

protects against reinfection. If properly applied the resulting ulcer is always healthy and closes rapidly. I have applied this method in ten cases with most satisfactory results, in several of which very extensive ulcerations were present.—Dr. Brewer, in the *Journal of Cutaneous and Genito-urinary Diseases*.

GLYCERINE AS A SURGICAL DRESSING.

The essential points of a good surgical dressing are: 1. It must be non-irritating, either directly or indirectly. 2. It must be antiseptic. Mr. John Wood has said that "antiseptics are the local use of applications calculated to prevent suppuration and putrefaction, and to promote quick healing. This admitted, antiseptics must be not only in the use of some chemical which shall destroy septic germs or render their growth impossible, but also the use of such means as shall, by promoting quick healing and preventing suppuration, tend to render the presence of these germs less harmful. In considering these means we are brought to the third essential point, and that is quick and thorough absorption, and here it is that dressings in common use appear most to fail.

Now, we want a dressing that is non-irritating, antiseptic, will not become adherent, will allow free drainage, will not allow the discharges to get hard and caked, will be freely miscible with the discharges, and not evaporate at any temperature of the body nor occupy the place intended for the discharges. We have, I think, what we want in the glycerine of starch of the *Pharmacopœia*, with some antiseptic dissolved in it; for example, corrosive sublimate 1 in 1000 parts. The starch, added for convenience of applying the glycerine, in addition forms a non-irritating surface to apply to the wound and is a mechanical protection; it is most conveniently applied thickly spread on one or more layers of Gamgee tissue or some absorbent wool. This application is not irritating, is antiseptic, and is removed with the greatest ease from any wounded surface. As glycerine is freely miscible with the discharges it is quite absorbent, discharge in passing into and through the dressing becomes mixed with the glycerine, and as this does not evaporate, it is thus prevented from becoming caked or hard and dry. The glycerine, itself hygroscopic, does not usurp the place of the dis-

charge nor prevent the free escape of the watery vapors. Such a dressing after several days will be found moist, soft, flexible and easily removed; it is heavy with the quantity of fluid it contains, a proof of absorptive powers. The discharges are not collected in one spot. Next the wound there is a jelly-like layer which is easily removed, leaving a clean surface, and the sutures, if any, distinct and easily taken out, not being caked with blood.

In my own practice I have found healing of incised wounds under this dressing quick and accurate, and the dressing of lacerated and contused wounds is absolutely painless and very quick; I have found it of much benefit in those chronic granulating wounds which every dressing seems to irritate, and have applied it with success as a daily dressing in two cases of purulent conjunctivitis. I have not had an opportunity of trying, but should think glycerine of starch might be used with advantage in skin grafting.—Mr. C. E. S. Fleming, in *British Medical Journal*, September 22.

SIMPLE ELECTRICAL APPARATUS.

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Electricity is admitted to be a potent factor for good when properly used in some of the derangements of the human system. Here there is a large field open for research and a rich harvest to be gathered. The medical profession is just beginning to learn how to make use of this agent; but a large number of physicians are still in ignorance as to the methods of operation or the results to be obtained. This is in great part due to the expense of the apparatus necessary. Now a convenient galvanic battery for office work can be made for a very few dollars, and any physician of a mechanical turn of mind will take pleasure in putting it together. Zincs and carbons with attachments can be obtained from any manufacturer of electrical apparatus. These should be attached to a thin board, so that they can be raised from the cells when necessary to add more water. Cells can be made of old bottles. To cut off the tops, place the bottle in the corner of a box which holds a steel wheel glass-cutter at the place at which it is desired to cut the bottle; turn the bottle until the lines meet; then heat the line in a flame for a moment and plunge