

sassafras, and of the Indian root of Mudar, which at one time was largely employed by the natives of India as a supposed antisyphilitic agent.

Upon this important branch of their instructions, the Committee are of opinion—1. That, until a more efficient remedy be discovered, the occasional employment of mercury cannot be dispensed with; 2. That, employed in moderation, and under judicious restrictions, it is to the large majority of constitutions harmless; and 3. That, when employed in such larger quantities as will cause salivation, the excess is not only useless, but assumes the character of a poison.

The belief in the value of mercury as an antisyphilitic agent is strengthened by observation of its remarkable influence in the hereditary syphilis of new-born children. The evidence of the witnesses testifies strongly to the value of mercurial treatment, by the adoption of which children in great numbers are annually restored to health.

XVII. Although they have reason to believe that *Syphilization* may prove serviceable in such chronic cases as have failed to yield to more ordinary treatment, they have no sufficient evidence of its curative properties to outweigh the obvious objections to its general employment; and, even accepting the entire truth of the reports of its curative powers, the treatment is repugnant to the habits and feelings of the profession in this country, and, in the majority of cases, is slow of operation.

XVIII. The syphilis of infants has no enemy to contend with more potent than a weak and anæmic state of the constitution, which disappears on the improvement of the general health. The disease, for the most part, according to the evidence above referred to, attacks children ill-nourished and ill-tended, who consequently fail in vigor of circulation. These children are placed on a nourishing diet, and supplied with strengthening remedies, medical and dietetic; and the disease subsides, and the cure is declared to be effected at a shorter date than that obtained through treatment by mercury.

Such is the evidence before the Committee, founded, however, on a rather limited number of cases, but which, although numerically small, is sufficiently important to claim the attention of the profession, and to justify a renewed inquiry in a larger and more general field of observation.

XX. *Phagedæna*. In nearly all forms of phagedæna, the morbid action will cease on the destruction of the affected part. The agent most generally resorted to is nitric acid, which, in the less active forms of the disease, may be

reduced in strength by the addition of three, six, or eight proportions of water. In the severe and destructive examples, nothing short of the strong acid, or any other equally powerful escharotic, will suffice to arrest it. The constitutional forms are extremely intractable. They defy the ingenuity of the surgeon, and set at naught every variety of remedy brought to bear on them. With a worn and debilitated frame, bark, iodine, mineral acids, wine and nutritious food, and the freshest accessible atmosphere, are the principal remedies on which reliance must be placed.—*Br. Med. Jour.*

INFLUENCE OF DIET UPON THE MOTHER'S MILK.

The contradictory opinions that are entertained in respect to the influence of diet upon the quantity and quality of the milk, induced Dr. Subotin, of St. Petersburg, to institute a series of experiments, to settle, as far as possible, the question.

His investigations led him to the following conclusions:—

1. That animal food increases the daily yield of milk, while a diet of vegetables diminishes it. Food of a fatty nature caused a marked diminution of the milk, and even, when persisted in, its entire suppression.

2. The character of the food had an entire influence upon the relative properties of the several elements which enter into the composition of the milk. By an animal diet the amount of the solid matters was increased, and this increase was especially shown in an augmentation of fatty material. The increase of casein was less evident. The augmentation of these two substances in the milk was not merely relative, but absolute; the daily amount of milk secreted being increased by animal food. The proportion of its albuminous and saline ingredients underwent scarcely any appreciable change. Under the use of an animal diet there was not detected any large reduction of the saccharine matter of the milk, as Beusch supposed to occur; neither was the opinion confirmed by the experiments of Drs. Beusch, Playfair, and others, that the fatty constituents of the milk are augmented by a vegetable, and diminished by an animal diet. By a change from an animal to a vegetable diet the quantity of the solid ingredients of the milk, namely, the fat and casein, was diminished, while the saccharine matter was somewhat increased. By fatty food the solid ingredients of the milk were but relatively increased, especially the butyraceous, while at the same time there was a decrease in the sugar.

3. The fact developed by the experiments of