tissue in the heart; and in this case there was no doubt irritability of the heart, and that it was liable to suffer from the action of ergot. In a similar case again occurring, I would combine some special stimulant with the ergot, in the hope of averting any similar evil consequences. Generally when ergot is given in repeated doses it causes sickness, and the stomach rejects a quantity of ergot which, if it be retained, might affect the maternal circulation. In this case no sickness took place, which may, perhaps, account for its effect on the system of the mother. The lesson to be taken is that, we should prescribe ergot with great care in cases where the circulation is weak or irritable.

A second case took place soon afterwards. A lady, mother of six children, summoned my assistance for uterine hæmorrhage. She was not aware she was pregnant, but circumstances pointed out that she might be so, and of six weeks' standing. Liquid extract of ergot was given, icebags applied, and cold water injections to rectum and vagina; the other usual injunctions were given, but little benefit resulted; considerable hæmorrhage took place still, and this began to tell on the patient; giddiness, palpitation, etc., appeared. I then gave ergot in infusion fresh made; this proved powerfully styptic for the hæmorrhage, but my patient suffered most violent palpitations, tightness in chest, and feeling of suffocation. When the palpitation ceased, the pulse-beat was 55 per minute, and the feet and hands were very cold, and the patient said there was considerable loss of power in the lower extremity. I am forced to think that the ergot acted on the maternal circulation, and so hampered its movements that the force of the circulation was much less than it should have been.

KOUMISS, BLANDA, SYRE, SIGRE, OR AIREN.

By JAMES T. GEORGE, M.R.C.S.E., Keith, Banffshire.

FOR upwards of twenty years I have used as a restorative medicine the vinous liquor procured by the fermentation of cow's milk, and although a liquor has been for some ages employed by several tribes of Tartars, as procured from the fermentation of mare's milk, it was with difficulty I could learn the particulars of the mode of preparing it. The books which I consulted, which were various, gave me little satisfaction concerning it. All writers say it is a vinous liquor obtained by the fermentation of milk, but none describe the mode of preparing it, or the purposes in medicine to which it is applicable. M. Paulus Venetus, in a work published in the thirteenth century, only mentions it to be a common beverage among the Tartars. Another writer on the Russian Empire gives a formula, which, if followed, could not be attended with success; for he mentions that the Kalmucks take off the thick substance, which, when sour, rises to the top of the milk, and employ this in food, and the remaining liquor is drank. But should any part of the milk be taken away no fermentation will or can take place; all the parts of the milk must be left in their natural proportion. The method which I have adopted in my own practice with success, and which was communicated to me by a Russian gentleman, is as follows.

Take of newly-drawn milk any quantity; add to it a little water, and pour the mixture into any vessel. Use as a ferment an eighth part of the sourest cow's milk that can be got—but at any future preparation a small portion of old koumiss will better answer the purpose. Cover the vessel with a thick cloth, and set it in a place of moderate warmth. Leave it at rest twenty-four hours, at the end of which time the milk will have become sour, and a thick substance will gather on the top; then with a stick, made at the lower end like a churn staff, beat it until the thick substance be thoroughly blended with the subjacent fluid. Leave it again at rest for some time; repeat the beating, after which pour it into a narrow vessel like a churn, agitate the liquor until it be perfectly homogeneous. In this state it is called *airen*.

Its taste, if properly prepared, ought to be a pleasant mixture of sweet and sour (agitation must be employed every time before use). When it is necessary to have it quickly made, heat the milk before applying the sour milk, and agitate every hour or half hour. By doing this it is obtained in twelve hours. If well secured in close vessels, and in a cool place, it can be kept a long time without injury to its qualities. There appear to be three things necessary to the vinous fermentation of milk; heat, souring, and agitation, the chief being agitation. In fermenting vegetable juices nature is sufficient to keep the parts of the fluid in mutual action, while milk is no sooner soured than a separation of its parts takes place; the cream rises to the top, while the cheese either falls to the bottom, or is suspended in the whey. When these parts are brought into close contact with one another by agitation, frequently repeated, a vinous liquor is produced, which, in my practice, I have found highly beneficial as a dietetic, and of considerable virtue as a medicine.

In cases of general debility I have given it largely, with essential service, as a nutritive. W. G., aged 26, was sent to this place from Edinburgh for change of air. He had been under a mercurial course for a venereal affection, which left him in a very weak state. He was much emaciated; his face of a leaden hue; his eyes sunken; he had slight cough, with expectoration of toughish phlegm; his appetite was impaired, and he was feverish toward night. On using the wine for about two months he got perfectly well and fat. He drank daily two quarts with a relish, and without any intoxicating effect. During the time he was under the medicine he required no purgative, and it seemed to act as a diuretic. I have found it of great use in typhoid fever, the patients using it for meat and drink. In a few cases no other remedy was used, young and old taking it. In nervous, dyspeptic, and hypochondriac subjects, its use for some time has a powerful restorative effect, giving flesh and strength. Invalids, not only without disgust, but with a sort of pleasure, drink it in large quantities, and, even when they do so, without headache or other unpleasant feelings, which the abuse of other fermented liquors produces. As stated, I have used it in various complaints with success, above my most sanguine expectations; and, in pulmonary consumption, when cod-liver oil cannot be taken, I have found it (but at the same time using whisked cream) equally, if not more efficacious, in relieving cough and giving plumpness to the body. From its mild acid, its vinous spirit, and its oily qualities, I consider it to be a cooling antiseptic, a mild stimulant and tonic, and a valuable nutrient. In acute diseases, with marks of weakness and putridity, in cases of excessive irritability, in dyspepsia, in phthisis, and in hectic, from ulceration or suppuration.

I again repeat, that all that is necessary for its preparation is, after it is sour, frequent agitation. No spirit can be produced from any one of the constituent parts of milk taken separately, nor any two of them unless mixed with the third. The closer it is kept the more spirit is obtained. If made in a glass vessel, that is to say if it undergo fermentation in it, it must not be more than two-thirds filled in case the bottles burst. When it is bottled for keeping any time, the bottles must not be full, and the corks must be fastened as in lemonade bottles.

ON UTERINE INFLAMMATION AND DEFECTIVE INVOLUTION OF THE SEXUAL ORGANS SUBSEQUENT TO THE CHANGE OF LIFE.*

By EDWARD JOHN TILT, M.D.

MY having written a work on diseases of women at the change of life enables me to affirm that one kind of uterine inflammation is much more frequently met with after the menopause than medical men are aware of. It is our own fault if we have remained ignorant of this fact; inasmuch as we have deprived ourselves of the opportunity of ascertaining it, by carefully dinning into our patients' ears that the change of life would bring with it a complete immunity from uterine disease which has been the torment of their lives, the result of this has been, that many women do not seek advice, when, after the menopause, a considerable amount of pelvic heat, pain, and muco-purulent vaginal discharge, denote inflammation of the vagina and cervical mucous membrane; and only consult us when these symptoms are very acute, and have thoroughly interfered with the duties of life.

In only two cases I have seen a severe attack of inflammation of the cervical mucous membrane to occur after the menopause in women who had *never* previously suffered from uterine inflammation. So I admit that, as a rule, we are fully justified in telling women who *have* never suffered before the menopause, that it will effectually bar the occurrence of congestion and inflammatory diseases of the womb, because, when healthy, the sexual organs then become subject to a process of physiological involution which gradually hardens the ovaries and the womb, diminishes their size, and contracts the vagina, unless matrimonial habits be kept up.

This process of physiological atrophy, which is the rule for healthy sexual organs, no longer holds good for the sexual organs that are still diseased at the menopause. If there be a small fibroid in the substance of the uterine walls, or a little polypus inside its cavity, or if what is much more frequently observed, the cervix be hypertrophied on the seat of fibroid degeneration, the sexual organs may retain their acquired size for the next ten or fifteen years without making any attempt at physiological atrophy. So long as such is the case, women are liable to inflammation of the sexual mucous membranes, although

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