

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES.

THE TRUE RELATIONS OF FILTH TO DIPHTHERIA.—Diphtheria is a contagious disease. There is probably no spontaneous origin of diphtheria, any more than there is a spontaneous origin of cholera or scarlatina. When an attack of diphtheria has made its appearance, it is well enough to examine the hygienic condition of the house, *with its deteriorating influences on the general health of the inmates, and look after the source of the case in the persons of friends, attendants and help.* In my Remarks on the Nature and Treatment of Diphtheria, made by invitation before the Section of Diseases of Children of the British Medical Association, August, 1888 (*British Medical Journal*, September 22, 1888), there are found the following sentences: "*Foul air and sewer gas do not create diphtheria; they do create dysentery, and typhoid, or such a condition of general ill-health and malaise as to afford the diphtheritic virus a ready resting-place.* There were plenty of malodorous privies and foul smells fifty years ago, but no epidemic of diphtheria. Besides, and mainly through the careful observations of English physicians, such as are contained in Dr. George Turner's report on diphtheria in lower animals and many others, the sources from which diphtheria may come are very many. Pigeons, fowls, turkeys, chickens, pheasants, cats, horses, sheep, cows, are just so many sources of diphtheria for man. Foods of all kinds, vegetables and milk will transmit it. It sticks to furniture, floors, and wall-paper, railroad cushions and school desks. Nospontaneous generation is required to explain its ravages.—A. Jacobi, M. D., Archives of Pediatrics.

GOOD AND BAD EFFECTS OF CYCLING.—

Cycling as a curative agent (says the *Medical Record*) has a considerable future; it ought not to be taken up at too early an age; the so-called "bicycle back"—round stopping shoulders—is particularly liable to be produced in a growing lad who uses the bicycle too much; a convenient rule is to avoid recommending it till a lad has passed the age when the chief growth in height takes place. Dr. Jennings' book confirms the impression formed from observation and the perusal of scattered notices in fugitive literature; that cycling is a form of exercise specially useful to men who are growing to be a little more than middle-aged. A man who has followed a sedentary occupation begins to experience increasing disinclination to exertion, chronic constipation with some

stiffness and it may be flying pains in the joints; for such a man a tricycle is capable of accomplishing a great deal; exercise ceases to be a trouble, the bowels become more regular, and the joint troubles which may be at first a little aggravated, disappear. Dr. Jennings believes that chronic gout and rheumatic gout may thus be cured, or at least kept at bay, even when the patient has been seriously crippled by several attacks; he also speaks very confidently as to the cure of obesity, if the patient will refrain from gratifying the thirst, which is at first very trying.

TO PURIFY THE BLOOD. The Boston Journal of health gives the following good advice. Natural means are the best for doing this. To "physic" for this end—whether with the old-fashioned "sulphur and molasses," or root "beer," tonics or "blood-purifiers,"—is a mistake; as it is, also, to be bled, which, in cases of feebleness, may be absolutely dangerous. The way to purify the blood is, not by putting something into it or by draining it impartially, but by taking out of it the impure substances which it contains. Nature has provided five organs for doing this—the lungs, skin, kidneys, liver, and bowels. The blood becomes impure for one, or both of two reasons: 1. Something impure has been put into it. 2. The five excretory organs just mentioned have not been sufficiently active. In the first case, alter your diet, eschewing pastry, "heavy" foods, and everything unhygienic. In both cases, set the excretory apparatus in full operation. To do this for the lungs, take abundant exercise in the open air. The more vigorous this is, short of exhaustion, the better, for the quicker and deeper will be the respiration, and the greater will be the amount of impurity, in consequence, thrown off. Remember that a person walking at the rate of three miles an hour breathes three times as much air as if he were sitting still, and that on walking at the rate of four miles an hour, breathes five times as much as if he were sitting still, and that in more active exercise the benefit received is in proportion. To quicken the action of the skin, get up a good sweat. If robust take a Turkish or vapor bath every day for a while. The kidneys, liver, and bowels may be stimulated to full action by drinking hot water in abundance. No better means exists for accomplishing this end. Not only does it stimulate the organs just named, but it cleanses the stomach, liver, and kidneys, and the water, permeating the whole body, drains impurities from it as it passes off by the pores. Thus, each means used assists the others, and the