

MEDICAL MATTERS.

BLOOD THE CARRIER OF THE ANTHRAX SPORE.

The report submitted to the annual meeting of the Anthrax Investigation Board at Bradford last week stated that it may now be taken as an ascertained fact that blood is the carrier of the anthrax spore, and that it appears increasingly probable that all danger of contracting anthrax would vanish in the Bradford district if blood clots could be permanently excluded from the raw material used. The Board may ultimately be in a position to say definitely that the formula "No blood, no anthrax" is correct; but, although the results so far point to that conclusion, absolute proof is difficult, and time for more observation is essential.

BLACK FEVER.

Of recent years we have been impressed by the important part played by insects in spreading disease. The mosquito, the common house fly, the flea, the tsetse-fly, have all come under condemnation or suspicion. Not long ago there was evidence which appeared to be well founded that the bed-bug was concerned in the transmission of leprosy. Now the interesting news is telegraphed to Professor Ronald Ross, of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, by Surgeon-General Bannerman, I.M.S., late Director of the Bombay Bacteriological Laboratory, and now of the Madras Presidency, that Captain W. S. Patten, I.M.S., Assistant Director of the King Institute of Preventive Medicine, Madras, has discovered the complete development of the parasite of Kala-azar (Black Fever) in Indian and European bed-bugs. For some time this disease, which is peculiarly deadly, was regarded as a form of chronic malaria, but the discovery by Sir William Leishman of its parasite demonstrated that this was entirely different from the malarial parasite. Experiments with the parasite proved that it reached a certain stage of development in the stomach of the common bug; but the same applied to the mosquito and to development in a test tube, and all that has been known so far of the method of infection has been that the disease has probably been conveyed by a blood-sucking or dirt-eating insect.

The same parasite, or one almost identical, is also held responsible by Dr. Wright, an American scientist, for various tropical boils and sores.

TREATMENT OF LEPROSY.

In the *British Medical Journal* it is reported that at two of the Indian asylums of the Mission to Lepers new remedies are at present being tried. A supply of bacterial extract, prepared by Dr. Bayon at the Lister Institute of Preventive Medicine, has just been forwarded to the Calicut Asylum, where it will be applied according to his instructions by Dr. Stokes, the superintendent. The preparation is analogous to tuberculin, and made from a culture originally isolated by Professor Kedrowsky, of Moscow, from cases of leprosy. This organism has been carefully studied by Dr. Bayon by experimental and modern serological methods, and he is of opinion that it is identical with Hansen's bacillus. At Champa, in the Central Provinces, Dr. T. C. Rutherford is experimenting on thirty cases with a new antitoxin. While old and well-recognized palliative remedies are employed at all the society's asylums, facilities for experiment with new and improved forms of treatment are gladly afforded by the Mission, whose organizing secretary is Mr. John Jackson, 33, Henrietta Street, Strand, W.C.

THE SALE OF NARCOTICS.

The International Opium Convention, which was signed at the Hague on January 23rd, requires, so *The Lancet* reports, the contracting Powers to enact pharmacy laws and regulations "to limit the manufacture, sale, and use of morphine, cocaine, and their respective salts to medical and legitimate uses only" in the following manner—by issuing licences to manufacturers of, and dealers in, these products in respect of their places of business, and by requiring them to register on their books the quantities manufactured, imported, exported, or sold. Such regulations are also to apply to medicinal opium; to all preparations (official and non-official, including the so-called anti-opium remedies) containing more than 0.2 per cent. of morphine or more than 0.1 per cent. of cocaine; to heroin, its salts and preparations containing more than 0.1 per cent. of heroin; and to every new derivative of morphine, cocaine, or their respective salts, or to any other alkaloid of opium which might, after generally recognised scientific investigations, give rise to similar abuse and to result in similar injurious effects. The contracting Powers are not required to apply the regulation in regard to the recording of sales of morphine and cocaine in the case of prescriptions of medical practitioners, or in the case of sales by pharmacists in the ordinary course of business.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)