

signs of improvement. Personally, I feel indebted to Dr. Starkey for the interesting manner in which the subject has been brought to our notice.

R. A. KERRY, M.D.—Dr. Starkey's paper has brought forward a very important point, namely, the condition of chronic hyperæmia of the mucous membrane. As we all know the function of the mucous membrane is to supply both warmth and moisture to the air inspired. In the house, with its air so deficient in moisture, the mucous membrane is kept constantly in a hyperæmic condition to furnish sufficient moisture to the air inhaled; and on emerging into the air in winter time, this condition is still maintained as a relatively large amount of blood must pass to the parts to afford the heat necessary to warm the air. We have thus for many months a sort of vicious circle established, causing in course of time alteration of structure and in advance cases absorption of bone.

We all frequently have cases of tinnitus aurium under our charge, and the majorities of these are nothing but the result of processes instituted under conditions similar to those which Dr. Starkey has described, and showing in several cases atrophy of the membrane from the anterior nares right through to the tympanum.

Many of these cases become infectious, from the horrible æzenas down to the ordinary muco-purulent affection of the naso-pharyngeal tract, which is so often seen. Considering how very common deficient hearing is, and that the altered mucous membrane affords a favourable means for entrance of various germs, the question of checking the spread of infection and affording pure air should be seriously taken up by the profession at large and urged upon the health authorities.

T. A. STARKEY, M.D.—With reference to the dust in the air this is a very important condition, but I think that the marked symptoms mentioned in the cases which I have described are not due to this, though certainly habits of living and the manner of conducting the household with reference to the dust problem have their effect upon the general health of the inmates. As to the combustion of coal gas, and gas escaping from furnaces, this is another important question, but rather a little outside of the matter which we have taken up. I may say that the bad condition of the atmosphere caused by the combustion of coal gas undoubtedly tells upon the children who gradually lose vitality and strength during the winter months. The Royal Sanitary Institute proposes to take up this whole question of ventilation and heating, including the combustion of coal gas.

I think Dr. Mills' answer as to the intonation of the speech of the