

Medical Matters.

A SENSATIONAL MEDICAL DISCOVERY.

On Friday, June 30th, 1911, a sensational medical discovery was demonstrated by a young American investigator, Professor Carrel, of Rockefeller Institute, New York, to a small circle of medical men in the lecture-room of the scientific department in the surgical university clinic, Berlin. The Professor has succeeded in promoting the growth of bodily tissues taken from different organs outside the body by placing them on a special medium, so-called blood plasma.

This was also the case with tissues taken from grown-up living beings, whether healthy or diseased. The particles of tissues were placed on the medium at incubator temperature, and it was found that the cultivation of the various tissues depended principally on the concentration of the blood plasma, on its percentage of water.

The lecture was followed by the showing of lime-slides of a number of preparations made by Professor Carrel. They showed particles of the tissue of the spleen, of the thyroid gland, of the cartilage, of the nerve cells, and tumour particles which all demonstrated the most surprising growth on the Professor's forcing bed. This power of growth was most distinctly seen in the formation of a scar. The different stages of the cicatrisation of a small wound were clearly seen, and here, too, the healing process was different in proportion to the percentage of water.

The lecture and demonstration met with loud applause. Geheimrat Bier, the head of the clinic, and the well-known Berlin professor of chemistry, Geheimrat Fischer, congratulated Professor Carrel on his remarkable discovery, and Professor Sticker drew attention to the fact that the Carrel discovery opened out infinite possibilities for the whole branch of science connected with tumours.

INSECTS SAID TO CONVEY LEPROSY.

Dr. Sands, Research Medical Officer of the Robben Island Leper Asylum, and Dr. Lang, the principal medical officer of Basutoland, are reported to be convinced that leprosy is introduced into the human system through the bites of certain insects.

It does not appear to be proved that this means is the sole cause of infection, but both doctors believe that a particular insect or bug is commonly responsible for the spread of leprosy.

The experiments conducted show that the leprosy-fed insect retains the leprosy germs for sixteen days.

The Imperial Health Congress.

The Imperial Health Congress, which, as we reported last week, was preceded by a most successful fête in the Royal Botanic Gardens, on July 5th, was opened on Thursday in last week by Lord Ilkeston at Caxton Hall.

THURSDAY, JULY 6TH.

In his opening remarks Lord Ilkeston spoke of the need of tactful workers, and the great possibilities of good before the Society. He mentioned the dictum of Miss Florence Nightingale, the "Saint of Hygiene," who said what were wanted were workers who would not talk at, or to, but *with* the people. Under the National Insurance Bill new vistas were opening up for voluntary workers in connection with the Health Committees, which would be even more aggressive than the present health bodies in the prevention of disease, because they were on an economic basis. The moment it became the duty of the State to look after the health of the people on economic grounds we got down to bed rock.

The Society had taken the title of Imperial because it sought to extend its influence beyond the seas.

There was a time when in England, as elsewhere, disease was looked upon as a punishment for misdeeds. In the face of a doctrine of that kind men and women felt powerless. Now we recognised that diseases were due to certain well-defined causes. If in the receptive minds of our Indian fellow subjects the accession of King George V. could be associated with this knowledge, instead of with the belief that disease was the punishment of offended gods, it would be extremely and directly appropriate that the Coronation Year should be signalled by the carrying of the knowledge of modern science to the East. There was need of a large Health Service, and that Englishwomen should penetrate the domestic life and educate their sisters in India in the elementary principles of hygiene.

TROPICAL DISEASES AS THEY AFFECT WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

Dr. C. W. Daniels, of the London School of Tropical Medicine, then gave an extremely interesting lecture on the above subject, illustrated by lantern slides, which were tantalisingly indistinct, as they were evidently most instructive. Concerning the conditions of life in the tropics the lecturer said that European women were rather behind the men. The first year or so of life there they were active and energetic, and kept fairly well; after a time the enervating climate began to tell on them and they got languid

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)