

## Practical Points.

**Nerve-Blocking to Prevent Shock from Amputation.** Dr. Hermann B. Gessner describes in *American Medicine* two cases in which the shock following amputation of the thigh was prevented by injecting cocaine into the large nerve-trunks before dividing them. About one grain in solution was used.

**Problems of Heredity.** One of the gravest problems of heredity is the question of the transmissibility of susceptibility to disease. Allied to it is the question of immunity from disease. Dr. Weissman, twenty years ago, enunciated the opinion that acquired characters could not be transmitted to offspring, and that therefore an animal which had rendered itself immune from certain poisons did not transmit this immunity to its posterity. Doubts have been thrown on this dictum by various observers from time to time; and Dr. Ehrlich, the famous bacteriologist, and the author of the "side chain theory of immunity," came to the conclusions that in the case of two poisons, "abrine" and "ricine," which he tried on rats, it did not hold. By careful dosage he succeeded in making these animals insusceptible to injury from the administration of considerable quantities of these poisons; and he found that their young were likewise immune and remained so. Even so the experiment was not properly conclusive, because it could not be stated at what period in its complete life-history the offspring became immune. Professor Lustig has tried to settle the point by carrying on a series of similar experiments on birds. Evidently immunity acquired through the egg would prove the case. But the results have proved entirely negative. Immunity, though it can be easily attained by birds, cannot be transmitted by them to their young, and at present, therefore, we must believe that Dr. Ehrlich was wrong and Dr. Weissman was right.

**Liquid Air to Cool the House.** Sceptical housewives may smile when told that liquid air and its products, oxygen and nitrogen, will ever be of economic value to them in cooling the house, writes Louise E. Dew in *Good Housekeeping*. There is every indication, however, that within the next decade these commodities will be delivered at the door for cooling purposes, just as milk and groceries are delivered to-day, and at a minimum price.

Inventors have now perfected their systems, however, to the extent that they are building a plant which will manufacture every twenty-four hours liquid air which in cooling effect will be equivalent to 200 tons of ice. At first they propose to interest large establishments, where the liquid air will be delivered ready for use at one-twentieth of the present cost. Later, when its value is recognised, it will be delivered to the housewife in insulated containers ready to attach to the pipes leading to the coil overhead. This coil, by the way, will be made as ornamental and inconspicuous as possible, and will cost no more than the heating pipes. As nitrogen is one of the most perfect preservatives known, it is predicted that when it becomes plentiful through the manufacture of liquid air, it will be possible to do away with ice, so far as the kitchen refrigerator is concerned.

## Nursing Echoes.

**\*\* All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W.**



The Lambeth Guardians are following up their home nursing scheme, under which it is intended to give to the poor medical attendance in their homes under a special outdoor staff of doctors and nurses, so doing away largely with the evil of an ever-swelling work-house infirmary. At a recent meeting of the Board the Chairman (Mr. George Howlett) intimated that the deputation which had waited upon the Local Government Board had been favourably received. The deputation gave all details as to the home nursing scheme; but though it was well received, nothing definite could be done until the higher authorities at the Local Government Board Office had been consulted.

Several Matrons attended the Conference of the National Union of Women Workers at York last week. Miss Gibson, from Birmingham; Miss Edwards, County Hospital, York, for the Society for State Registration of Nurses; Miss Purvis, Middlesbro', for the Matrons' Council; and Mrs. Bedford Fenwick for the Registered Nurses' Society. It is a pity that the R.B.N.A. has for years appointed a delegate who never attends the Conference, and that other important nurses' societies affiliated to the Council do not even nominate a delegate. This woman's Conference is always wonderfully educational, and we cannot do better than realise that our own special work is not of paramount importance to the world at large. There are others.

We found time to spend an hour at the York County Hospital, which is a fine old hospital with plenty of open ground about it. Here great improvements have been made of late, in spite of the fact that, rich as the county is, the charity is poorly supported. Miss Edwards showed us with pride the fine new balconies, on which many beds and cots are now placed, the patients enjoying the bracing air day and night, and so appreciating the change that they strongly object to sleep in the ward.

The new Nurses' Home is a very picturesque building and most comfortably appointed, and the rearrangement of the operating theatre is quite modern in every way. The Committee are wise to push ahead and bring the hospital up to date. The

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