

catarrh; for the tympanum being drawn inwards, and the hammer turning on its long axis, this band of fibres is stretched, and becomes visible as a yellowish white line coming from the posterior upper wall and passing forwards and downwards towards the small process of the hammer. The fibres which serve to fasten the tympanic cartilage are often visible as yellowish white lines running downwards and backwards nearly to the middle of the tympanum; these were formerly considered to be the outer edges of the different parts of the hammer. It is not infrequent to see the edges of the niche of the fenestra rotunda as a grayish spot on the tympanum, and, if that membrane is very transparent, the descending process of the incus appears as a white line behind the handle. Occasionally the union of the incus with the head of the stapes is to be seen, and very seldom indeed one side of the stapes. The anterior and posterior folds of the tympanum, first described by Dr. Gruber as an important diagnostic point in the drawing inwards of the membrane in catarrh, run forwards and backwards from the small process of the hammer, and become more developed the greater the prominence of the small process. They are formed in a perfectly natural way by the small process pressing the expanded membrane before it, as would be the case in pressing at any one point on a tissue tensely stretched. If the small process is very prominent, a superior fold also is formed, and it is by no means unusual to see all three on the same tympanum.

Only by an exact knowledge of the minute anatomy can the appearances found in disease be explained, and Dr. Gruber, in these recent "studies," has already cleared away much that was misty in aural surgery.

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TREATMENT OF NASAL CATARRH.

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THE treatment of catarrh has been heretofore so generally a matter of temporizing that our medical bank in this respect is nearly bankrupt of ideas or facts. Undoubtedly this condition results from the unwillingness of patients to submit to means necessary for a radical cure, so long as they can get relief from "dry ups."

Recently, the introduction of the "nasal douche" has opened anew the field of investigation, and with hopeful prospects of adding to our knowledge of the treatment, and perhaps to the pathology, of the disease. My observations, while using the douche the past year, lead me to believe that the factor attending catarrh, and often its continuance, depends upon the retention of decomposed and dried

mucus and pus in some of the fossæ of the nose or pharynx. The following case is selected for illustration.

Mrs. P., aged about 25 years, married, four months pregnant, primipara, commenced treatment for catarrh March 1st, 1866.

History.—Catarrh commenced in infancy; fœtor often so offensive as to exclude her from society; discharges from the nose and throat very profuse.

Present Condition.—Pharynx, velum and palate uniformly congested; discharges of variable colors—green, yellow, white and bloody—and quite offensive to smell; also of dry scales, varying in size from a few lines to an inch in diameter, and two or three lines in thickness, of a greenish-gray color. These scales were dry upon one surface and moist upon the other, with purulent matter. When these scales came off by “hawking,” they would get into the pharynx, and often produce vomiting.

At first, I commenced the use of the douche, with an ounce of the chloride of sodium in a pint of warm water, washing the nose out once in four days, but after a few sittings the interval was shortened to one day. The patient occasionally omitted the douche a week, and at one time nearly three weeks. Sometimes, as much as a gallon of the salt solution was carried through the nose, and even then it would occasionally fail to remove the dry scales; but generally they were ejected by the patient within an hour after using the douche. Ammonia muriat., gr. viij. to a pint of the salt solution, was added during the later days of treatment.

Shortly after treatment commenced, improvement was manifest; the moist secretion changing from green to yellow, and then white, and lessening in quantity. The dry scales diminished in size and consistence, and became lighter in color, until they ceased wholly. May 26th, nearly three months after the douche was first used, the patient declared herself well, and was discharged. Since that time, with the exception of attacks of acute catarrh, which the douche immediately controls, she has had no further trouble.

I think it reasonable to infer that pregnancy in this case favored constitutional changes in the system necessary or conducive to recovery, but I do not believe that the dry scales would have come away rapidly enough to admit of healing of the surface from which they were cast off unless the douche had been employed.

I have used the douche with the salt solution, to which from five to ten drops of tincture of capsicum were added, in acute catarrh; and when within twelve hours from the commencement of the attack, it has been uniformly successful, either in promptly arresting the disease or greatly modifying it. Warm new milk is a pleasant substitute for salt, and more soothing. When the fœtor is troublesome, I have added from five to twenty grains of permanganate of potash to the salt solution; and Dr. G. L. Stebbins, of this city, informs me that he uses Labarraque's solution with good success in such cases.

In some cases, where there is a flabby condition of the mucous membrane, bitter tonics, particularly "muriate of hydrastia," seem to assist in improving the symptoms better than astringents. In all instances, the constitutional treatment of my cases has been such as the patient seemed to need, without reference to the catarrh.

In obstinate cases, I have used the vapor bath and the wet sheet with success; and in a few cases emetics, with prolonged nausea, and hot foot-baths, which seemed to start the patient towards recovery, who before their use remained at a certain stage a long time without change.

In some cases the throat syringe is essential to remove the scales and mucus from the Eustachian tube and the deep fossæ above it in the pharynx. In a few instances of this character, in cases of catarrh of the tympanum, hearing has been improved from one to twenty inches at one sitting.

In cases of congestive retinitis, where the ophthalmoscope shows the membrane like fine pink velvet upon which a mixture of milk and water had fallen, attended with photophobia and complicated with sclerotico-choroiditis posterior, I have had all the symptoms and signs, except the myopia, change for the better at once; and so great was the benefit in these cases that I use the douche in all catarrhal inflammations of the eye or the lachrymal apparatus.

In some cases of catarrh where the mucous tissue is greatly thickened, where the turbinated bones are changed in character, where ulceration has become a habit, it requires faith and perseverance to succeed; but my experience warrants me in saying to the profession, that but few cases are incurable, if physician and patient will as carefully and persistently continue the means as they do in cases of ordinary acute diseases. It needs faith to infuse enthusiasm in your patient, and without it one will have 'dull work and very likely a failure.

Bibliographical Notices.

Watson Abridged: a Synopsis of the Lectures on the Principles and Practice of Physic, delivered at King's College, London, by THOMAS WATSON, M.D., Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, late Physician of Middlesex Hospital, &c. Abridged from the last English Edition. With valuable Additions, by J. J. MEYLER, A.M., M.D. Philadelphia: published by the Author.

THE character of this little volume is best given in the author's own words:—"The principal object," he says, "that induced the making of this abridgment was to afford young practitioners, who are often at a loss what to do on their first 'sick call,' and country and other physicians, whose numerous professional duties prevent them from consulting more extended works, a convenient and expeditious means