

## DISINFECTION OF ALVINE DISCHARGES.

SIR,—At the present moment, when so much is said and written with reference to cholera, and noticing in the JOURNAL remarks and essays dealing with this subject, it might not be inopportune to acquaint you, sir, and your many readers, of the fact that, according to the statement of one of the most eminent German physicians just to hand, "Hartmann's Patent Wood-Wool" is an excellent material for rapidly absorbing and disinfecting fluids discharged from the intestines. If employed for this purpose, the "wood-wool" is impregnated with carbolic acid, as the latter appears to be particularly efficient against the cholera-bacillus. One of the principal advantages in the employment of "Hartmann's Patent Wood-Wool" with cholera patients lies in the fact that it can be simply scattered into the bed without in the least inconveniencing or disturbing the patient, and with the same ease may be removed.—We have the honour to remain, sir, your obedient servants,

ESSINGER and NEUBERGER.

## ACETIC ACID IN CHOLERA.

SIR,—At page 574, paragraph 10, of "Dr. Salmon's New Lond. Dispensary, 1082," the following passage occurs. "Acetum Regis Polonicæ, the King of Poland's vinegar. Take of the best vinegar, lb. xii; clarified juice of Celandine, lb. ix; nutmegs, leaves and roots of avens, roots of elecampane, a ʒj; roots of angelica, zedoary, juniper berries, a ʒij; sage, xj; digest two days in *nm.* It is a powerful thing both in preservation from and cure of the plague and other malign fevers. It clears the eyesight also to a wonder. No man that drunk this medicine in the great plague of 1592 was infected with it or any other disease.—Salmon."

I have a vague recollection that pyroligneous acid was used both outwardly and internally during the cholera at Marseilles in 1836. This would be quite a traditional treatment, as aromatic vinegar, then called "vinaigre des quatre voleurs," vinegar of the four thieves, is said to have been compounded by four miscreants who are supposed to have imbibed it to preserve themselves from the plague at Marseilles while they pillaged its victims.—Yours truly,

124, Fulham Road.

V. FOULAIN, M.D.

## CARBOLIC ACID IN CHOLERA.

SIR,—The treatment of English cholera by carbolic acid is not new by any means. In this way I have used it during the past ten years; though where I first saw it recommended I cannot say. It is easy to believe the addition of chloral would increase its efficacy; but the use of belladonna in this complaint is difficult to understand. During the present season I have found one minim doses of carbolic acid control both vomiting and diarrhoea.—I am, yours, etc.,

Lewisham House, Dartmouth Park Hill, N.

E. G. WAKE.

## BOROGLYCERIDE IN SURGERY.

SIR,—Boroglyceride is made by saturating hot glycerine with boracic acid. "F. R." will find its uses, mode of preparation, and percentage with water when used as a lotion, fully set forth by Mr. Richard Barwell, in the JOURNAL, vol. ii, 1882, p. 362.

Mr. Barwell operates in the open, without spray, previously cleansing the hands, instruments, and patient's skin with carbolic acid. "The operation completed, the wound is thoroughly mopped and sponged with a five per cent. solution of boroglyceride in water (that is, one ounce to the pint); or, in case of a cup-shaped wound, I fill it with the solution." All is then covered with eight or ten layers of lint soaked in the same solution, and covered with mackintosh.

My personal experience of its use in surgery has been highly favourable. In one case of very severe cystitis, it acted like magic when injected into the bladder of a woman who was suffering from that disease, after a bad labour, followed by retention of urine. The patient in question was in great agony. Although tormented by a constant desire to micturate, she was unable to pass any urine whatever, and, on my passing the catheter as usual, I found the urine to be like bird-lime; so thick, indeed, was it, that I had to fit a syringe to the gum-catheter to suck some of it out of the bladder. After one injection of boroglyceride in warm water, the patient was very much relieved, and, with four or five of them, she was cured. When I proceeded to draw off the urine some four hours after the first injection had been made, it flowed freely through the catheter, and was completely altered in character. It is evidently an antiseptic preparation of great value.—I am, etc.,

H. A. LATIMER, M.R.C.S., etc., Surgeon to Swansea Hospital.

## TREATMENT OF STAMMERING.

SIR,—Anyone may be cured of stammering by simply making an audible note in expiration before each word. Stammerers can sing as easily as other persons. Jacky Broster, of Chester, who made a large fortune by curing stammering, simply made his pupils say *h e r* before each word beginning with a consonant.—I am, etc.,

10, Roland Gardens, S.W.

RALPH RICHARDSON.

SIR,—I would advise your correspondent "J. F. W." to place his son under the care of Mr. N. H. Mason, 18, St. Mary's Road, Highbury, N., with whose method of the treatment of stammering I am familiar, and believe it to be the one most likely to cure. The earlier some treatment is adopted, the better.—Yours truly,

M.R.C.S. Eng., L.R.C.P. Lond., L.S.A. Lond.

## BEOWULF, THE MARSH-DEMON.

DR. ARTHUR DOWNS, of Chelmsford, writes to the *Times*: The interesting article in the *Times* of August 26th recalls the thought, suggested by a perusal of Beowulf some years ago, that, under the myth of Grendel, the fen-demon, we have a personification of the ague-giving marsh-miasm; Grendel of the ninth century becomes the bacillus malarie of the nineteenth. Each of the limbs of the heroes; the home of each is in the stagnant fen; in the fen alone, by diving to its utmost recesses, can Beowulf kill the monster, and the hag who gave him birth; only in the fen itself, by deepest drainage, can we in our day effectually root out malaria, and the cause of malaria. To Grendel the light of the sun would be fatal; the night-mist hides him:

"..... then

Came from the moor under a

Mist-screen Grendel ganging."

Modern science shows this to be as true of the bacillus as of Grendel, but science is the bathos of poetic truth. The spear of the hero has given place to the inoculating lancet of the *savant*; Beowulf the marsh-drainer has received his apotheosis; Jenner has somewhere a statue, Koch a professorship, Pasteur probably a street. Years later, Beowulf, in single-handed contest with a new foe, a fiery dragon, receives his death-wound; *absit omen*.

For the rest, my suggestion is, I think, a-tune with modern views of mythology; if it be not in the present case a new one, I trust I may be pardoned for unwittingly offering it as such.

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## BOOKS, ETC., RECEIVED.

Lessons for Deaf and Dumb Children. Parts I and II. By W. Van Praagh. London: Trübner and Co. 1884.  
Nerves and Nerve-Troubles. By J. Mortimer Granville. London: W. H. Allen and Co. 1884.  
The Science and Art of Surgery. By J. E. Erichsen, F.R.S., LL.D., F.R.C.S. Revised and Edited by M. Beck, M.S. and M.B. Vols. I and II. London: Longmans, Green and Co. 1884.  
Diphtheria, Croup, etc. By C. B. Galentine, M.D. New York: J. H. Vail and Co. 1884.  
A Handbook for Midwives. By H. F. Smith, B.A. Second Edition. London: Longmans, Green and Co. 1884.  
A Few Suggestions to Mothers on the Management of their Children. By A. Mother. London: J. and A. Churchill. 1884.  
A Manual for the Practice of Surgery. By T. Bryant, F.R.C.S. Vols. I and II. London: J. and A. Churchill. 1884.  
A Practical Treatise on Disease in Children. By Eustace Smith, M.D. London: J. and A. Churchill. 1884.  
The National Dispensary. By A. Stillé, LL.D., and J. M. Marsch, Ph.D. Third Edition. London: J. and A. Churchill. 1884.  
The Use and Abuse of Pessaries. By G. G. Bantock. London: H. K. Lewis. 1884.

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