THE ABSORPTION PLAN.

The readiness with which absorption takes place through the skin is well shown by the following case, as also the efficacy of medication by the surface. Some fifteen years ago, a baby three months old, suffering from cholera infantum and attenuated to the last degree, was brought from the city to the Latourette House, Bergen Point, and came into my hands. Its intra-uterine life had been six and a half months. This was well attested. The little creature was ejecting everything given it; and what to do, at first, was a puzzle—but something must be done, for all the ladies in the house had fallen in love with the little handful of humanity, and if the whole world had contained but this one baby the mother could not have been more anxious for its recovery. So we enveloped it in nice, soft, juicy beefsteaks, renewing them as often as the heat of the weather rendered necessary, preceding their application by a very delicate medicinal solution—giving by the mouth almost nothing—and thus we went on day by day.

The babe recovered, grew strong and well, and four years afterward became again my patient at Peteler's Hotel (now St. Mark's) for a bad scald of the chest, which she went through as bravely as if she'd been born at full term and had not had her life saved by beefsteaks externally applied. Another case forcibly illustrating the rapidity with which absorption takes place is given by Sir G. Hill: "A jockey had been for some time in training for a race, in which that gentleman was much interested, and had been reduced to the proper weight. On the morning of the trial, being much oppressed by thirst, he took one cup of tea; and shortly afterward his weight was found to have increased six pounds, so that he was incapacitated for riding. At least three-fourths of this increase was from cutaneous absorption, which function was suddenly stimulated by the cup of tea." I might give many more cases similar to that of the babe's in my own practice, perhaps not quite so marked, but where the result was quite as favorable—fully demonstrating the efficacy and efficiency of peripheral medication and sustenance.

THE INHALATION PLAN.

Along with this form of treatment by the surface, goes admirably well the introduction of medicaments into the circulation by inhalation. This is a very easy and very powerful way of combating disease. As it is through the air-passages that many pernicious elements enter the system, it would seem very natural that by the same ingress the correctives and antidotes should be sent; and all know how efficiently agents act given this way—as chloroform, nitrous oxide gas, oxygen, etc.

In many diseases, as typhus and typhoid fever, and the typhoid stage of other diseases, the tongue and mucous membrane become hard, rough, and as dry as a chip. The lining of the stomach is mostly in the same condition (for the tongue is the mirror of the stomach), and medicines placed in it are of no avail, for there is no action, no absorption, and they lie there dead and inactive. Now, you might as well place a weasel in a tightly cemented room from which there is no point of exit, and expect it to rid the house of rats, as to expect medicines placed in the stomach under these circumstances to have any controlling or curative influence over disease; and yet this is just what is done over and over again, indeed all the time, by physicians of every school everywhere. Not so do medicines act when given by inhalation; for, carried to the delicate vesicular membrane in thorough solution, they quickly enter the circulation, and, unimpeded by any action of the gastric juice, commence their neutralizing and curative work at once, and if properly and judiciously administered in conjunction with the use of the vacuum receptacle, and proper applications to the surface, I am sure that many diseases that are now the opprobrium of the profession will be rendered much more amenable to treatment. Of course there are many affections that readily yield to treatment by the stomach. Indeed, I believe that one-half of all the ailments to which humanity is liable may be controlled by the "*vis medicatrix nature*," alone, and would get well without any treatment further than the proper regulation of diet and exercise.

I do conscientiously believe that by the inhalation of medicaments, carefully prepared and judiciously administered—by the application of medicaments, carefully prepared and properly applied, after the skin has been well cleansed (all dead epithelium being removed), together with the use of the receptacle, a new era in the treatment of disease will be inaugurated, and a success attained in the curing of the graver maladies that will surpass anything yet realized.

It has often occurred to me that the importance of atmospheric pressure, as affecting the health and general condition of mankind, is not sufficiently estimated. I believe with a celebrated writer, who said: "Give me the physical aspect of the country, and I'll give you the character of the inhabitants." And he might have added, the physical development also. All know that elevated situations for habitations are much healthier than those in the valley or low places. Some will say because the air is purer, and in this they are correct so far as they go; but it is well known that as we ascend, the atmospheric pressure lessens, and if we go high enough this will be unpleasantly demonstrated by blood issuing from parts of the body. When a suitable elevation is reached, the peripheral circulation is much increased; the action of the lungs is freer and fuller, and a feeling of exhilaration is experienced from the improved oxygenation of the blood. Therefore, how infinitely better it would be for the health of the denizens of cities to pass their summers among the mountains, than at the crowded places of fashionable resort! What a marked improvement there would be, not only in their physical, but mental condition (to say nothing of morals), in the course of two or three years' living rationally, exercising judiciously in the fine, exhilarating mountain air! One of my patients, who suffered much from asthma, spent a winter at the Fifth Avenue Hotel. After a little he discovered that he could live much more comfortably, with much less dyspnea, on the fifth floor than any lower down—and here, of course, he fixed his quarters. With the lessening of the surface pressure his peripheral capillary circulation was increased, and his lungs correspondingly relieved. How large a number of persons suffering from lung trouble have been greatly benefited by living in the Adirondacks! One occasionally being obliged to remain there throughout the winter, as was the case with a physician of some note, who, while remaining in those mountains, enjoyed fair health, but each time on coming to the city and remaining a short time, would have hemorrhages, night sweats, and all the symptoms of rapid tuberculosis, rendering his flight to the mountains and remaining there imperative.

CURES BY ELECTRICITY.

Then, again, there are some affections in which all remedies

by the stomach are at times wholly inefficacious, even when that organ is in good working condition. I remember a striking case of this sort in a young lady suffering from ovarian neuralgia, which came on regularly every morning, and was very severe. I used everything in the way of anti-periodics, anodynes, counter-irritants, etc., that I thought applicable to the case, but with no apparent permanent good result. The father, tired of seeing his child suffering so, took her to a famous homeopath in the city, and he encouraged them greatly by saying that the trouble was not ovarian but in the kidney, and that he'd make short work of it; but he was longer at the case than I was, and no more successful—when the electro-chemical baths were suggested, the first one of which brought entire relief. I had at one of the hotels a somewhat similar and severe case, in the management of which were associated with me three of the best physicians from the city, and in this case, too, medicines had only a very slight temporary effect. The cure was effected quickly and permanently on the ninth day by electricity. While I think this treatment applicable in most cases, it is more particularly so in those of internal congestions and inflammations, in eruptive and congestive fevers, and impaired circulation.

KEEP THE SKIN IN GOOD CONDITION.

Doubtless the importance and benefit of keeping the skin of animals in good condition is patent to all, for no animal will thrive and do well unless this be the case.

For many years I have been a strong advocate for the clipping of horses, and invariably have it done every winter on every horse whose hair is too long and thick to admit freely of the brush and curry-comb reaching the skin. Some years ago I had a horse who threw out early in the fall a very thick, heavy coat. Soon the legs began to swell, which increased daily, notwithstanding the giving of purgatives, diuretics, and free rubbing, all of which were resorted to, as I did not want to clip so early; but all of no avail. The horse was clipped. A greasy scum all over his skin (which the comb and brush could not reach) was removed by a wash of whisky, water, and borax; and now, after a drive all swelling was gone, and did not return—and in eating, driving, and feeding he was a new horse.

Clipping the horse when the hair is coarse, thick, and long is the very best thing that can be done, for he will do a third more work on a third less feed, and is a merciful, and not a cruel procedure. I also recommend the clipping of cattle that are being fattened, where the hair is long and coarse, believing—indeed, knowing—that such cattle would fatten much easier, and the meat would be more tender and much sweeter.

In a word, I have long been impressed with the belief that not a tithe of the attention to the condition of the skin in disease, and what may be effected by medication and sustenance thereby, is given by physicians, and until this is done, the success that should be attained will not be reached.

True, Europe has its mud-baths, and Philadelphia its mud poultices; and we have Turkish baths and Russian baths, and all kinds of baths, and all are good as far as they go; but to our mind, repeated daily thorough cleansing of the skin by medicated washes, and the insuring a free peripheral capillary circulation, are the prime essentials in the treatment of disease.—*Medical Record*.

LIP-SALVE.*

Spermaceti.....	40 parts.
Lard, perfectly pure and fresh.....	80 "
White wax.....	20 "
Oil of sweet almonds.....	5 to 10 "

according to the season of the year, are melted together, the mixture colored with a sufficient quantity of alkanet, by digesting the root with the melted mass, and the latter then suitably perfumed, for instance, with

Oil bergamot.....	2 parts.
Oil orange.....	3 "

The mass is then poured out into moulds. It is customary to pour it into tin-tubes, from which it is removed when cold, and then covered with tin foil.

Cold Cream (Crème Celeste).

1. Spermaceti.....	30 parts,
White wax.....	24 "
Oil of sweet almonds.....	168 "

are melted together at a gentle heat, the melted mass poured into a warm porcelain or Wedgwood mortar, stirred until it begins to solidify, and then intimately mixed with

Rosewater.....	70 parts.
----------------	-----------

After stirring until cold, there may be added, for every 10 ounces of the mixture,

Oil of rose.....	2 drops.
Oil of bitter almonds.....	3-4 "

This cream is white. The following formula yields a cheaper, slightly yellow, but still very good product:

2. White wax.....	166 parts.
Olive oil, finest.....	500 "
Rosewater.....	100 "
Oil of bergamot.....	15 "
Oil of bitter almonds.....	q.s.

To be prepared as the preceding.

Glycerine Cream (Crème de Glycerine).

Spermaceti.....	60 parts.
White wax.....	30 "
Oil of sweet almonds.....	250 "
Rosewater.....	10 "
Glycerine.....	20 "

To be prepared like cold cream, and to be perfumed with oil of rose and oil of bitter almonds.

Almond Cream (Crème d'Amandes).

Lard, perfectly pure and fresh.....	220 parts.
Solution of potassa, containing 26 per cent. of caustic potash.....	120 "
Alcohol, 60 per cent.....	10 "
Oil of bitter almonds.....	q.s.

Triturate, in a porcelain or Wedgwood mortar, the lard and potassa solution, and let it stand a few hours. Then add the alcohol and sufficient oil of bitter almonds to give it the proper flavor. Finally triturate until the mass is uniform, and resembles mother-of-pearl.

This cream has a handsome look, but is not so bland as the first mentioned varieties.

* From *New Remedies*.

A CATARRH CURE.

By HANS M. WILDER.

WHEN people get a cold on the chest, as they call it, among other good things are prescribed the wearing of a respirator when out of doors, and, when at home, balsamic inhalations or sprays.

I should think both things combine—a medicated respirator, so to call it—would be a decided improvement. Let the respirator be soaked or sprinkled with the same balsamic mixture which patients are ordered to use indoors as inhalation. When they use the respirator, prepared as above, away from home, the air which they inhale will always be charged with the vapors of the inhalation, although in a less degree, and in this way their air passages will be continuously under treatment and consequently recover so much the quicker.

I got this idea from personal experience. Having a heavy cold in the head, I got a bottle of Hager's olfactorium antiscarrhoicum (see below) with addition of a little essential oil of cubebs. This bottle I carried in my upper waistcoat pocket; the stopper came off and the contents were spilled on my clothes. Wearing the same clothes, I was constantly enveloped in a balsamic atmosphere, and got completely rid of my cold and accompanying hoarseness in four days; ordinarily it takes a couple of weeks.

Olfactorium antiscarrhoicum.

Acid carbol. pur.....	5 parts.
Alcohol.....	5 "
Aq. ammon.....	6 "
Aquæ.....	10 "

A few days after being mixed it turns bluish black (through formation of aniline) and acquires a more disagreeable odor; the best way to make it is to dissolve the carbolic acid in alcohol by itself in one bottle, and the diluted ammonia in another bottle. When using, pour from each bottle a few drops into a tumbler or cup, shut the eyes, and inhale the vapor through the nose and mouth; it is smarting at first, but one soon gets used to it. The quantity of the ammonia may, of course, be decreased.—*New Remedies*.

ANTISEPTIC DRESSING OF WOUNDS.

By MM. GOSSELIN and BERGERON.

THE authors ascribe the beneficial action of these dressings not merely to the destruction of ferments, but to the coagulation of the albumen.

POISONOUS PROPERTIES OF PHENOL.

By DR. BINNENDIJK.

THIS acid acts in a direct manner upon the cerebro-spinal nervous system, and especially upon the respiratory center, and is not without influence upon the blood. It is partly transformed in the organism, yielding hydroquinon, pyrocatechin, etc. A portion of the phenol seems to be oxidized.

VANILLIN.

MM. HAARMANN and REIMER.

AN ethereal extract of vanillin, whether obtained from vanilla pods or the oxidation product of coniferin, if shaken up with a solution of sodium bisulphite, yields up its vanillin to the latter, exactly as in the case with the other aldehydes. The compound of vanillin with the bisulphite is then destroyed by the addition of sulphuric acid, and the pure vanillin is withdrawn from the liquid by agitation with ether. In this manner the actual vanillin, either in the natural pods or in artificial samples, may be accurately determined. The authors maintain that their artificial vanillin is chemically and physically identical with the natural product.

COMPARATIVE RESEARCHES ON PTYALIN AND DIASTASE.

By TH. DEFRENE.

THE action of the saliva is arrested by pure gastric juice; but, on the other hand, if we operate with mixed gastric juice, containing merely or anic acids, the saccharification of starch proceeds as well as in the mouth. Ptyalin and diastase are, therefore, not physiologically identical, since the saccharifying action of the latter is irreversibly destroyed by pure gastric juice or by hydrochloric solutions, and even after contact with mixed gastric juice, though it still dissolves starch, it no longer saccharifies.

THE METEOROGRAPH.

To the Editor of the *Scientific American*:

Will you, in the interest of the true history of scientific invention, refer to the files of the *SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN* for May, 1854, and see if you did not publish an account of essentially the same device for registering the direction of the wind, that is found in the *SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT* for January 11, 1880, and credited to Dr. Draper?

A fuller account of a paper read before the American Scientific Association, at eighth meeting in Washington, 1854, may be found on page 224 of published proceedings of that meeting; also, there is a notice of the register in "*Annual of Scientific Discovery*" for 1855, page 192.

As the writer of this devised and constructed this part of Dr. Draper's ingenious set of automatic instruments more than a quarter of a century ago, and made it public by description and exhibition of its actual work to the American Scientific Association, he feels himself entitled to whatever credit is due as its originator, and fortunately his claim is easily established, unless some one can show its existence prior to April, 1854.

As several self-registering instruments were combined, a name was necessary, and the term "*meteorograph*" was used to designate the set of automatic registers. Can any one find the word *meteorograph* used prior to May, 1854?

Please refer as above and oblige

N. B. WEBSTER.

Webster Military Institute, Norfolk, Va.

[Note. We are glad to be able to place the claims of Prof. Webster so clearly before our readers. Dr. Draper, we believe, in presenting the drawings of his instruments, made no claim to the original authorship of this class of devices.]