when a prophylactic measure is likely to be of use, and the evidence given before the Trevethin Committee on this point by different authorities was conflicting in the extreme. Individuals vary in their susceptibility to gonococcal infection, and for this reason it is advisable to wash out the urethra even although twenty-four or forty-eight hours have elapsed since exposure.

From the fact that irrigation is successful in safeguarding the patient in the great majority of cases, provided it is carried out within three to four hours of exposure, it may be surmised that the tissues are generally capable of dealing with the more rapid dissemination of organisms occurring through the lymphatics, for if this were not so prophylactic measures would be of little avail. But it is within the experience of most urologists that from time to time prophylactic measures fail, even although carried out within an hour of exposure. I can remember several instances in which the urethra was washed out immediately after exposure, either by a competent orderly or else by the patient himself, and yet gonorrhoea developed. It is possible that these failures of prophylaxis are to be explained by an inability of the patient's tissues to deal with the rapid lymphatic dissemination. The problem is complicated, however, for we know that not only do individuals vary in their resistance to the gonococcus, but also that different strains of the organism exist with different grades of virulence. The reaction of the tissues to these different strains varies, as is shown, not only by the acuteness of the attack that develops, but also by the length of the latent period.

It has been proved by experiment and by clinical practice alike that the ideal fluid for prophylactic irrigation is of a non-irritating nature with the maximum power of penetration. Could a bactericidal fluid be obtained which was capable of being absorbed to some extent by the lymphatics, it is possible that a still higher ratio of success might be achieved, and that the small percentage of cases in which prophylactic measures miscarry might be abolished. But before these ideals can be reached more research is necessary, and it is possible that the knowledge which will be of the greatest use will be that which throws light on the part played by the lymphatics in disease and in health.

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NYSTAGMUS IN AN INFANT.

BY

G. MACLEOD MILLAR, M.B., Ch.B.,

AND

JAMES ALEXANDER WILSON, O.B.E., M.D.,

CAMBUSLANG, GLASGOW.

THE following case has been under our observation for about two years and seems worth recording.

The patient is a child with paralysis of the third nerve and nystagmus. The mother has five children living, but she has also had two that were stillborn, and one that died shortly after birth. Several of her confinements have been "instrumental," the history of these suggesting some maternal malformation. When the patient was born instruments were again required, and soon after birth it was observed that "the right eye was too much closed." There was also a suggestion that the right side of the face was paralysed, but, if so, it soon passed away. It was further observed that the right eyeball diverged. At the end of two months the drooping of the right upper eyelid disappeared.

When first seen the child was 9 months old; there was no evidence of ptosis, but the reverse, for the lid was now unnaturally drawn up, exposing part of the sclerotic above the cornea. The right eye could only be closed imperfectly, and the child seldom closed it; even when in sleep the eye remained open. The right eyeball was still divergent; it could be moved up to, but not beyond, the middle line, and it could not be raised or lowered. The right pupil was dilated, and did not seem to react to light. Moreover, this eye had rotatory nystagmus. The left eye seemed normal, except that it also exhibited rotatory nystagmus.

A year later both upper eyelids seemed normal. The mother stated that the child now closed both eyes, but that the right

tended to open during sleep. The right eye was still divergent, but came in when the left was covered—not, however, beyond the middle line. The pupils were now equal. There was still rotatory nystagmus in both eyes, but the range was less. The child tended to turn the head to the left, as if endeavouring to use both eyes. The fundus in both eyes was normal.

A few months later the condition was much the same. When the child looked down, the right upper eyelid did not come so far down as the left.

Here, then, we have a lesion that in effect produces abeyance of function of the greater part of the higher area of the brain that controls the oculomotor apparatus of the right eye, and with this is associated nystagmus affecting both eyes. It is interesting to note that the paralysis of the levator palpebrae was replaced by spasm, thus resembling the cyclic affections of the third nerve.

Nystagmus occurring in a miner is not an entity by itself, and should not be considered in a detached manner. The neurasthenia that attends the later stages in the miner is in great measure fostered by the legal recognition of injury received and the elaborate provisions made for dealing with compensation.

Imperfect retinal images are common to all cases of nystagmus, or there is interruption of the transmission of these as afferent impulses. The miner straining to see while at work at the black and dark coal face has very imperfect images to guide his labours, while often the actual onset of the disorder is occasioned by a blow.

In the case here recorded there is interruption of the associated efferent impulses, with loss of some higher control. Nystagmus is sometimes associated with mental defect, and it is sometimes a terminal manifestation in exhausting diseases. In the background of all these there is probably loss or enfeeblement of the higher control, with consequent release phenomena.

SYMMETRICAL HYPERKERATOSIS OF THE
EXTREMITIES.

(? KERATODERMIA BLENNORRHAGICA.)

BY

J. BEATTY, M.D., M.R.C.P.,

MEDICAL OFFICER IN CHARGE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SKIN DISEASES,
ROYAL INFIRMARY, CARDIFF.

THE following case of symmetrical hyperkeratosis of the extremities is of interest because of its association with the gonococcus.

A married woman, aged 51, presented herself at the dermatological clinic of the Royal Infirmary, Cardiff, on October 16th, 1925. She stated that the condition started as a horny mass under the left great toe about a month previously and soon spread over the sole of the foot, simultaneously appearing on the sole of the right foot. There were soreness and burning sensations, and the mass of horny tissue caused pain on walking. Immediately previous to the attack her left ankle swelled and became painful; later, shortly before she came to the clinic, there were pain and swelling in the left knee.

On examination the soles of both feet, including the sides and backs, showed heaped masses of horny skin, broken here and there by cracks. At the points of the toes cornified matter projected for a quarter to half an inch, almost like horns. There was no exudation, and at one or two points where a portion of the mass had been detached the skin was pink, soft, and dry. In front of each knee there was a similar but less marked horny thickening in a well defined patch. There were also a few small patches of thickened epidermis on the left palm, but no rash of any kind elsewhere on the body. Her left knee was somewhat swollen, tender, and slightly reddened. Her left ankle was slightly swollen, but she made no complaint of pain. There was some general malaise.

I asked Dr. Eric Evans, in charge of the venereal disease clinic for women, to examine, and if necessary, treat her. Dr. Evans reported that on making a bimanual and other examination nothing abnormal was found, but that she had taken smears from the vagina, cervix, and urethra. On these Dr. Scholberg, pathologist to the Royal Infirmary, reported that gonococci were present in the films from the urethra and cervix, but not in that from the vagina. Dr. Evans then treated the case, giving trimine intramuscularly and rhubarb and soda mixture by the mouth.

By October 23rd the left knee was much improved, and the malaise relieved; there was still slight swelling of the left ankle. The urethra and cervix were treated with protargol, and contramine