

A New Mercurial

The Old World gave us Salvarsan. The New World has given us Mercurosal. Salvarsan is placed directly into the vein; Mercurosal may be also. Never until now has the medical profession had a mercurial preparation that could be administered intravenously, by the mere introduction of the needle into the vein and the customary technique, without the practical certainty of obliterating the vein.

In Mercurosal, the new P. D. & Co., mercurial, the molecular form of the mercury compound is such that it has no irritating effect upon the delicate tissues of the venous walls; at the same time, characteristic mercurial effects upon the spirochetes are secured by the intravenous administration of this compound.

One physician reports having made twenty-seven consecutive injections into the vein in a space not more than half an inch extent, without any ill effect upon the blood-vessel.

The chemical synthesis of Mercurosal must be regarded as a triumph over difficulties as great as those which had to be overcome in the development of Salvarsan; and its accomplishment is what the profession has long been looking for, notwithstanding the acknowledged value of the arsenical compound. Both Salvarsan and Mercurosal are needed.

The manufacturers, Parke, Davis & Co., have a booklet on the subject which they offer to physicians.

Dangers of Winter

The first three months of the year, says the Dominion Department of Health, are the most fatal. The greatest number of deaths is in February, the next in March, the third in January. This seems to upset the old theory of the healthfulness of the bracing cold of winter. One explanation is that many people breathe very little of the outside air, spending most of their time in heated houses, offices and cars; sudden changes from this atmosphere to something in the neighborhood of zero would be dangerous. Winter sports such as skating, hockey and tobogganning, are mostly for the young, and it may be that the high mortality is among older people of sedentary habits. The fault of most heating systems is lack of moisture, which may be supplied by water kept on the stove or in the furnace-pan.

Dr. Amyot, the Deputy Minister of Health, lays some of the blame on diet, which in the winter does not contain enough green stuffs. There is a certain improvement in this respect owing to the growing habit of using tomatoes, lettuce and other salads in the winter. These are sometimes classed as luxuries; and the taxation of imported vegetables and fruits is defended on that ground. But the free use of these foods is conducive to health.

The simple and homely advice given by Dr. Amyot is to go to bed when one has a cold. Trying to fight the cold by going out is plucky, but dangerous, and may mean death or a longer illness.