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AN EPITOME
OF
CURRENT MEDICAL LITERATURE.

MEDICINE.

Ferratin.—Under ordinary circumstances the liver of a pig contains an acid albuminate of iron which has been styled "ferratin," and this has been used with success for therapeutic purposes. M. Germain Sée states that even when taken for a considerable period it never causes gastric or intestinal disturbance, and never gives rise to the formation of sulphuretted hydrogen in the bowel. Indeed, it improves the appetite and regulates the intestinal functions. The dose of artificial ferratin is from eight to twenty-four grains per diem: it is not soluble in water. In a large number of cases of chlorosis and anemia following acute affections, Banholzer found the hemoglobin increased by 5 per cent. after a week's treatment by ferratin, and at the same time there was a marked increase in the number of red corpuscles. Similar results were obtained in chlorosis and anemia, which were not due to acute diseases, and it was noted that all the patients enjoyed an excellent appetite while under the treatment. When a comparison was instituted between ferratin and Bland's pills it was found that the former produced the greater increase in the hemoglobin.—*The Lancet.*

The Treatment of Diphtheria with the Antitoxine.—At a recent meeting of the Clinical Society of London, Washbourne, Goodall, and Card (*British Medical Journal*, No. 1773, p. 1417) reported the results of observations made at the Eastern Hospital in eighty cases of children under fifteen, submitted for treatment with the antitoxine of diphtheria. Bacteriologic examination was made in all, but diphtheria-bacilli were found in but sixty-one. Eight of the cases in which diphtheria-bacilli were not found would have been considered not to have been diphtheric had a bacteriologic examination not been made; these were

excluded from the statistics. The other eleven at first presented the appearances of diphtheria, but their further progress fully bore out the bacteriologic evidence. Among the seventy-two cases there were fourteen deaths (19.4 per cent.). The significance of this mortality becomes apparent when compared with that of previous years. During the year 1893 there came under observation 397 cases, with 166 deaths (41.8 per cent.); from January 1, 1894, to October 22, 1894, 400 cases, 144 deaths (36 per cent.); from January 1, 1893, to October 22, 1894, 707 cases, with 310 deaths (38.8 per cent.); from September 14, to October 22, 1894, there were seventy-two cases not treated with serum, with twenty-eight deaths (38.8 per cent.); from October 23, to November 27, 1894, seventy-two cases treated with serum, with fourteen deaths (19.4 per cent.). Of the sixty-one cases shown bacteriologically to be diphtheric, thirteen died (21.3 per cent.). Among the whole number tracheotomy was required in nine cases, with three deaths. The serum used was obtained from the British Institute of Preventive Medicine and was administered as follows: In severe cases, 20 c.cm. where injected when the patient was first seen, followed by 10 c.cm. in from eighteen to twenty-four hours, and again another 5 or 10 c.cm. in from another eighteen to twenty-four hours. In moderately severe cases a first dose of 10 c.cm. was injected and followed by one of 5 c.cm. the next day, and perhaps another of 5 c.cm. a day later. In mild or doubtful cases, a single dose of 5 c.cm. was injected if there were reasons to suspect that the condition was likely to become worse. Herringham (*Ibidem*, p. 1428) related that twenty-two cases had been treated at St. Bartholomew's Hospital with the antitoxine, and that in four diphtheria-bacilli were not found. Of the remaining eighteen, seven were mild and all recovered; five were severe: six very severe. Tracheotomy was required in ten of these eleven, with three deaths, and in one intubation. In previous years tracheotomy had been performed in sixty-three cases, with forty-one deaths. Kossel (*Deutsche medizinische Wochenschrift*, 1894, No. 51, p. 946) has made a further report upon the use of the antitoxine in the treatment of diphtheria at the Institute for Infectious Diseases in Berlin. From March 15 to December 1, 1894, there came under