

TOPICAL REMEDIES IN DISEASES OF THE THROAT, NOSE, AND EAR.

By Thomas F. Rambold, M.D., St. Louis. Contributed to the American Practitioner.

The usual solution of common table-salt—one drachm to the pint of warm water—I have found on the whole to be the best agent for mere cleansing of the nasal cavities. When the secretions are abundant the solution may be applied in spray or by the catheter nasal douche; but whichever mode is adopted the work of cleansing must be thoroughly done. This is essential. The salt solution, however, is a cleanser only; it does not deodorize. Where ozena is present a solution of bromo-chloralum, of a strength varying from two drachms to one ounce to a pint of tepid water, used by means of the catheter nasal douche, as often as may be necessary to correct fetor, is perhaps the best application. The most offensive case is usually relieved by it, at least for a time.

For four years past I have given carbolic acid the first place among local measures for the treatment of both acute and chronic inflammations of the cavities under consideration. I use it as follows:—R. Crystallized carbolic acid, ℥j—℥ij; glycerine, ℥ij; water, ℥vij. Misco. Throw on the diseased parts by the spray apparatus, from half a drachm to two drachms of this solution every other day, or daily if necessary to control the secretion. If the nasal douche be used, the carbolic acid must be in only one-fourth or thereabouts of the quantity given above, or of a strength which when applied will produce but a slight smarting sensation, lasting for a few moments only, and should, if properly used, be followed by an evident sense of relief. At the suggestion of my friend, Dr. Wm S. Edgar, of this city, I began using a year ago a solution the extract of pinus canadensis in such chronic cases of disease of the cavities under consideration as were attended by excessive secretion. By adding from half a drachm to two drachms of the sol. extr. of pinus canadensis to eight ounces of the carbolic-acid mixture, I have obtained a very valuable combination when astringent and local tonics were required. The fluid extract of geranium maculatum, when one drachm be mixed with eight ounces of the carbolic-acid solution, constitutes an efficient astringent, but should be dispensed with as soon as the secretion has been controlled. The tincture calendula officinalis, one ounce to eight ounces of the carbolic-acid solution, is useful in certain cases of subacute catarrh of the pharynx and pharyngo-nasal cavity. The tincture of aconite root, half a drachm to eight ounces of the carbolic acid solution, I have found useful in pharyngitis accompanied by great pain, but without much swelling or secretion—cases of local hyperæsthesia. As soon, however, as the pain ceases the aconite should be omitted, lest it produce unpleasant constitutional effects. The muriate of ammonia (one drachm to eight ounces of water) is especially valuable in cases attended by a varicose condition of the vessels of the pharynx and larynx, attended either by copious secretion or the reverse, a dry and glazed condition. The remedy should be suspended as soon as the secretions of the parts are regulated, as I am sure I have seen it developed new throat troubles

when too long continued. Chlorate of potash has not in my hands sustained its reputation in the treatment of nose and pharyngeal diseases. It sometimes yields good results in acute states, unattended by much swelling, but accompanied by excessive secretion. But it is not only of no benefit where ulceration is present, but is positively injurious. The sulphate of copper (fifteen to twenty grains to one ounce of water) I regard as superior to nitrate of silver in favouring healthy granulation in phagedenic ulceration; but previous to its application with a brush or sponge the parts should be thoroughly cleansed with the spray of muriate of ammonia; the carbolic-acid spray should subsequently be used in order to allay the pain produced by the blue-stone.

SYPHILITIC ALOPECIA.

By Balmanno Squire, M. B., London.

That form of syphilitic alopecia which is independent of any eruption affecting the scalp, which accompanies the so-called secondary syphillides, and which is characterized simply by an extensive loss of hair, so that the greater portion of the scalp is denuded absolutely of hair, and not the scalp only, but also the eyebrows and eyelids (of eyelashes) as well, is often a persistent affection, and in my experience is only—very tardily, indeed—remediable by general mercurial treatment. I refer to the condition described above, as distinguished from the syphilitic alopecia, resulting commonly (in tertiary syphilis) from the limited and “discrete” loss of hair resulting from cicatrices consequent on (tertiary) syphilitic ulceration of the scalp. This kind of alopecia, which has by some eminent French writers been assumed to be identical with tinea decalvans (la teigne pelade), but which is to be distinguished from any even the most “diffused” forms of the latter disease by its want of definite limitation of margin, is, as I have found, readily (within a month or so) curable by the following topical remedies:—

For the scalp, hydrargyri iodidi rubri, gr. v; atar. rose, ℥ij; olei amygdalæ, ℥x; unguenti simplicis, ℥j.

For the eyebrows (where the skin is more tender), three grains of the mercurial iodide are used. The prescription is otherwise the same as before.

For the eyelids, which are more tender still, five grains of the yellow oxide of mercury, made by the recent method, are substituted for the iodide. The prescription is otherwise as above.

The French writers referred to regard secondary syphilis as merely a predisposing cause of tinea decalvans. I, however, regard the “secondary” syphilitic alopecia as a distinct disease.—[British Medical Journal.

A NEW METHOD OF PRODUCING LOCAL ANÆSTHESIA.

Dr. Horvath, of Kieff, has lately proposed (The Doctor) a new method of producing local anæsthesia. If the hand be immersed for a short time in ice-water, severe pain is caused. But in experiments made in reducing the temperature of frogs by means of cold alcohol, Dr. Horvath found that no such pain was produced when the hand

was immersed in cold alcohol, not even when the temperature of the alcohol was as low as 5° C. Glycerine was found to possess a similar property. Ether caused pain, and quicksilver more acute pain still, causing the speedy withdrawal of the finger when plunged into this liquid at a temperature of 3°. It was next ascertained that when the finger was held for quite a long time in alcohol having a temperature of 5° C. no pain was experienced. Moreover, although the faintest touch was distinctly perceived in his finger, no pain was experienced from sharp pricks. This seemed to show that the application of alcohol has the effect of depriving the part of the special sensibility to pain, without however, impairing the delicacy of the general tactile sensation, which, as is well known, resides in the superficial integument. This apparent possibility of the artificial separation of these two nervous functions—viz., the tactile sensation and the sensation of pain, and the temporary suspension of the latter—seemed important in a physiological point of view, and also of no small practical utility in allaying certain forms of local pain, more especially that caused by burns and surgical operations. Dr. Horvath had an opportunity of testing the value of this application to burns on his own person, as well as upon others; and not only was all pain instantly allayed directly the part was immersed in alcohol, but it was found that the wound very speedily began to assume a more healthy appearance, the surrounding redness rapidly failing.

SHORT NOTES.

ENURESIS.

Dr. Buyelmann of Cologne, recommends the syrup of the iodide of iron in the treatment of incontinence of urine.

TREATMENT OF BURNS AND SCALDS.

Dr. Breyne highly recommends the following treatment in *L'Union Pharmaceutique*:—Hydrate of lime (newly precipitated), forty-five grains; glycerine, five ounces; chloric ether, forty-five drops. It makes up a transparent, colourless liquid, with an agreeable odour, and an alkaline reaction, according to the dose of hydrate of lime. It calms the pain and prevents or abates inflammation.

IODIDE OF MERCURY IN PULMONARY PHTHISIS.

Dr. Brachatti, of Larnaca, prescribes the above salt, combined with oxymel of squills, in the various stages of phthisis. The usual dose is one-sixth of a grain for an adult; for children he uses it in the shape of pills; one-fourth of a grain is divided into eight pills, and one or several pills are administered according to age.—*Gazette Médica delle Provincie Venete*.

COMBINATION FOR CHRONIC DIARRHŒA.

Rayer advocates the combination of cinchona charcoal, and bismuth in the management of chronic diarrhœa, in these proportions:

R. Subnitrate of bismuth, ℥j;
Cinchona, yellow, powdered, ℥ss;
Charcoal, vegetable, ℥j. M. Chart. xx.

S. Two or three times daily during the intervals between meals.—*Union Médicale*, No. 73.