

mucus of the throat and nose contains the typical diphtheria bacillus, not only in cases where no signs of the disease have been found, but also in patients many weeks after an attack of diphtheria has passed away. This proves that the disease may be latent for some length of time before it shows itself, and on the other hand that the source of contagion may remain for long after all apparent danger of conveying the disease to others has passed away. Both these facts emphasize the necessity for washing out the nostrils and throat with frequent injections of strong antiseptic solutions, in all cases in which infection has been possible, as well as in patients who are recovering from an attack of diphtheria.

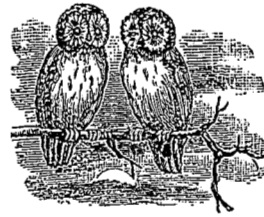
GERMS.

The present era in medicine might not inaptly be termed the Germ Age, because every disease, or nearly every one, is now put down to the influence of these microscopic bodies; and, arising from this, one or two difficult problems require to be solved. If it be granted that the ancient statement that "little fleas have lesser fleas upon their backs to bite 'em, and these again have smaller still, and so on *ad infinitum*," was not merely a stretch of poetic fancy, but a prophetic insight into actual fact; and that the world contains rather more germs than anything else, it remains to be explained why infants are not strangled at their birth by these malignant hordes, or, at any rate, how it comes to pass that any one can attain adult age with safety from their attacks. To answer this natural, and, at the same time, most important, question, a theory has been advanced under the name of "immunity," that is to say, the capacity of resisting infection is dependent upon the presence in the body of certain cells called "leucocytes," which have the property and the ability of eating up any germs in their neighbourhood. These are, therefore, termed "phagocytes." The opposition theory to this, is that there are certain chemical substances contained in the blood which have the power of acting as antidotes by poisoning all kinds of germs. There can be no doubt that the germs do get killed somehow, and the cause of their slaughter is probably to be explained by one or other of these theories, more probably, we imagine, by the latter than by the former. Whichever be the truth, we are brought back once more to the good old-fashioned doctrine of the "Constitution;" which, with our ancestors, was quite sufficient to explain why some people suffered from disease and others did not; why

The Link Shell Truss Co., 171, Wardour Street, London, W., have a new truss, it is claimed that by this method of manufacture a truss is provided which will be more comfortable than the one in ordinary use and better able to adapt itself to the various movements of the body, especially if these are of a sudden character. The truss is fitted with a hip-joint regulator by means of which the pressure is increased or diminished as required and with a soft hollow shell pad perforated for ventilation. The Truss as thus completed is an efficient one.—*Lancet*, August 4th, 1894.

some people were killed by an epidemic from which others escaped; and why the same disease or injury wrought in different individuals totally different results. Until we know for certain whether our safety lies in "phagocytes" on the mucous membrane, or in *alexine*—the presumed germ poison in the blood—we can content ourselves by feeling certain that the "constitution" is not only a fact, but a very sufficient factor in the many modifications, which are met with in disease, in different individuals.

Matrons in Council.



MADAM,—If the Matrons' Council is worked upon the broad lines which its founders have drawn up, it is certain, not only to succeed, but to have that influence upon the whole Nursing world which is desired. All deviations from old paths must have opposition. What is wished is that we women, as Matrons, should not hold our dignities too tightly. The position of a Matron with her Committee is fixed; no Sister, or Head Nurse, can be in her place, unless she wills it so. If we can make our Sisters or Head Nurses feel and understand that our position and theirs has each its own peculiar duties and trials, there is not much fear of their abusing our confidence. I agree with Miss Kenealy when she says that no Matron would wish to claim a "Divine right," but some of us might inadvertently give our Nurses cause to think we claimed it. It seems to me that those who oppose the wording of the "Matrons' Council," play with words. "Matron" is used in the broad sense—the title of the majority—in the same way that the word Clergy and Doctors is often used. A meeting of Clergy usually consists of bishops, priests, deacons, churchwardens, and lay helpers. In my own mind I class the Matrons who either by their position as Matrons of large or ancient Institutions, or by their own individuality and personal character, are our leaders. If we all meet together as *Nurses*, using this word also in the broad sense, working for the common good of humanity in different methods, we must gain the benefit which the promoters of the Matrons' Council wish us to gain. These benefits have already been put before us in Miss Stewart's opening address. She is anxious to extend the "greatness" of the present Matron of St. Bartholomew's by drawing together her sister Matrons to share her large-hearted views of her profession. A great heart will always assist the Matron of St. Bartholomew's to meet the great responsibilities which such a position entails. The age is progressive, also socialistic. We can take what is good out of socialism, and still preserve our old conservative methods.—I am, yours truly,

ALUREDA BURGESS.

Matron of the Royal Orthopaedic and Spinal Hospital, Birmingham.

Reduction of Munson Typewriter prices from £21 to £12 12s., our Odell Typewriter reduced to 65s., particulars of both free.—LINK SHELL TRUSS Co., Surgical Instrument Makers.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)