or from lack of control over the bladder. It is important to remember that, even though the secretions are in perfect order, the incontinence may continue, and thus a habit may be formed which the poorer classes and stern people occasionally endeavor to correct by punishment. In some idle and dirty children such a course may be of benefit; but in others who are nervous and timid, there is the possibility of increasing the evil we desire to remove.

Enuresis is sometimes seen in connection with chronic albuminuria, and is so occasionally persistent as to require special treatment. It seems impossible to lay down a plan of treatment for general adoption; the peculiarities of constitution and habits of life must be taken

into consideration, and hap-hazard treatment guarded against. Some cases are cured or relieved by the combined influence of electricity, iron and belladonna. The successful issue is in a great measure attributable to the constant care which the mother takes in feeding the child and rigorously attending to the physician's instruction. Those cases that date from birth or have lasted for upward of a year are invariably intractable and often incurable, especially if the child be of a nervous parentage, or was delicate when born, or passes large quantities of urine. With respect to the utility of fardism there can be no question; it requires to be used regularly, and to be continued for a considerable time, but it sometimes fails altogether. When the nervous system is weak, and there is general debility, the sphincter loses its power, and urine escapes by night and day without the child's knowledge. It is in such cases as these that iron and nux vomica are of service.

If there be excess of muscular action, and the child have frequent inclination without power of control, belladonna is an admirable remedy. It occupies a prominent place as a therapeutic agent, and sometimes, when combined with iron, even in small doses, it seems to do good; but it should not be given up in obstinate cases, till either soreness of the throat is produced or dilatation of the pupils takes place. In Dr. Day's hands it has often failed when administered in any form or dose. It certainly tends to lessen irritability of the bladder, and should always have a fair trial.

Cold sponging in the morning is very serviceable in cases of enuresis that appear to have their origin in general debility. It braces up the nervous system and is a powerful tonic. The slight sensation of chilliness soon passes away without leaving any depression if vigorous friction with a towel be employed for a few minutes. In a case under Dr. Day's care, about three years ago, the cure was attributed to this simple remedy when one remedy after another had failed. The vital functions are brought into a healthier state, the skin acts better, and the appetite and digestion improve. However delicate a child may be, free sponging in tepid water, followed by a good rubbing, is of great value.—*Therapeutic Gazette*.