

moistened in olive oil, usually suffice to dry them up; but when they are obstinate, white precipitate ointment, (drachm 1 ad drachms 10 axung,) or Galen's cerate, may be employed. Frequently, to cure the intertrigo behind the ears, it suffices to take care that the string of the cap be not too tightly tied, or to prevent the surfaces of the skin from coming in contact with each other.

*Impetigo, impetiginous eczema, and ecthyma, in their acute form, require special treatment.* Dr. Trousseau, regarding the first two as true eruptive fevers, just as scarlatina, variolæ, &c., is careful in not suppressing them too rapidly, although he does not encourage their development. So far from this, believing with Sydenham that our object should be to prevent eruptive diseases becoming confluent, he prescribes prolonged baths, abstinence, acid drinks, and mild laxatives. The children are not to be too much covered up, nor to be kept in bed. Excessive cleanliness is to be observed, and great care taken that they do not scratch the pustules, and diffuse the disease with their nails over other portions of the body. When the febrile action has ceased, we have to do with a mere local disease, and must get rid of it as soon as possible. Unfortunately, however, impetigo oftentimes succeeds to measles and scarlatina; in which case, our proceedings must be more circumspect. If the impetigo be too rapidly healed, in this case, the lungs, or some other internal organ, will very probably become diseased, we having thus destroyed the revulsive affection of the skin, which acted as a preventive, or as a curative, if they were already affected. There are circumstances, however, in which such caution would be misplaced. Thus, a violent inflammation of the ocular mucous membrane may spread to the eye itself, or a very severe eczema behind the ear may give rise to dangerous or even fatal enlargement of the cervical glands. In both these cases we must at once cure the eruption, as it gives rise to greater evils than we have reason to fear from its repercussion.

When the *impetigo* and *eczema* become chronic, and the condition of no internal organ causes alarm, I treat them with baths, ointments, lotions, purgatives, blisters, or depuratives. *Alkaline baths* are the best of remedies when the disease is attended with itching. To 75 or 100 quarts of water I usually add from 12 to 20 drachms of sub-carbonate of soda or potash. These baths most effectually clean the skin, soften the crusts, and relieve the pruritus. The dreadful suffering this last causes proves its relief alone is no slight advantage. With a solution rather stronger than that employed for the baths, lotions may be made and locally applied two or three times daily. These baths are suitable for the dry forms of *eczema*, for *lichen*, and for *pityriasis*. But when the *eczema* is very acute, and is accompanied by great redness and abundant discharge, *mercurial baths* are to be preferred. I prepare these by adding to 50 or 70 quarts of water 3 or 4 scruples of corrosive sublimate, dissolved in 1 oz. or 1½ oz. of alcohol. I have used these baths for fourteen years in every variety of dartsrous affection of the skin, with the greatest advantage. Some practitioners consider them dangerous, but I order about a thousand annually, and even for women in the weakest state, and children of the earliest age, without ever seeing any accidents result from their employment; I have had children placed in these baths, half the skin of whose bodies had been destroyed by *eczema*, and no injurious absorption of the mercury has taken place, while the epidermis has become regenerated in a few days. Very young infants should not be kept in the bath more than a quarter of an hour, at the farthest, but those who are more than a year old may be retained in it for half an hour. The severest forms of *eczema*, *lichen*, *erythema*, and *impetiginous eczema* soon yield to these baths, and they form the most appropriate treatment of the *syphilides* of infancy. In simple, chronic, *impetigo*, I find sulphureous baths, formed of 1 or 2 drachms of sulphuret of potash to 50 or 70 quarts of

water, best. But they are especially indicated in children covered with furunculi, or little sub-cutaneous abscesses. The action of these baths is no doubt chiefly topical, for ointments composed of the same materials, and applied to circumscribed spots, are as useful; but when we find the alkaline baths correcting acid urine, and the mercurial baths relieving syphilis, it is evident that some portion of their material is absorbed, as is also shown by the odor which the sulphureous baths impart to the secretions. Indeed, experience has proved the efficacy of alkalies and mercurials, taken internally, in moderating the dartsrous diathesis, which manifests itself in herpetic eruption.

When the affections of the skin are very limited, *lotions*, composed of the same materials, in larger proportions than in the baths, may be substituted. The strength of these must depend upon the susceptibility of the skin, and condition of the lesion; but the practitioner must not be afraid of using them pretty strong, as the temporary irritation they excite is often advantageous to the affection. In the treatment of "*gourmes*" of the hairy scalp, the sulphuret of potassium may be employed in such strong solutions as to be almost caustic. The temperature of these lotions should be as high as can possibly be borne. This may seem strange advice at first, but doubtless much of the efficacy of the vapor bath in cutaneous affections depends upon the great heat thus produced, and the success attendant upon the employment of infusions of simple herbs by empirics, in like manner results from their using these very hot.

Among the *ointments*, those containing *mercury* occupy the very first place. White precipitate and calomel are usually to be preferred to red precipitate; but nothing absolute can be stated, for in apparently identical affections, sometimes the one and sometimes the other preparation proves most efficacious. The two former may be used in the proportion of one part to five or ten of cerate; and the red precipitate half as strong. In some children, lard, and in others cerate, forms the best vehicle. In some diseases of the hairy scalp, alkaline or sulphureous ointments are preferable to the mercurial ones, and this is the case especially in the moist and scabby forms. In the dry and squamous forms, ointments formed of mercury, of pitch, or of sulphate of copper, are highly useful. But I cannot too often repeat, that we must try various means, and neither allow ourselves to be too much encouraged by former success, nor discouraged if we find a remedy useful in some cases of no avail in others. Even for the same disease, the practitioner should always be provided with a certain variety of remedies, which will all, some day or other, be required.

I now come to the consideration of the employment of *blisters*. And first, let it be observed, that a substance, such as Burgundy pitch, croton oil, or mercurial ointment, which, when applied, sometimes gives rise to the production of a local crop of vesicles, occasionally also leads to a *general eczema*, first acute and then chronic. This is a rare occurrence in men, rather more common in women, and very frequent in children. A few months seldom pass without my seeing, in hospital or private practice, an acute, simple, or impetiginous *eczema* attack children, after the unavoidable employment of a temporary blister in pneumonia. Generally the disease assumes a chronic character; and if we consider that, up to this time, the child was not the subject of any cutaneous affection, we must admit the blister has been at least the occasional cause of its production. Seeing, then, that in a healthy skin, a blister may develop a chronic cutaneous affection, ought we to attach much importance to this means for the treatment of "*gourmes*," and rather ought we not reject it in the majority of cases? I have now in my wards a young child, who, when the subject of a slight lichen upon some few points of the skin, was ordered a blister by its attendant. A few days after, the arm to which this had been applied was covered with *eczema*; which quickly spread over