

THE BINIODIDE OF MERCURY IN DIPHTHERIA.

Dr. C. R. ILLINGWORTH writes: Dr. Watson, in addition to applying the biniodide locally, should have used it internally, and I think he would then have cured his patient much more rapidly.

As it is only quite recently that I have used the biniodide locally, I cannot speak from experience of its use in diphtheria, but only in scarlatina. Of its value when given internally for diphtheria, however, I have had sufficient proof; and I notice that Dr. Ackley, of New York, confirms my report in the *Medical Record* of a few months ago. I prescribe as follows: R Sol. hydrarg. b. chlor., 5vj; potass. iodd. vel sodii ioddid., 3ss; aq. menth. pip. et syrup., ad. 5vj. Misce et solve. S. Cap. semiunciam secundis horis. I give iron and chlorate of potash when the throat is clear of exudation; but if the vital powers be at a very low ebb, I see no objection to the giving of the biniodide of mercury, with a slight excess of iodide of sodium or potassium, every two hours, alternating with a dose of iron every two hours. The disease could thus be combated and the system fortified at one and the same time. This plan was suggested to me by Dr. Ringwood, of Kells, who has adopted it in his treatment of scarlet fever with marked success.

The amount of the biniodide which is precipitated from the ordinary solution of the bichloride of mercury is so small that I would advise a solution of double strength to be used for the purpose—a solution, that is, of one grain to the ounce. Two ounces of this solution would, of course, then require about two grains of iodide of sodium for the precipitation of the biniodide for purposes of local application.

FOREIGN DEGREES.

BRUSSELS writes: I do not think I am unnecessarily severe on the Editors of the *Medical Directory*, as your correspondent "M.D. Brux., M.R.C.P. Lond.," says. I was not a little astonished at being told by them that the mere production of a diploma was no evidence; whereas the diploma itself states that the graduate has undergone the necessary *épreuves*, and is signed by the officers of the University and by twelve professors of the Faculty of Medicine, whose signatures are all verified by the Chief Magistrate; that of the latter, again, by the Minister of Foreign Affairs; and his, finally, by the British Consul at Brussels. Foreign diplomas may vary in their wording, but that of Brussels is unequivocal; and I think the Editors of the *Directory* committed a breach of tact and good manners in mistrusting that, as well as in demanding the certificate of his own veracity from the graduate himself, and in disqualifying as referees those holding foreign diplomas.

I agree with "M.D. Brux., M.R.C.P. Lond.," that the Editors should do all in their power to ensure accuracy, but contend that the diploma in question is evidence in itself, and that if they want to be assured of the truth of the graduate's own statements, it is not to him that they should apply, but to any registered practitioners whom he may appoint as referees. I consider this the "fair play" which your correspondent wishes to see, and not the humiliation which the present regulation implies.

OPERATIONS ON THE FOOT VIEWED FROM A MECHANICAL STANDPOINT.

MESSRS. M. MASTERS AND SONS (New Kent Road) write: Brigade-Surgeon Godwin's paper on the above subject—which appeared in the *JOURNAL* of September 17th—appears to us to have initiated a valuable and much-needed inquiry. As the writer based his remarks mainly upon a quotation from Mr. Bigg's work, we purposely avoided taking part in the discussion until the latter gentleman had had an opportunity of replying. Permit us to say that we endorse every word of Mr. Bigg's letter, and our opinions are the result of a practical experience extending over nearly half a century.

Brigade-Surgeon Godwin is in error, however, in saying that the mechanician would tell a patient who has undergone Hey's or Chopart's operation that "he cannot give him an artificial foot." We have fitted useful feet to hundreds of such cases, and are now fitting a case of double amputation—both Chopart's.

To our minds, the principal advantages of Syme's operation are: (1) the bearing is just as good as the others; and (2) a good joint can be inserted without making the appliance so bulky and cumbersome as is unavoidable in all cases of Chopart's or Hey's.

One other point in Brigade-Surgeon Godwin's paper requires comment. He appears to think the expense of an appliance too great for any but the wealthy to bear. We have made many hundreds of a cheap foot which is extensively worn by the poorest of the working classes, and we certainly think from our own experience that this objection is groundless. For the very poor there are so many charities founded for the purpose of providing these articles, that none need go without; and where the mechanism is simple and materials good, the cost of keeping in repair is almost nil.

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BOOKS, ETC., RECEIVED.

- Illustrations of Clinical Surgery. By Jonathan Hutchinson, F.R.S., LL.D. Fasciculus xx. London: J. and A. Churchill. 1887.
- The Marriage of Near Kin. By A. H. Huth. Second Edition. Revised. London: Longmans, Green and Co. 1887.
- Letters from Crete: Written during the Spring of 1886. By C. Edwardes. London: R. Bentley and Son. 1887.
- The Life and Recollections of Dr. Duguid of Kilwinning. Edited by John Service, L.R.C.S. and P. Ed. Edinburgh: Y. J. Pentland. 1887.
- Manual of Treatment by Massage and Methodical Muscle Exercise. By J. Schreiber, M.D. Translated by Walter Mendelson, M.D. Illustrated. Edinburgh: Y. J. Pentland. 1887.
- Medical Electricity. By R. Bartholow, A.M., M.D., LL.D. Third Edition. Illustrated. Edinburgh: Y. J. Pentland. 1887.
- Impotence and Sterility, and Allied Disorders of the Male Sexual Organs. By S. W. Gross, A.M., M.D., LL.D. Third Edition. Illustrated. Edinburgh: Y. J. Pentland. 1887.
- A Compend of Human Anatomy. By S. O. L. Potter, M.A., M.D. Fourth Edition. Edinburgh: Y. J. Pentland. 1887.
- Practical Lessons in Nursing: Outlines for the Management of Diet. By E. T. Bruen. Maternity, Infancy, and Childhood. By J. M. Keating, M.D. The Nursing and Care of the Nervous and Insane. By C. K. Mills, M.D. Edinburgh: Y. J. Pentland. 1887.
- The Student's Handbook of Chemistry. By H. L. Greville, F.I.C., F.C.S. Second Edition. Edinburgh: E. and S. Livingstone. 1887.
- The American System of Gynecology and Obstetrics. Edited by Matthew D. Mann. Vol. I. Edinburgh: Y. J. Pentland. 1887.
- Medical Diagnosis (Third Edition). By Graham Brown. London: Bell and Bradfute. 1887.

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