

ARTIFICIAL NEURASTHENIA.

Dr. Von Pelizarva describes a condition which he has observed to come on in a patient undergoing the water treatment at mineral springs and to which he has applied the name of artificial neurasthenia. This condition has frequently been described as bath or spring fever, but the author of the present article says that it is undoubtedly a form of nervous disturbance resulting from the indiscriminate use of the bath and drinking of the mineral waters.

It is well known that there is a great difference in individual ability to react from certain shocks. At one time reaction from a cold bath would be prompt, at another there will be distinct loss of control of the will, shrinking and so forth, followed by depression and weakness. When such results obtain and the baths are persisted in the process will undoubtedly cause a lessening of the resisting power of the nervous system. When it is remembered how great is the number of people ordered to the baths by physicians and how many go on their own account and take a regular course of treatment, in spite of the discomfort it may cause, it is not to be wondered at that patients return with neurasthenia or an exhaustive neurosis. The condition is soon established and it is for this reason that the author urges upon medical advisers sending patients to the springs, and also upon the physicians attending there, greater care in the selection of cases destined to undergo regular treatment. Due to the lack of the necessary foresight in this regard, Carlsbad, Marienbad and Kissingen are prominent sites for the promotion of this form of nervous artificial neurasthenia. The original article treating on this subject appeared in the "*D. med. Woch.*," 27-91 and the abstract in the "*D. med. Z.*," August 18th. B. M.

TREATMENT OF POLYNEURITIS.

In an able article on Polyneuritis, published in "*Anales del Circulo Medico Argentino*" for May, 1891, Dr. Julio Mendez, of Buenos Aires, advises the following treatment:

At the outset, when fever is present, the author gives the salicylate of soda, which, in many cases, diminishes the temperature and allays the pain. For controlling the pain, hypodermic injections of morphia, phenic acid, etc., are recommended, or opium and other narcotics internally. Chloroform and other liniments are applied to the skin. Internally, the iodide of potash, with tonics and a nutritious

diet, is strongly urged. Warm baths, vapor and sulphur baths—along with massage and electricity, may be applied after disappearance of the hyperæsthesia. W. C. K.

TREATMENT OF ASTHMA.

Dr. Benjamin D. Martinez formulates the treatment of Asthma (*Anales del Circulo Medico Argentino*; Tomo xiv., page 351) as follows:

"During the attack the first indication is to calm the nervous action and for this I prescribe antispasmodics, in combination with anæsthetics, sometimes giving small doses of pilocarpin to relieve the bronchial exudation. After the attack I administer the iodide of potash along with lobelia. Of the former I begin with small doses, gradually increasing, taken in milk; of the latter, begin with five centigrams daily and increase to fifteen centigrams daily, in pill form." With this mode of treatment the author claims to have had excellent success in nine cases treated within a year, lessening the severity of the attack and in prolonging the interval between attacks. W. C. K.

HYPNOTIC ACTION OF URETHANE, SULPHONAL AND PARALDEHYDE.

From a study of twenty-six cases by T. Sidney Short, M.D., the following summary is made. Age or sex does not in any way affect the action of these drugs. They have little effect on sleeplessness due to pain. Five out of seven cases of heart disease were greatly relieved. In bronchitis with cardiac failure, they gave good or fair nights and will probably prove most useful in this class where opium is contra-indicated. In convalescence after pneumonia and enteric fever all these drugs proved of great service and after the first good sleep no further dose was required, the bad habit of not sleeping apparently being broken. Both urethane and paraldehyde have probably a more rapid action than sulphonal, although on five occasions sulphonal in 3ss doses produced sleep in fifteen minutes. On two occasions, however, sleep did not ensue for six or seven hours and in several cases the sleep seemed better the night after, than on the occasion of the first dose, even when only one was given. If the patient had been talking much in disturbed sleep for several nights before giving the drug, the sleep following seemed more likely to be accompanied by occasional wandering, than when given for complete absence of sleep.