

proportion of blood thus supplied to the part influenced heightens its tint, and at the same time allows the ordinary consequences of improved blood supply to show themselves. The part feels warm (sometimes unpleasantly so), nutrition is improved, and absorption and exchange of tissue are accelerated.

In addition to this, the researches of Dr. Stone and others have shown that passage of a continuous current converts the portion of the body traversed into a secondary battery, or, in other words, sets up a condition of polarization—*i.e.*, a current opposite in direction to that which is being used is initiated in the body, and goes to reduce the current strength capable of being passed from the outside with a given electromotive-force. This point will require further consideration when we come to discuss skin-resistance.

As accompaniments of these functions there is general stimulation of tissues (muscle, nerve, &c.) in the neighbourhood, and not infrequently there is alleviation of pain.

The experiment illustrated in Fig. 19 has already shown, that there is an actual mechanical transference of fluids, from the anode to the cathode, in cataphoresis, under suitable circumstances, and the experiment known as Porret's has proved to demonstration the fact that semi-fluids actually collect at the cathode.

German observers have made use of this cataphoric function, to show the possibility of passing certain solutions through the skin with the aid of the continuous current. A few attempts have been made in this country also, to take advantage of it in the administration of drugs. But most of these have been half-hearted, and some experimenters have hoped to be successful when even the elementary conditions have been disregarded. We have, however, in several cases succeeded in bringing this power of the current to our aid, and by chemical and other tests have proved beyond doubt that in cataphoresis, properly applied, we have a therapeutic aid of much potency, the possibilities of which are probably illimitable. On a later page we shall give indications as to cases suitable for, and the methods of applying, cataphoric medication. At present we are content to refer our readers for further information on the subject to a letter by Dr. Harries in the *Medical Press* of December 11th, 1889.

The electrolytic function (see page 172) will require somewhat full treatment when we come to its surgical applications. Until then we postpone further mention of it, and of dilatation and other curious effects of the use of the bare electrode. (To be continued.)

TERMS USED IN NURSING, THEIR ORIGIN AND MEANING.

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY MISS MARY SHEEHY.

(Continued from page 284.)

Edema (Greek œdeo, I swell).—A dropsical effusion in the cellular tissue.

Opiate (Greek opiom, opos, juice, opium).—A medicine that procures sleep.

Orthropnœa (Greek orthos, erect, and pneo, I breathe).—A form of difficult breathing, in which the patient is unable to lie down, and is compelled to assume the erect or sitting posture.

Pack.—A sheet is dipped and wrung out of hot or cold water, and patient wrapped in it, blankets placed over and tucked in, in which he remains a certain time.

Perspiration (Latin perspirare, to breathe through).—The insensible transpiration or exhalation continually going on at the surface of the skin and membranes. When it is so excessive as to collect in drops upon the surface it is called sweat.

Pessary (Greek pessos, a small stone or other substance for playing at draughts).—A solid instrument made of cork, ivory, or elastic gum, introduced into the vagina to support the uterus, &c.

Phlegm (Greek phlego, I burn, I distil).—A popular name for matter expectorated.

Pulse (Latin pillere, pulsum, to beat).—The beating of the arteries produced by the afflux of the blood propelled by the heart in its contractions.

Purgatives (Latin purgare, to cleanse).—Medicines which stimulate secretion and promote evacuation.

Pus (Greek puon, matter).—A secretion from inflamed textures, and especially from the areolar tissue.

Poultice (Greek poltas, porridge).—A soft moist application, used as a means of heat and moisture, or to contain some drug intended to exert a specific effect.

Pyrexia (Greek pur, fire).—Inflammatory or symptomatic fever.

Rash.—A popular term for patches of superficial redness of the skin.

Receiver (Latin recipere, to take).—A name generally given to a bowl or some kind of vessel, used to receive dirty dressings, or the lotion when bathing wounds, &c.

Rectum (Latin rectus, straight).—So called from the notion that it is straight, which it is not; the third and last portion of the great intestine.

Respiration (Latin respiratio, breathing back,

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)