

powders:—starch, rice, bismuth sub-nitrate, talcum, magnesium carbonate, zinc oxide, boric acid, kaolin, etc., etc. When an affected surface is weeping, he recommends lotions and says they are borne infinitely better than ointments; he recommends a saturated solution of boracic acid, and states it is as soothing to the skin as it is to the mucous membranes. When there is much itching he recommends the addition of resorcin or carbolic acid, five or ten minims to the ounce; he also states, what may be a surprise to some practitioners, that with many dermatologists a favourite treatment for acute eczema is the use of black wash, either pure or diluted one-half with lime water, followed by the application of ordinary oxide of zinc ointment. Lotions may be used in the day-time and ointment at night, ointment bases alone being frequently sufficient—such as petrolatum, cold cream, lanoline, zinc-ointment, lard, or paste, such as Lassar's, which consists of one part of zinc and starch to two of lanoline or petrolatum. He speaks highly of diachylon ointment of Hebra, which has, however, the well-known drawback of being a great irritant should it have undergone decomposition. To combat the itching, which is so often a distressing symptom, in sub-acute cases of eczema he recommends the use of carbolic acid, tar, menthol, and resorcin. He calls carbolic acid the morphia of the skin, and applies it in the strength of 10 grains and upwards to the ounce. In chronic eczema, he thinks strong remedies are required to promote absorption of the infiltration, such as tar ointment, or oil of cade, with zinc ointment (3 i. v. 5 ii. ad. 3 i.) or as a paint with collodion. He calls special attention to liquor carbonis detergens (a composition of mineral or coal tar and tincture of soap bark) as a very useful remedy for sub-acute eczema, in the proportion of about two drachms to four ounces of water.

THE X RAYS.

THE full advantage of this valuable addition to the diagnostic appliances of the surgeon are, as was expected to be the case, now being exemplified and utilised in the South African War. By means of the X Rays, bullets and fragments of shell are immediately localised, and therefore removed with comparative facility; and the natural result has followed in many cases already, in the more rapid and successful recovery of the wounded.

Nursing on the Hospital Ship "Solace."

By Mr. THEODORE V. SPEER,
*Graduate, Mills Training School, Bellevue Hospital,
New York.*

IN reply to your request for an article relative to the experiences of a male nurse during the Spanish-American War and elsewhere, I wish first to remark that I am afraid I will not be able to make the article a very interesting one, from the fact that I have no data with me from which to draw inspiration, and will, therefore, be compelled to rely upon a not always reliable, but sometimes tricky, memory.

The sixteen American male nurses now in London, anxiously waiting to board the *Maine*, eager for the front, where they may be enabled to demonstrate their capabilities as nurses on a mission of humanity to their "British cousins," were all, more or less, actively engaged on a similar mission during the Spanish-American War; some in the Navy on hospital ships and cruisers, some on the field of battle, others in hospitals on their own shore, working side by side with the sister nurses, some of whom are here in London with us. Of course, our experiences were as varied as our number; three of the sixteen male nurses on this mission served on board the hospital ship *Solace*.

We left New York in April for Norfolk Va, where we boarded our good ship and sailed to Key West, Fla, where we rested a few days, preparatory to sailing for Porto Rico, to meet Admiral Sampson and his fleet on their still hunt for the wily Spaniard and his ships.

One night, as we were passing along the coast of Hayti, nearing Mona Passage, the darkness was suddenly illuminated by a flash of light and the stillness broken by the boom of heavy cannon and scream of shell as it whistled across our bow. Signal lights red and white dotted the horizon in every direction—the dreaded blood-thirsty Spaniard was upon us. "The Spaniards!" "To arms!" was the universal cry on board; but we had no arms, not even the semblance of a toy pistol, with which to make an unsuccessful "bluff" at self-defence. We replied to their signals, but our reply was evidently unsatisfactory, for it was followed by more flashes, more boom of cannon and scream of shells both "Fore" and "Aft." We were "Held up" by an unseen enemy, for all lights had been extinguished. There was nothing to indicate that an enemy surrounded us. The night once more resumed its quiet, darkness was upon the face of the deep, and nature seemed to be in sweet repose, when,

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)