

portion of the patient's body to a temperature of from 280° F. to 320° F. This brings about marked constitutional changes which mean better local results. I found decidedly less relief from local treatment alone. The treatments must follow one another at short intervals at first, as patients relapse if any length of time supervenes. The results are often not apparent for some time after treatment.

PUERPERAL INSANITY.

By ERNEST HALL, M.D., L.R.C.P., Ed.

Fellow of British Gyn. Society, Victoria, B.C.

MRS. X., aged 39, of low grade of intelligence, family history suggestive of mental deficiency, her two brothers being considered somewhat "green." She was the mother of two children, last confinement attended by midwife and very tedious. Some days after a medical man was called and ordered a creolin douche, which gave her great pain. Each douche was followed by from one to three hours of wild delirium. She would leave the house, when not carefully watched, and wander towards the city. This condition continued, with slight interruption, for three weeks, when I was called to see her. The patient was apathetic, careless as to domestic duties, yet apparently devoted to her child.

Examination showed no abnormality, save the uterus slightly sub-involuted; pulse, temperature and urine normal. The treatment was free catharsis and hot douches; withdrew baby from the breast and gave tonics with plenty of food, frequently administered. Patient was better for a few days, when she relapsed into a semi-melancholic condition and complained of intense headache. Fearing that there might be some abnormality of the endometrium, I curetted, finding a piece of placenta no larger than a bean. Her recovery was complete and she has continued in excellent mental and physical health ever since.

I am aware that, to the superficial reader, there is nothing startling in this brief history of a not very extraordinary case, only a mild case of puerperal insanity, in a patient with a decided predisposition, mental and physical health following upon a simple curetting. I do not advance the opinion that the operation was the means by which the insanity was relieved, or that the combined treatment was responsible for it. We speak with less degrees of certainty as our vista widens.

As yet we do not fully know the psychic and physical interrelationships. It is ours, for some time yet, to observe and deduce, with the hope that some day we may speak with a greater degree of certainty regarding matters which, as yet, are largely undecided.

There is one lesson that many of our number have yet to learn, although it has been so often repeated, viz., that we must look at all forms of insanity through the physical medium. We must remember that the abnormal psychic manifestations, called insanity, depend upon some physical or chemical change in the elements of the nervous system,