

## Medical Matters.

### PLAISTER OF PARIS BANDAGES.



A VERY practical hint is given by a Canadian doctor in last week's *Medical Times*. He writes: "I have noticed, while in England, that general practitioners appear to shun, to a great extent, the use of the 'Plaster of Paris' splints for immobilizations, on account of its being so difficult of removal. Therefore, most prefer the starch bandages, etc., although it is generally acknowledged that the Plaster of Paris is much the best appliance. But with the method which I will mention, the Plaster of Paris is the easiest to remove. It is simply this: Soak some cotton wool in *Peroxide of Hydrogen*, then moisten the splint down its full length with this, for about half an inch wide. When it is thoroughly soaked you will find the plaster is in the same condition as when first put on, and all you have to do is to cut the bandages with a pair of scissors, without any injury to the patient or any trouble whatever."

### THE PLAGUE.

IF the reports which have reached us with regard to the outbreak of the plague in Portugal are to be relied upon (and we have no reason for doubting them), they exhibit a carelessness on the part of the Portuguese authorities which, from an international point of view, is almost criminal. Dr. Jorge reported cases of plague as long ago as July 12th, confirming his report on July 28th and backing it by bacteriological evidence. These reports the government appear to have ignored until August 15th, whilst the unfortunate Dr. Jorge became the target of a threatening, clamorous mob because he had performed his duty. Such reckless carelessness cannot but recoil upon those who show it, and the people of the Peninsula are certain to suffer, from a monetary point of view, by the resulting panic which the presence of the plague will cause amongst intending holiday visitors.

### MALARIA AND THE MOSQUITO.

A GOOD deal of interest has recently been aroused by the telegram of Major Ross announcing his discovery of the malarial mosquito. The importance attaching to this discovery, if sub-

sequent investigations confirm it, cannot be overestimated. Since the discovery was made known, Professor Celli and Dr. Casagrandi have published their investigations on the best methods of destroying mosquitos, and have concluded that they can be got rid of by odours, fumes and gases. Among the odours which cause the death of the insect are turpentine, iodoform, menthol, nutmeg, camphor and garlic. Among the fumes, tobacco, chrysanthemum flowers, fresh eucalyptus leaves, quassia wood, pyrethrum, and simple wood smoke. Of the gases, the most practical and efficacious is sulphurous oxide. The lively and ubiquitous "skeeter" is at all times a nuisance of the worst kind, but he is now becoming invested with a terror which puts all his customary exploits in the shade. For the last few months, we have frequently reported the progress of the investigation into this matter, because it is one of the greatest personal interest to the large number of nurses who are now working in Africa and other tropical climates. If the connection between the insects and the contagion of malaria is definitely proved, it is obvious that more stringent methods must be in future taken both to destroy mosquitoes and to protect Europeans from their bites. In fact, the simple measures of precaution hitherto deemed sufficient must be exchanged for more active preventive measures.

### INSANITY IN ENGLAND.

ACCORDING to the report of the Commission of Survey for Great Britain, insanity is on the increase in England and Wales, the number of insane for the past year being 3,114 in excess of the previous year. The increase does not appear to be confined to any particular class, nor is any special cause assigned to it. There is, in spite of this somewhat gloomy report, one matter for congratulation, and that is that the percentage of cures is now-a-days much greater than in former years. This is largely in consequence of the fact that cases come under treatment at an earlier stage now than was the case even a quarter of a century ago. It is recognised that insanity is as much a disease as Diabetes or Cancer, and the old fashioned idea that it was a disgrace to the whole family if one of its members became a lunatic has almost died out. The consequences are, that the disease is not hidden as it used to be, and that more early treatment is therefore possible and more effective.

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