

FAINTNESS AND ITS CAUSES.

Faintness consists in a temporary failure of the activity of the heart; the blood, in consequence, is not properly circulated. It does not reach the head, and the patient loses clearness of vision and color, and, if not prevented, falls to the floor, where, however, or even before reaching it, he recovers. There is no convulsion, and, though he can scarcely be said to be conscious, he is not profoundly unconscious, so as not to be able to be aroused, as happens in epilepsy.

There are all degrees of faintness, from merely feeling faint and looking slightly pale, to the state we have described; and in some cases the state of fainting is hardly recovered from well before it recurs again and again, for hours and days together. We need hardly say that such cases as the latter are altogether beyond the reach of domestic medicine. What are the causes of faintness? It is not very difficult to describe these. Some people are so easily affected that they faint if they cut their finger, or even if they only see the cut finger of another person. All one can say of such persons is that their muscular fiber is not strong and that their nerves are sensitive. The heart, which goes on for years circulating the blood, is essentially a muscle. It is weak in some people, stronger in others. As a rule it is weaker in women and stronger in men. Hence women faint more rapidly than men. Whatever weakens the heart and the muscles generally acts as a cause of faintness. Close, foul air is a common cause of faintness or of languidness. Anything which greatly affects the nervous system, such as bad news or the sight of something horrible or disagreeable, will sometimes cause fainting.

But of all causes of faintness, none are so serious as the loss of blood. The muscles, in order to act well, must be supplied with blood, and if the blood of the body is lost—if it escapes, either from a vein opened purposely, or from piles, or from the source from which menstruation proceeds—in excessive quantity, then faintness will happen. The degree of it will depend on the constitution and on the amount of blood lost. A loss of blood that would scarcely be felt by one person will be serious cause of faintness to another. Sometimes frequent faintness arises from becoming very fat, the muscular system of the heart being impaired by fatty deposit.—*Cassell's Household Guide.*

A REMEDY FOR WHOOPING COUGH.—Dr. Garth (*Wiener Allgem.*) states that by placing xx. gtt. ol. terebinth. on a handkerchief, holding it before the face, and taking about 40 deep inspirations, to be repeated thrice daily, signal and marked relief, followed by rapid cure in cases of laryngeal catarrh, is the result. In an infant 15 months old, in the convulsive stage of whooping cough, he directed the mother to hold a cloth, moistened as above, before it when awake, and to drop the oil upon its pillow when asleep. The result was markedly beneficial. In 24 hours the frequency and severity of the attacks were notably diminished, and by proper support by aid of stimulants, the improvement was rapid. Subsequently pertussis became epidemic in his vicinity, and he repeatedly used the drug in this way. He gave it to children of all ages, and in any stage of fever. The initial catarrh, the convulsive, and the final catarrhal stages were all decidedly benefited, the spasmodic attacks being in many cases aborted.

FEATHERS IN TEXTILES.—According to the *Paris Figaro*, the shops will soon have the new textiles in feathers and wool and cotton on sale. This is an invention of M. Bourguignon, of Donchery, who has found how to weave feathers (deprived of the horny substance) and incorporate them with woolen and cotton yarns in proportions varying from 10% to 75%. Some very fine textiles are thus made, and especially a flannel which for warmth and lightness is unapproachable.

CONSUMPTION OF RUBBER.—The consumption of rubber by our manufacturers continues as large as ever, imports amounting to about 12,000,000 pounds per annum, chiefly from South America. The price ranges from 20 to 50 cents per pound, the cheaper grades coming from Africa and the finest from the valley of the Amazon, where the trees producing it abound over a vast region, one-half of the entire yield going to the United States. The consumption in the manufacture of shoes equals the demand for all other purposes. In the manufacture of rubber from 3% to 10% of sulphur, and various metallic oxides—chiefly lead and zinc—are combined with it; the quantity of the latter depending on the degree of elasticity and other properties required in the article to be manufactured; and to judiciously combine these substances with the rubber in suitable proportions to produce the desired end, as well as in properly vulcanizing it afterwards, requires great experience and skill. A certain degree of honesty on the part of the manufacturer is also essential to abstain from introducing mere adulterating substances into his "compounds," and thus cheapen the product at the expense of its quality.

FRESHLY PAINTED ROOMS.—The impression that those who inhabit rooms freshly painted are in danger of lead poisoning has been shown by Dr. Clement Biddle to be quite unfounded. He bases this statement upon the result of the following experiment: He introduced into a close box a number of sheets of paper saturated with white (lead) paint, and upon the bottom of the box placed a shallow dish of pure (distilled) water, previously tested to make sure of its perfect freedom from impurities, and from lead in particular. After an exposure to the atmosphere of the box for three days, the water-dish was removed, acidulated with nitric acid, and treated with sulphureted hydrogen, when not a trace of lead precipitate occurred. Dr. Biddle therefore attributes the colds and other unpleasant consequences experienced by sleeping in freshly-painted apartments to the irritating action of the vapors of turpentine on the lining membrane of the air-passages.

THE ODOR OF HUMAN HAIR.—In *Le Progrès Medical*, M. Galippe calls attention to the medico-legal value of the odor of the human hair. He asserts that from the simple smell of a lock of hair he can tell whether the lock has been cut from the living subject or whether it has been composed of hair that has fallen out. Hair-dressers have acquired this art, which is said never to fail them. Hair which has fallen out has a dull appearance, attributable to disease, and is not easily made up; it has no peculiar smell. The hair of the Chinese has a characteristic odor of musk, which is so persistent that it cannot be concealed by cosmetics, for it cannot be destroyed by washing with potash. The hair of the Chinese has also a reddish tinge, and is polyhedral in section. Hair of hysterical patients has a peculiar and distinguishing odor which is most perceptible at the approach of a crisis. Certain hair is electrical, the electricity being developed more readily after rubbing.

GLYCERINE IN FOOD.—Catillon, a French physiologist, found that the addition of from seven to eight grains of glycerine to the daily ration of a lot of Guinea pigs increased the effect of their food so that they gained from one-tenth to one-fifth of their weight in a given time, while a second lot fed on the same ration, but without glycerine, gained nothing; when the dose of glycerine was changed to the second lot they gained in weight, and the first lot gained nothing. Large doses of glycerine, however, cause derangement of the digestive organs.

TO MAKE A MUSTARD POUFTICE.—In making a mustard plaster use no water, but mix the mustard with white of egg, and the result will be a plaster which will draw perfectly, but will not produce a blister, no matter how long it is allowed to remain.

USES FOR BUTTERMILK.

Buttermilk Cheese.—Loppered milk is generally used for this purpose, but it is much better and richer made of fresh buttermilk, with only one-third sour milk. It should be placed in a large tin pan or thoroughly cleaned brass kettle, over a slow fire, and allowed to remain there until the curd has separated from the whey. If the fire is too hot, so that the buttermilk is scalded, the curd will be a disagreeable, stringy mass. Set a tin colander on the top of a pail, spread a coarse linen towel over it, and into that dip the curd. Let the curd remain in the colander until the whey only drips from it, then tie the corners of the towel together and hang up for several hours, or until the whey is well drained out. Then turn it into a pan, and with the hands work in a small quantity of salt, a piece of butter, and also a little cream, if the cheese is to be eaten fresh, as most Yankee palates prefer. But if to be kept until strong and rancid to both taste and smell, the cream must be omitted. Make into nice, firm balls, the size of a good apple, and cut in slices for the table.

Buttermilk Pop.—Boil one quart of fresh buttermilk. Beat one egg, a pinch of salt, and a heaping teaspoonful of flour together, and pour into the boiling milk. Stir briskly and boil for two or three minutes, and serve while warm with sugar, or, still better, maple syrup. Although this is an old-fashioned and homely dish, eaten and relished by our grandparents before corn starch, sea-moat farina, desiccated cocoanut and other similar delicacies were even heard of, it is perhaps as nutritious as any of them, and often far more easily obtained.

Its Hygienic Properties.—As the butter which is taken from the milk is only the carbonaceous or heat-producing element, there are still left in it all the nourishing properties which make it so valuable as food. As a drink for men at work in the hot sun, buttermilk is far preferable to cider, methueghin, switchel, or any preparation of beer whatever, as it is not only cooling and refreshing, but also strength-giving. Of course there are plenty of people who are constantly dosing themselves with blood-searchers, liver purifiers and stomach invigorators, who would laugh at the mention of buttermilk as a medicine, and yet if they could be once persuaded to try drinking a glass of that fresh beverage every day, they would soon find it a corrective of their poor appetites and "clogged-up" livers. In a little book of Plain Directions for the Care of the Sick, written by an intelligent physician of Philadelphia, who has under his medical supervision several charitable institutions, we find buttermilk mentioned as being very useful, especially in fevers, as an article of diet for the sick.

A VARNISH FOR REPLACING TURPENTINE AND LINED OIL PAINTS.—Fr. Thies, of Bismarck, prepares a varnish consisting of 100 parts of colophonium, 20 parts of crystallized carbonate of sodium, and 50 parts of water, by heating these substances together and mixing them with a solution of 24 parts of strong liquor of ammonia in 250 parts of water. With the mass thus obtained, the pigments are levigated without the addition of linseed oil or turpentine; the paint dries readily without the aid of a drier, and looks very well especially when varnished. The paint keeps well even under water and becomes very hard. The cost is said to amount to about one-third of that of ordinary oil paints.—*Deutsche Gewerbe Zeitung.*

PURIFYING OIL OF COGNAC.—The beautiful green color so often met with in the oil of cognac, imported from Europe, is generally derived from an appreciable quantity of copper, which, of course, must render the liquor made from it highly injurious. To purify the oil heat it to about 114° F., and shake with one-tenth of its volume or a saturated solution of tartaric acid. Set aside for one-half hour and filter.