

Hypnotics may be roughly divided into two classes : (1) Those which diminish nervous irritability ; and (2) those which distinctly, though perhaps not profoundly, narcotize the nervous centres. Of the first class the bromides—the potassium salt preferred—given in two or three doses during the latter part of the day, and in many chronic cases through the day, are valuable. If there is much nervous excitability and restlessness during the day, a bromization lasting a few days or a week or two is occasionally admissible. It is not believed that the hypnotic is yet discovered, or ever will be, which is at once trustworthy as producing the desired result and incapable of producing any unpleasant after-effects. Sulphonal comes as near to that standard as any drug, and used with care is little likely to do harm, except that which attaches to any habit of this kind or dependence upon artificial aids to sleep. The tardiness and permanency of its action cannot be looked upon as a disadvantage when properly allowed for. A second good night without renewal of the dose is not unusual. Fifteen grains are sufficient, and its use should not be prolonged beyond an emergency period of four or five days, without an interval of more than two days. Trional seems to enjoy most of the advantages of sulphonal, except that its effect does not last over two nights. Paraldehyde is a rapidly acting and sure narcotic, probably coming much closer to alcohol in its mode of action than the coal-tar preparations, but it may give rise to symptoms resembling mild delirium tremens, and it has a most disagreeable taste and smell, which may or may not be a disadvantage.—*Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1898, vol. xxxi. p. 757.

Septic Endocarditis.—DR. LUDWIG HERZOG, from his observations of nine patients suffering from this disease, presents the following treatment: The important consideration is the strength of the patient, which must be increased by all means possible. Milk, eggs, port wine, brandy, and strong coffee suggest themselves. A water-bed is beneficial. The affected joints should be protected, kept at rest, and an ice-bag placed upon them ; internally, sodium salicylate in solution should be administered. An ice-bag should be kept constantly upon the heart ; in case of high fever, another upon the head. If a febrifuge is required, seven grains of quinine in powder or wafers are recommended. If severe diarrhoea supervenes, fifteen grains of bismuth subnitrate, or tannic acid, three grains, with one-tenth of a grain of opium, may be given every hour or two.—*Deutsche medicinische Wochenschrift*, 1898, No. 45, S. 716.

Saline Solutions in Medical Diseases.—DR. BOLOGNESI concludes an elaborate paper by stating that the physiological saline solution is a valuable therapeutic agent. Its action upon vascular tension and in producing hæmostasis is well known. Numerous observations and experimental physiology have not yet given an explanation of its mode of action on intoxications and infections. This much we know: the injection, whether intravenous or subcutaneous, raises arterial tension, favors diuresis, diaphoresis, and the secretions in general. It does not produce, as has been claimed, a lavage of the blood, a disintoxication of the organism. Intravenous injections should be made only in case grave surgical or obstetrical hemorrhage has brought