

## THE MODERN AD ASTRA (A MEDICAL FABLE).

ONCE upon a time, a poor but humane physician was riding along a road which led by a dark forest, when he saw by the wayside a sick and miserable dog which had laid down to die. Moved with pity, he got down from his carriage, picked up the poor animal tenderly, and gave it some food and drink. Suddenly the dog vanished, and he saw standing before him a beautiful fairy. "You have saved me from a miserable doom by your compassion," she said. "Command me anything you wish, and it shall be yours." The astonished physician replied, "I am a poor man; I should like to be rich." The fairy waved her wand, and extended to him a piece of paper and a bottle filled with a dark-coloured liquid. "Here," she said, "is a prescription for an infallible compound hair-restorer. It will never fail, and it has been indorsed by the leading clergymen on both continents. The world is yours! Do you wish more?" "I am a quiet man," replied the doctor, and little known. I should like to be famous." "You shall be more; you shall be immortal." Waving her wand again, she presented to him a small, dark, and curiously shaped instrument. "See," she exclaimed, "it is a new, and an 'unquestionably perfect pessary.' It radically restores every malposition. Your name is blown into the side. Generations of suffering women and successful doctors will read, and bless you. I have tried it myself," she added, blushing a little, and vanished.—*Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*.

## DR. CHARLES J. B. WILLIAMS' EAR-TUBES FOR DEAFNESS.

A NEW and inexpensive ear-tube, of extremely simple construction, invented by Dr. Charles J. B. Williams, has been manufactured by Messrs. Creswick and Co., 12, Great Portland Street, W. These ear-tubes, which are made of thin pasteboard, with a curved ear-piece of tinned iron, covered with India-rubber tubing, are said to enable those afflicted with deafness to converse freely and with much more ease than with the various trumpets in general use. They are light and durable, and can be used either for close or distant conversation. They are kept in three lengths, namely, nine, twelve, and twenty-one inches. The superiority of these pasteboard-cones over those of metal, as has been pointed out, lies in their conveying the sound-vibrations through their light material, by conduction as well as by reflection, and in their being more free from the echoes and ringing sounds developed by metals. Dr. Williams, in his memoirs, writing of these, says:

"It is the best conversational ear-tube for a deaf person that I ever met with; I use it habitually, and prefer it to every other kind. The sound of the voice is intensified by the length of the tube, for it is louder than when spoken closely into the unaided ear; and, what is most important, the articulation is distinct, and wholly free from the confusing din or roar caused by most ear-trumpets and tubes."

The prices of these tubes are 4s. 9d. and 5s., post paid.

## NURSES.

SIR,—I was extremely gratified to read the kindly letter on "Nurses" by Miss E. Faithfull, in the *Journal* of September 20th. I am sure the subject is of the utmost importance, not only to the entire profession, but to the outside public as well, who benefit so much from the secret toil of those who so faithfully tend the sick and the hurt.

I would like, however, to point to a matter deserving of notice, to wit, the excessively long hours, and want of sufficient time for proper rest and recreation, which nurses have at present to endure. It is shameful to think how slavish is the life of the majority of those who adopt the profession of a trained nurse in any of our large hospitals, and I am afraid that much of the misery attendant upon learning the duties is created by unnecessary and severe rules formulated by the managers, and strictly enforced by a lady superintendent, who may rule with a rod of iron.

Any lady with anything like fine feelings must submit very often to gross insults, and work of the most degrading character, if she wishes to become a nurse. This, coupled with the long hours and night-work alternating with day-duty, must deter many from continuing in the work they may have at first most courageously entered upon. I know of several such cases, and I am now writing from a strong desire to benefit such a deserving class of the working community. The laws of health are, in the matter of the lives of nurses, too often flagrantly broken by those in authority who have to do with the regulation of their duties; and it would, indeed, be a charitable action to get this matter sufficiently investigated.

Why should such a state of matters be permitted to continue, when even Acts of Parliament are in existence to prevent manufacturers and tradesmen from overworking their assistants?

Regarding the after-career of a hospital trained nurse, I would heartily endorse the feeling remarks of Miss Faithfull. It is to be hoped that the suggestions she and others have thrown out may now be turned to practical account.—I remain, yours faithfully,

A PHYSICIAN.

## PERMANENATE OF POTASH PILLS.

SIR,—In reply to "Una's" inquiries, kaolin ointment, in the words of Martindale's *Extra Pharmacopœia*, "forms a useful excipient for nitrate of silver and permanenate of potash pills."—I am, etc. ARTHUR J. CAMPBELL, M.B. Newcastle-on-Tyne.

## ARCAEON AS A WINTER HEALTH-RESORT.

SIR,—I notice a letter in your *JOURNAL* on the above subject, and, as one who has had a winter's experience there, allow me to say that the villas there are most unsuitable habitations for an invalid to be located in during the winter months. They are built for other people as summer residences, and let from October to May or June to people who live by "taking in" invalids. The villas are badly constructed for winter residence, no fireplaces with fire to cheer the drooping frame, as in England, but merely a few logs of wood burning in a square opening, around which, in December and January, you may have to sit with your overcoat on, and a rug round your legs to keep warm in the evening. The place itself looks desolate and miserable, the Casino and nearly all the shops being closed till spring. The water is not good, and the drainage is bad; but the forest, with its atmosphere impregnated with terebene, is all you could desire, provided you are prepared to wander about, talk to the trees, observe nature, and sit on the verge of the forest, overlooking the Bay of Biscay, watching a fine sunset. If a few friends go together, and take a villa on well defined terms, get an English fire-grate or two put in, and burn small coals at 40s. per ton with their logs of oak or pine, they may do pretty well, providing they are prepared to pay high prices for everything else they may require. Finally, let me say that Arcaeon is pleasant for the French and Spanish in summer, but not adapted to the requirements of English invalids in winter.—Yours truly, Cavendish House, Chorlton-cum-Hardy.

JOHN RAINS, M.D.

## DISINFECTION OF BEDS AND BEDDING.

SIR,—I shall be obliged if you can advise me, through your *JOURNAL*, what measures will be sufficient to disinfect beds, etc., thoroughly, after a case of epithelioma with ulceration, for several months. The beds, being new and always protected, without apparent stain, it is proposed to have them heated in an apparatus, to over 210° Fahr. For the blankets, the same method, or immersion in boiling water is proposed.—I am, yours etc., R. C.

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## BOOKS, ETC., RECEIVED.

- The Mouth and Teeth in Health and Disease. By J. M. Dennis, F.R.S. Grimsby: A. Gait. London: Simpkin, Marshall and Co.
- Elements in Modern Chemistry. By A. Wurtz. Translated and Edited by W. H. Greene, M.D. London and Philadelphia: J. P. Lippincott and Co. 1884.
- Fat and Blood. By S. W. Mitchell, M.D. London and Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co.
- Micro-organisms and Disease. By E. Klein, M.D., F.R.S. With 108 Engravings.
- A Treatise on Physiology and Hygiene for Institution and General Readers. By J. C. Hutchinson, M.D., LL.D. New York: Clark and Maynard. 1884.
- A Handbook of the Diseases of the Eye. By H. R. Swanzy, A.M., M.B. With Illustrations. London: H. K. Lewis. 1884.
- Medical and Surgical Electricity. By G. M. Beard, A.M., M.D., and A. D. Rockwell, A.M., M.D. London: H. K. Lewis. 1884.

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