

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES AND SELECTIONS.

SUMMER DISEASES.—The advent of summer says the *American Lancet*, brings to the front a special class of diseases. In some way these are related to heat. This in some cases acts directly upon the organism, producing a class of affections known as heat diseases, sun-stroke, etc. In varying degrees it is possible that this cause is more common than is generally supposed. But the heat of summer is indirectly the means of causing many diseases, as cholera infantum, cholera morbus, diarrhœa, dysentery, etc. This is due to the influence of heat in promoting decomposition, either by acting to break up organic compounds, or by causing the infinite multiplication of the organic germs which induce such decomposition. The ways by which the human body may be damaged or destroyed through the activities of this agent are simply infinite. Great light has of late years been cast upon this subject, but still our knowledge remains very meagre. We already have outlined the antiseptic treatment of summer diarrhœa. More or less the idea of preventing putrefactive processes enters largely into our ideas of the management of many kinds of cases. It is along this line that lies the most hopeful study of summer diseases.

TESTS FOR ARSENIC IN PAPERHANGINGS.—A few months ago we gave, from the *British Medical Journal*, what was said to be reliable tests for arsenic in papers. Wm. Woollans & Co. (paperstainers) have since written to that journal for publication the following: Having made the subject of arsenic in paperhangings a matter of close study for many years, we read with great interest the description of

the test devised by Mr. Grenstedt, as published in the *British Medical Journal* of Saturday, December 11th. We hoped some rough, ready, and reliable test for arsenic had been at last discovered, but in the result we were disappointed. The method proposed would answer in most cases where "considerable quantities" of arsenic are present, so far as Tests 1 and 2 are concerned; but there are still a large number of papers made and coloured with arsenical pigments which would exhibit no recognisable reactions of the kind described; and there are many others highly arsenical, but free from copper, which would yield no such reactions as those described as "Tests 3 and 4." Of the former, the red and the light coloured papers enclosed are examples, while sample A, B and C (containing arsenic) are quite free from copper, the blue C being highly arsenical.

AN EXPERIENCE of over a quarter of a century in the manufacture of non-arsenical papers, and a knowledge of many methods, both empirical and scientific, of ascertaining the presence, or what is sometimes more difficult, determining the absence of arsenic in a suspected paper or other fabric, embolden us [Woollans & Co., paperstainers] to ask your permission to point out to your medical readers that it would be essentially injudicious, where the health of a patient is at stake, for any of them to rely upon any test, such as that now referred to, to determine the absence of arsenic; and that the only way in which such a conclusion can be safely arrived at, is to submit a sample of the paper to a competent analytical authority for careful examination. A superficial, or