


Medical Matters.**PUERPERAL FEVER.**


IN no department of Medicine has the antiseptic system secured more brilliant results than in that of Obstetrics. It is universally admitted that Puerperal Fever is, to all intents and purposes, a preventable disease, that its occurrence is due to infection, and that, therefore, absolute cleanliness is an almost complete bar to its occurrence. The death rate from this disease, which was formerly, in many towns, terribly high, is now almost infinitesimal, when proper precautions are adopted. And, amongst these, it is usual to rate the use of antiseptics very highly, forgetting the great principle—that prevention is a thousand times better than cure. In the lying-in chamber the first object to be obtained is the most absolute cleanliness, the absence of all decaying matter in the air, or in the room, and certainly an antiseptic condition both of the patient's surroundings and of her attendants. There is reason to believe that this latter fact is somewhat overlooked or depreciated, because great stress is usually laid upon the value of injections or lotions of chloride of mercury, and other powerful germicides. It is, however, admitted that Nature herself has provided the means of excluding germ life from the denuded uterine canal, the source of infection; and it is therefore claimed by many that the injections so frequently recommended may even have detrimental effects by conveying an infection which would not otherwise obtain access. And it is beyond dispute that patients have exhibited serious symptoms from the absorption into their system of the poisonous mercurial compounds employed as a vaginal injection to destroy their would-be destroyers—a very excellent illustration of the proverbial remedy which was worse than the disease. The most successful obstetricians, at present, are content to use the old fashioned carbolic acid for cleansing their hands and instruments, and the still older fashioned boiling water, soap, and nailbrush to prevent the presence of injurious germs; and with such precautions it cannot be denied that they obtain equal, if not better, results than those gained by the most drastic antiseptic measures. This should be the first and great lesson impressed on all obstetric nurses.

HEPATIC COLIC.

The excellent results obtained by the treatment of gallstones by large doses of olive oil is well-known, and an interesting explanation has recently been given of the method by which the treatment relieves attacks of colic caused by the presence of these stones in the gall duct. Presuming that from three to six ounces of olive oil has been administered, the stomach being empty in consequence of the vomiting at the commencement of the attack, the oil will rapidly flow over the walls of the stomach and part of it pass into the duodenum, soothing the whole of the irritated mucous membrane and so relieving the painful spasm which is always present. When a gallstone has become impacted in the duct, and so has blocked the passage of bile, it is most probable that some of the oil will be sucked up the duct, and so be brought into contact with the calculus which it contains. Now, it has been denied that olive oil has any influence upon such gallstones, because they have been immersed for several days in olive oil and found to have remained unaltered. But that experiment was made at the ordinary temperature of the air, because when it was performed at the temperature of the body it has been found that gallstones in olive oil will lose from one half to one quarter of their weight within four days; and when it is remembered how small a diminution is necessary either to enable a gallstone to slip back into the gall-bladder, or to descend along the duct into the intestines, it can easily be understood how the action of the oil upon the stone in the duct would quickly reduce its size, and so permit the impacted fragment to move one way or the other. Then again, the first effect of the absorption of the oil into the system is to cause an abundant secretion of bile, which, flowing down upon the impacted stone, it can easily be understood, will greatly assist its movement down the duct. Or if, further, the obstruction was removed, it is equally evident that such a flow of viscid fluid would effect the most valuable curative result by flushing out from the gall bladder smaller collections of mucus and calculi, a result which, according to practical experience, is well known to follow this treatment, although the precise causation has been regarded as somewhat obscure. These explanations of well-known facts, are therefore, not only simple but are probably correct.

DELICIOUS MAZAWATTIE TEA
 DELICIOUS MAZAWATTIE TEA
 DELICIOUS MAZAWATTIE TEA
 A Guarantee of Purity.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)