

Note on Rumbold's method of treatment of catarrhal inflammations of the upper air passages / by Ely McClellan.

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NOTE ON

Rumbold's Method of Treatment
of Catarrhal Inflammations
of the Upper Air
Passages.

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1889.

RESEARCHES ON THE
PHYSICAL PROPERTIES
OF THE LIQUID AIR
PASSAGE

BY
J. M. M. M. M. M.

PH.D. THESIS

NOTE ON RUMBOLD'S METHOD OF
TREATMENT OF CATARRHAL IN-
FLAMMATIONS OF THE UPPER
AIR PASSAGES.

My note published in *THE JOURNAL* of August 18, has occasioned so many letters asking for further information as to the details of the method therein advocated, that I feel called upon to present a second paper on the subject in which the attempt will be made to detail each step in the procedure so plainly, that it will enable those who may wish to avail themselves of the method of treatment, to proceed in its practical administration without delay. As stated in my former paper, the method of treatment which is advocated, originated with and has been elaborated by Dr. Rumbold, whose experience in the treatment of the diseases of the throat, nose and ears dates back to 1855, and who has used vaseline since 1872.

The history of this therapeutic measure is as follows: In 1866, Dr. Rumbold obtained the glass spray producers of Maunder, to each of which a small bottle was attached as the receptacle for the fluids to be atomized. After some experience in their use, Dr. Rumbold commenced the manufacture of glass spray producers in his own office, and with his own hands produced the instrument in the shape in which it is now used.

In 1870 a specimen of cosmoline was placed in

his hands, and having at the time a patient in whose case great difficulty was had in removing inspissated mucus, the cosmoline at the point of liquefaction was exhibited by means of a glass spray producer, and the results obtained in this case led to the developement of the measure under consideration.

For many years vaseline has been recommended as an available application to inflamed mucous surface but so far as I am able to determine, Dr. Rumbold is the first investigator who devised means by which vaseline at the point of liquefaction can be thrown upon all the deep-seated surfaces of the nasal and pharyngo-nasal cavities. This therapeutic measure has stood the test of eighteen years practical experience, and has invariably yielded the anticipated results in all cases which were at all susceptible to improvement.

In my former paper I stated that this method was not fully recognized outside of the locality in which Dr. Rumbold resides. It was by no means intended to convey the impression that it had not been presented to the medical profession by its originator. Dr. Rumbold began the publication of his views in 1868. In 1872 they were presented to the St. Louis Medical Society. The volumes of the *St. Louis Medical and Surgical Journal* and the *Chicago Medical Journal and Examiner*, will be found to contain them. The first edition of his work was published in 1881. The second and enlarged edition was published in the present year. It is not intended in this paper to attempt any description of the many and valuable measures which Dr. Rumbold has devised in the treatment of diseases of the throat, nose and ears, but to confine myself to his method of treatment of what is commonly known as nasal catarrh, with a description of the necessary in-

struments, and an account of the method by which they should be used.

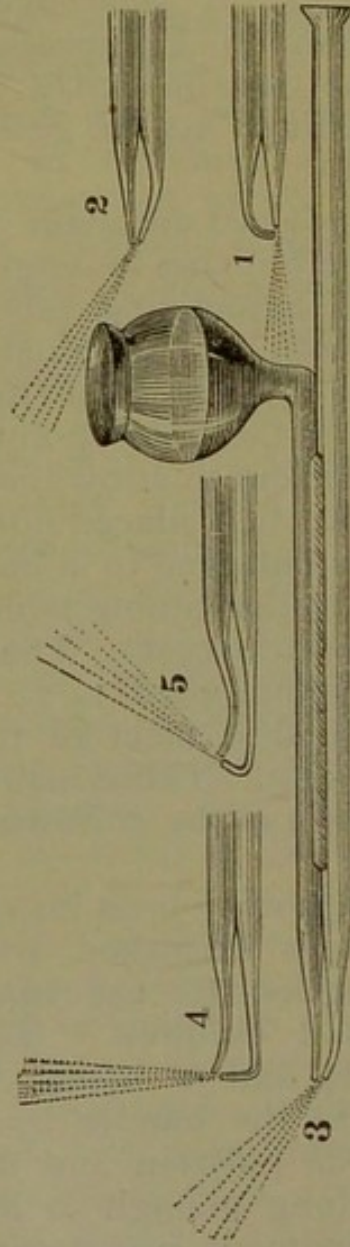
The essentials are as follows:

1. Four spray producers. 2. A tongue depressor. 3. A nasal speculum. 4. A pharyngeal mirror. 5. Suitable illumination. 6. Compressed air. 7. Means by which the vaseline may be melted. 8. Towels and napkins. 9. An active disinfecting solution.

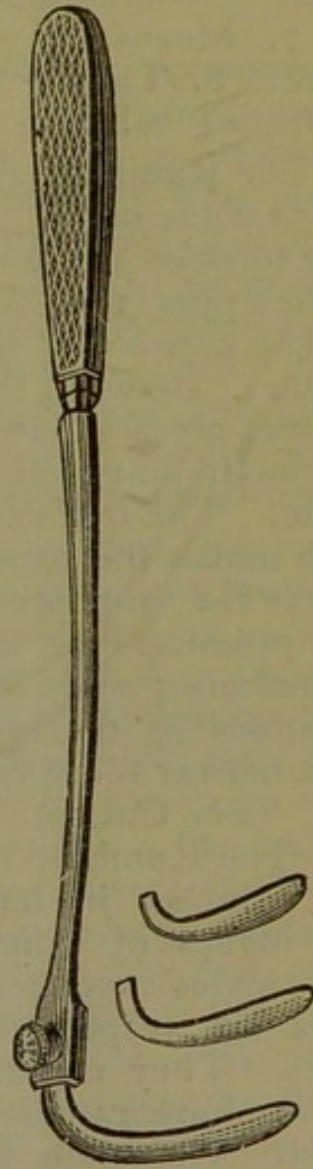
I. The Rumbold *spray producers* are made of glass or white metal. They are 8 inches in length, in the form of the well-known automizing tubes, but the upper tube is armed with and terminates in a cup capable of holding a drachm of melted vaseline. Between the cup and the spray points, the tubes are bent laterally sufficient to allow them to maintain an upright position when placed upon a table. The free extremity is enlarged to a bulb which makes the attachment to the tubing which conveys the compressed air more secure. These spray producers are arbitrarily numbered 1, 2, 4, 5; numbers 4 and 5 being found to meet all the indications of the original No. 3. These instruments deliver the spray as shown in the following plat: (See Cut 1.)

II. The Rumbold *tongue depressor* is an instrument 9 inches in length. It is furnished with three blades of different lengths, for use upon adult males and females and children. The blades are respectively 3, 2½ and 2 inches in length. They are attached to the handle by a screw and are rapidly placed in position and detached. The blade is only long enough to depress the base of the tongue, without occasioning gagging. This instrument should be held by the patient, whose hand will not interfere with the movements of the operator. (See Cut 2.)

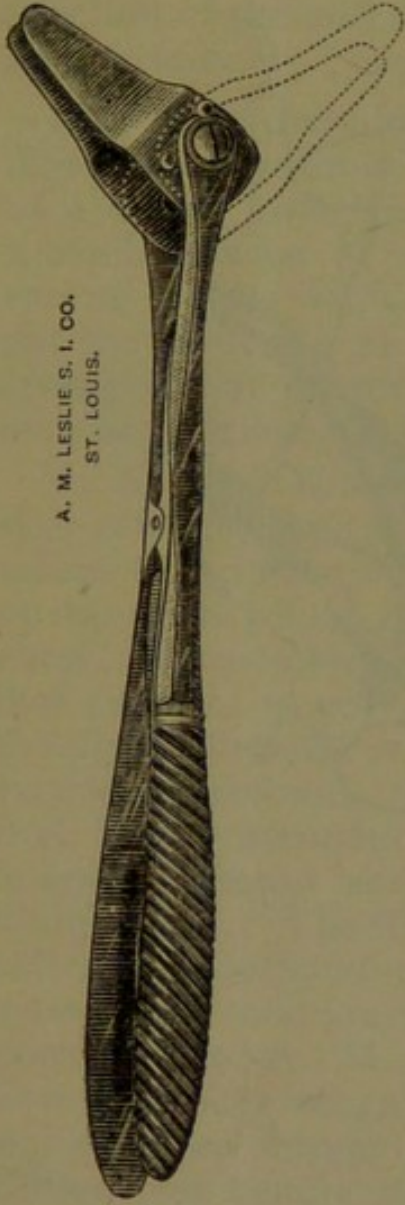
III. The Rumbold *nasal speculum* is a bi-valve



CUT No. 1.



CUT No. 2.

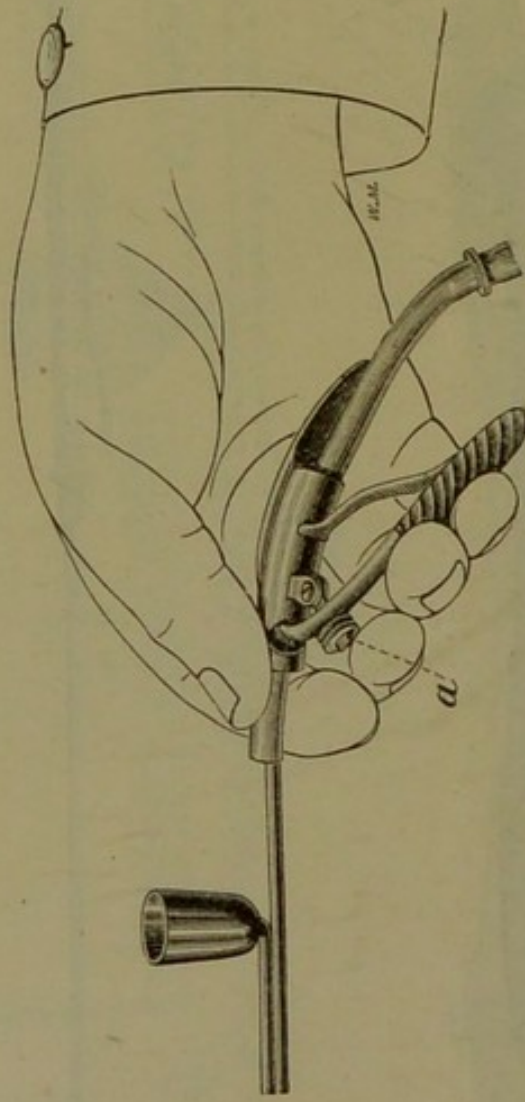


A. M. LESLIE S. I. CO.
ST. LOUIS.

CUT NO. 3.



CUT NO. 4.



CUT No. 5.

with a handle 8 inches in length. The blades are $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch long, and are so attached to the handle as to be readily reversible. The blades are flat and sufficiently wide to protect the membrane from contact with the hot instrument when a treatment is made. This instrument admits of free inspection of the anterior nares, and may be used in all operations. (See Cut 3.)

IV. The Rumbold *pharyngeal mirror* is a most ingenious instrument. The mirror is controlled by a spring upon the handle, by means of which it can be placed at and maintained in position of various angles without being removed and without the patient's knowledge. The holder is so arranged that mirrors of various sizes and shapes may be employed. (See Cut 4.)

V. *Suitable illumination*. Light from a clear sky, reflected by a concave mirror attached by means of an elastic band to the forehead of the operator, has been thought to be the best illuminator. Its use, however, is open to the objection that sunlight is not always attainable, and that the use of the mirror upon the forehead becomes exceeding irksome. It is therefore thought best that, in the treatment of this class of diseases, the operator should accustom himself to artificial illumination. The Tobold illuminator, applied to either a gas or coal oil burner, are the measures most in use and are very satisfactory in examinations. The A. M. Leslie Surgical Instrument Company have recently furnished me with a battery of three Turner cells which, by means of an Edison two candle power light, furnishes a perfectly satisfactory illumination. I do not know but what it is far more satisfactory than any other means at my command.

VI. *Compressed air*.—The simplest means of obtaining compressed air will be found in the soft

rubber hand bulb, now so constantly in use for all atomization. The use of this is, however, laborious and when many patients are to be treated, becomes tiresome. Dr. Rumbold has devised a most excellent apparatus for this purpose, which is far superior to others in use, by which the air is compressed by hydraulic pressure. It is, however, too elaborate except for the office of a specialist. Various forms of tanks for holding compressed air are on the market, the most valuable of them being, in my experience, the Standard Hygienic Air Compressor of the Leslie Company. This tank is furnished with a gage and cut-off, rendering the flow of the air absolutely within the control of the operator. I have used such a tank for some time and have found no cause of complaint in its action.

When a tank of compressed air is employed, it involves a necessity for an additional air "cut-off" by means of which the flow may be instantly arrested. The Rumbold *spray controller* answers this purpose perfectly. (See Cut 5.)

VII. *A heating apparatus.*—Where gas or lamps of any kind are employed for purposes of illumination, the agent for this purpose is constantly at hand. Where the natural light or the electric candle is employed, a small spirit lamp will be found to answer the purpose.

VIII. *Napkins and towels.*—Absolute cleanliness must be observed in this method of treatment. A small napkin should be used in all handling of instruments. It is also good form to furnish a clean handkerchief for the use of a patient. Vaseline is a rebellious substance when the attempt is made to remove it from fabrics, therefore care should be taken not to soil the clothing of patients. The soiled napkins and

handkerchiefs should be treated antiseptically when laundered.

IX. *A disinfecting solution.*—A convenient bowl should always be at hand, filled with a disinfecting solution in which all instruments should be placed after employment. I have found the solution of Labarraque in rain-water to answer this purpose. In such a solution every instrument which may come in contact with the mucous surfaces should be immersed after each use, and they should be carefully dried on a clean napkin before being again employed. The operator should constantly bear in mind the fact that, to a majority of his patients, the thought of submitting to the employment on their persons of instruments which have been indiscriminately used is most repulsive, and that nothing is more disgusting than the odor of dried saliva on tongue depressors and throat mirrors.

It will be recollected by those who read my former paper that the method of treatment advocated is based upon the abandonment of all heroic procedures. The removal of morbid secretions, either fresh or dry, from the inflamed mucous surfaces is to be accomplished, but not by means which will in any way add to the local irritation, and this is to be immediately followed by a thorough application of an aseptic medicament which has a sufficient density and tenacity as will enable it to remain impervious to the air for several hours after the application has been accomplished; and experience has proven that these indications are fully met by the employment of vaseline. Vaseline, however, is not recommended as a basis for the exhibition of other remedies, but for its own intrinsic properties and for its physiological effect.

The medicaments now in use by Dr. Rumbold are as follows: 1. Vaseline. 2. Eucalyptol. 3. Gaul-

theria. 4. Fluid extract of *pinus canadensis* and glycerine. His experience has proven that the aseptic property of vaseline is enhanced by the addition of eucalyptol; that the extract of *pinus canadensis* is a decided tonic and slightly an astringent to the mucous membrane of the throat; and that the oil of gaultheria increases the tonic effect. The glycerine is used as a menstrum in the *pinus* mixture and as a placebo to the gustatory nerves. To prepare these substances for use the following directions should be observed: Take a wide mouth glass stoppered bottle, place in it 2 ozs. of vaseline, and 10 minims of eucalyptol, and mix cold. To mix first use a glass rod and then a small spoon. Continue this process until the eucalyptol is intimately incorporated with the vaseline. In a second bottle containing the same amount of vaseline add 10 minims of the oil of gaultheria and mix as in the first instance. In a graduated measure place 1 oz. of glycerine, on it drop 30 minims of the fl. extract of *pinus canadensis*,¹ and then add slowly 3 oz. of boiling water and mix. When cold place in a bottle similar to those first used. A fourth bottle should contain a supply of pure vaseline. Each bottle should be labeled. A small spatula should be at hand by which the vaseline may be removed from the bottles when the spray cup is to be charged.

In making an examination and giving a treatment it is well to observe the following directions: On a convenient table should be arranged the various instruments, appliances, and medicaments, so as readily to be reached. The operator should be seated so that his left arm is free of the side of the table. The patient should be seated facing

¹ The specimen of *pinus canadensis* used should be that which retains its original color; that which has been refined is almost useless.

the operator and on the left side. This relative position should be invariably maintained, even in such cases as are examined by means of the natural light. The operator should never stand over or sit in front of his patient. In making an examination the patient is handed the tongue depressor and simply told to open his mouth and apply the instrument. These simple directions are generally sufficient to secure free access to the throat, which can be fully illuminated and rapidly examined.

The treatment commences by warming spray producer No. 4. When warm a drachm of pure vaseline is placed in the cup, to which is added a small quantity of the eucalyptolized vaseline, not to exceed a grain in weight. The instrument is now heated until the vaseline is thoroughly melted and until the tubes in their length are hot enough to continue the liquefaction. Connection is now made with whatever apparatus is used for compressed air. The tongue depressor is again applied by the patient. The spray point is carried behind the *velum pendulum palati*, and the spray is thrown upwards and backwards into the pharyngo-nasal cavity. This act of spraying should not be continued but for a moment, when the instrument should be removed to allow the patient to clear his throat. If a rubber hand bulb is used, its compression once or twice on each side of the uvula will be sufficient for a first application. It is not necessary to use the entire contents of the cup; but that which remains may be emptied into the cup of No. 5, which, when made sufficiently hot, is used in the same manner as was No. 4. The spray from this instrument is thrown upwards and forwards, reaching the entire anterior surface of the cavity, cleaning perfectly the posterior nares and reaching the surfaces of

the turbinated processes. The same caution as to the length of the application must be observed. As the patient becomes accustomed to the treatment a larger amount of the medication can be used.

The next step is the employment of spray producer No. 1. The cup is warmed and charged as before with pure vaseline, to which is added about a grain weight each of the eucalyptol and gaultheria mixtures, with 5 drops of the pinus compound. The applications is freely made to all the parts exposed through the mouth. No. 2 is now charged with the vaseline and eucalyptol mixture. The nasal speculum is inserted into one nares, the spray producer is passed along the blade of the instrument, and the hot spray is thrown in until every portion of the nasal cavity is reached, when it is repeated on the other side. This procedure is facilitated by raising and depressing the free end of the instrument during the act of treatment. The patient is now told to clear his nose and, that being accomplished, a second but slighter application is made so as to leave a thin film of vaseline upon the mucous surface. In making these applications it must be remembered that, while vaseline is used in each of the four spray producers, the addition of eucalyptol is confined to Nos. 4, 5 and 2; that the four remedies are to be combined only when spray producer No. 1 is used.

A careful inspection after each application will demonstrate how completely melted vaseline will remove from the mucous surfaces all secretions, recent or inspissated. Where a considerable volume of water applied with force would be necessary for the purpose, a spray of an inconsiderable amount of hot vaseline loosens, detaches the se-

cretion, and allows it to be discharged without violent effort. A single treatment is often sufficient to demonstrate fully the antiphlogistic action, as shown in the lessening of the local irritation of the mucous membrane and in the increased comfort of the patient.

These applications are useful in rhinitis in its various forms and many sequelæ; in nasal and bronchial catarrh; in acute and chronic tonsillitis; in pharyngitis and laryngitis; and in that indefinite condition of "bad cold" which, unchecked, may result in serious forms of disease. They are peculiarly valuable when exhibited before exposure to intense cold and damp night air, and not infrequently exert a decided prophylactic agency after such exposure. The results which I have obtained from this treatment have invariably been good. In many instances I have succeeded in aborting acute attacks; in many others I have obtained a speedy convalescence. I have abandoned the use of the water douche entirely, having found from the employment of the hot vaseline spray an agent which produces no local irritation when used, and much more powerful in effecting good results.

The applications should be made at intervals of from twelve to twenty-four hours until the severity of the symptoms is relieved, and then every second or third day as necessity demands. It must be borne in mind that the pressure of compressed air should in no instance exceed that of six pounds; a violent spray is always to be avoided.

In many letters of inquiry which I have received the question has invariably been asked as to where these special instruments may be obtained. I therefore state, in conclusion, that the A. M. Leslie Surgical Instrument Company, of

St. Louis, make a specialty of these instruments, and that the care with which they are constructed has always given me satisfaction.

Headquarters Division of the Department of Missouri,
Chicago, December, 1888.

