The gaseous enemata have, however, an immediate action: the relief of the dyspnoea in relation to the influence exercised on the bulb by the carbonic acid and to the experiments of Professor Brown-Séquard, and a tardy action, attributed by some to the sulphuretted hydrogen and the sulphuret of carbon, and by others to the carbonic acid the sulphur waters contain. The general impression among the profession in this country is that the treatment of phthisis by Bergeon's method does not possess sufficient advantages to supersede the other methods in vogue, though it may be employed as a simple palliative. But even this property will not counterbalance the drawbacks of the method, to wit, the inconvenience that patients are put to by the frequent use of the enema, and their exposure to the risk of enterocolitis, which has been attributed to it.

Iodoform is an agent very much in vogue internally, as well as externally, as an anti-parasitic and antiseptic. Dr. A. Poncet, of Lyons, in a paper read before the surgical society of that city, related the inconveniences arising from dressings with that substance. Iodoform excites, particularly in women, an anorexia, the more intense according as the habits of the patients are more civilized or refined. The odor itself is a great drawback, and however the drug may be disguised it is always readily recognizable. The patients lose all taste for food, which is attributed to the presence in the saliva of iodides and of alkaline iodates. Dr. Poncet remarks that the buccal cavity is probably not the only medium of the elimination of iodoform, the intestinal mucous membrane and the kidneys serve as emunctories. The odor of this substance is often recognized in the sudorous secretions. The author points out the affinity that silver has for this substance, so much so that all utensils composed of this metal and used by patients saturated with iodoform become infected with the peculiar foetid and garlic odor, in consequence of which patients who are acquainted with this fact, adopt iron spoons and forks instead of silver. In patients under treatment with iodoform, but who are not yet saturated with it, the peculiar odor of the drug may nevertheless be developed by simply placing a piece of silver in contact with the saliva of the patient, then rubbing it with a piece of linen, the metal gives out the well known odor. This the author terms the *signe de l'argent*. The researches of Dr. Cazeneuve show that the garlic odor disengaged by silver in contact with iodoform is due to the production of the iodide of silver with the formation of acetylene.

As every medal has its reverse so has cocaine, so much vaunted lately. It has rendered great service in a variety of circumstances for the prevention and relief of pain; but several severe accidents having occurred by its administration. Dr. Dujardin-Beaumont has thought proper to publish in the *Bulletin de Thérapeutique* a paper communicated by Dr. Bignon, of Lima, who gives the following results of a series of experiments performed by him on man and dogs with cocaine: 1. Cocaine produces only physiological effects, which are very transitory, in doses of from 30 to 50 centigrammes administered

by the stomach, on condition that the drug be absorbed in divided doses of five centigrammes every hour. 2. It acts principally on the renal secretion in retarding it, in preventing the elimination partly of the products of oxidation, and in then producing the first symptoms of slight uræmia. 3. In a single large dose it produces anuria followed by grave uræmic accidents (nervous convulsive attacks etc.). 4. This paralyzing action of cocaine on the kidneys generally disappears two or three hours after the absorption of the alkaloid. It is followed by a considerable diuresis which relieves the organism, and which is the more active according as the anuria had been much prolonged. 5. Cocaine is toxic only in an indirect manner when the dose is sufficiently high to prolong anuria, to the extent of the accumulation of toxic products of the urine, in sufficient quantity to produce symptoms of uræmic poisoning. 6. If the diuresis should make the toxic phenomena to disappear rapidly, the general stimulating action continues none the less for a long time afterwards. It lasts about twenty-four hours at fifty centigrammes in the day. During all this time the phenomena of oxidation continue to go beyond the normal average, denutrition, in a word, continues. To sum up, cocaine acts in two ways: 1. In diminishing the renal secretion, and, if the dose is sufficiently high, in suppressing it during a sufficient time to produce the gravest uræmic accidents, and even death in a very short time. 2. In hastening nutrition, and then the production of the products of disassimilation or of oxidation. If, then, the dose is high, the two actions combining contribute to cause death in a very little time by uræmic accidents. If, on the contrary, the doses are divided, they leave between each the necessary time for the reaction (diuresis), and death will only be the consequence of prolonged exhaustion and deceneration. A. B.

DOMESTIC CORRESPONDENCE

BERGEON'S METHOD.

Dear Sir:—In THE JOURNAL of June 18, 1887, p. 676, in the body of the "Address in Medicine" by Dr. J. S. Lynch, I find the following (I do not wish to be regarded as a champion of the Bergeon treatment of tuberculosis):

For, admitting all that is claimed as to the agency of microbes in setting up and keeping up disease processes, it must be remembered that they are biologically as high in the plane of life, and if all experiments can be believed, have a higher resisting power than the cells which compose the living elements of our tissues. *Any germicide therefore, which can destroy the one, must inevitably destroy the other.*

I am of the opinion that the above reasoning is faulty and would lead young practitioners astray. In vol. xvii, page 662, Ziemssen's Cyclopædia of Practice of Medicine we find the following: "Cases of poisoning have also been recorded, from human beings eating the flesh of animals, which had fed upon belladonna leaves without danger to themselves; among the animals to which atropia is innocuous are

rabbits, pigeons, rats and guinea pigs." Snails are also said not to be affected by it.

We have been informed that sulphate of strychnia, in the dose of thirty to sixty grains will not kill a hog. It must also be a patent fact that solanine will not kill potato bugs, while it is certain to kill a man. We also wish to call attention to the fact that the dose of veratrum viride that would be harmless to a white man, would be a very dangerous one to give a negro. It is also known that on the other hand santonine is practically non poisonous to the human family, while it readily kills intestinal parasites.

I do not wish to plead for or against the treatment of tubercle by gaseous enemata but from Dr. Lynch's remarks I believe that he has placed the cart before the horse; as you read from line 19, page 676, of THE JOURNAL:

Even then, admitting that his mixed gases can destroy the microbes, which seems highly improbable, in view of the fact that, they are continually exposed to an atmosphere so highly charged with carbonic dioxide that its retention in the lungs for five minutes will produce unconsciousness, it is not clear how they are to reach the objects intended to be destroyed.

If I understand the theory set forth by Bergeon, it is the sulphuretted gases that do the work, and the carbon dioxide is used as a diluent to carry the sulphydric acid gas to the scene of trouble in such condition, that it shall not cause erosion of the mucous membrane of the bowels or other tissues with which it may come in contact.

In the treatment of pulmonary tubercle, who has seen any marked effect from any kind of treatment? Let us be cautious in making experiments with this plan of treatment, and if any benefit can be secured from the so-called gaseous enemata we would like to know it; if not, lay it away in its sarcophagus to rest with the dead.

I think Dr. Lynch would have us believe that what is life to one, is life to all; and that that which will kill one form of animal life will kill all forms. But as a matter of fact this is far from being true, as will be seen from the above quotations. Even among patients in the same family, we find that that which will favor life and health in one member, if continued, would produce disease and ultimately death in another of the same blood. Why it is we do not know. The unknown quantities in the equation of life as yet have not all been solved, and much may be learned from empiricism.

ORSON MILLARD, M.D.

Flint, Mich., June 27.

POISONING BY POKE ROOT.

Dear Sir:—On the evening of March 25, 1887, I was called in haste to see J. H., a stout, muscular colored man, 39 years of age, who was said to have been suddenly attacked with "vomiting and cramps in his bowels." I obtained the following history from him. In the afternoon an old vender of domestic medicines was in the city, with among other things, a large quantity of poke root, which he said was good when put in whiskey to purify the blood. My patient asked him if it was not good to chew also, and upon receiving an affirmative answer, placed a small piece—probably 3j or 3ij—in his mouth and

began to chew it and swallow the juice. This was about 3:30 P. M. About one hour later, being thirsty, he drank a pint of cold water and shortly afterwards nausea set in, soon followed by vomiting, at first of the contents of the stomach and then of a greenish colored and very bitter fluid. He continued to vomit frequently till 7 P. M. when he began to have severe pain in his bowels, accompanied by free purgation and hæmatemesis.

When I first saw him, at 7:30 P. M., he complained of heaviness in the head and dizziness, was suffering severely from pain in the abdomen, and said he felt as though there was a hard lump in his stomach. He was considerably prostrated and sweating freely; pulse 90, soft and compressible. At 8 P. M. I gave him subnit. bismuth, gr. x, morph. sulph. gr. $\frac{1}{3}$, and ordered it to be repeated in half an hour if he obtained no relief and also to have hot, dry woolen cloths applied to his abdomen, and allay his thirst with mucilaginous drinks. At 9 P. M. I saw him again. He was a little easier, but had vomited three times in the interim, and each time a considerable quantity of blood. I now gave him morph. sulph. gr. $\frac{1}{4}$, dissolved in a little cold water, after which the pain soon subsided. He vomited twice during the succeeding hour, then fell asleep and awoke the next morning comparatively well. ALEXANDER GUTHRIE, M.D.

Cairo, Illinois.

TREATMENT OF DYSPEPSIA.

Dear Sir:—In THE JOURNAL of July 2 is an article giving Dr. Talma's treatment of dyspepsia with hydrochloric acid. For the last twelve years I have met with almost unlimited success in treating dyspepsia with this agent, though I perhaps use it in stronger solution than Dr. Talma. I use it in the proportion of about 3ij nitro-muriatic acid to 3iv water, believing that the combination of the two acids is better than one alone. I invariably give the solution in teaspoonful doses immediately after meals. I have treated some of the most severe cases, and have cured some of the most obstinate, with this combination.

When the heart is sympathetically affected I have used tinct. digitalis, gtt. v-vj, three times a day with good results.

When there is constipation I have of late had excellent results from a combination of cascara sagrada and fluid extract juglans cinerea, teaspoonful three times a day. I insist that my patients should abstain from tea and coffee, and use either water or milk, especially buttermilk, which seems to have an excellent effect upon the stomach and alimentary canal generally, giving health and vigor to the absorbent vessels.

When there is much gastric distress after eating a few drops of chloroform will soon relieve the pain.

In severe cases of gastralgia there is nothing better, in many cases, than oil of cojeput, gtt. v-vj.

In cases of vomiting, chloroform has a soothing effect, and sometimes a small dose of morphia has a good effect in quieting the nervous system. Or a mustard plaster or horse radish leaves may be used.

In some cases in which the patient uses tobacco I forbid it, and the patient gets well without medicine.

Harmon, Ill., July 5.

WM. HENRY, M.D.