

## Selections.

### The Indirect Treatment of Hepatic Cirrhosis.

Cardarelli (*La Riforma Medica*) deals chiefly with the treatment of milk diet, of which he speaks highly. In the cases in which it does good, the urine increases in quantity, the urea increases, and the uroerythrin disappears. These good effects may not be seen all at once; they may be delayed, especially where there is much abdominal tension. Small quantities (half a litre or even less) should be given at first. If milk cannot be borne, large doses (40 to 50 grammes) of lactose may be given in weak broth. To test the power of absorption, the author recommends an enema containing five to six grammes of salicylate of soda, which may be looked for in the subsequent urine. The most reliable indication for paracentesis abdominis where there is ascites, is the quantity and quality of the urine and the presence of edema of the lower extremities. In performing paracentesis, the author prefers the gradual method of extraction by Southey's tubes.—*Brit. Med. Jour.*

### Sterilization of the Skin.

Senger (*Centralblatt für Chirurgie*), investigating the value of alcohol as a disinfectant for the hands, finds that absolute alcohol will not destroy staphylococcus aureus in twenty minutes. The disinfecting power of this agent increases, however, as this drug is diluted down to 50 or 40 per cent. After this the germicidal effect of the drug rapidly disappears. As a result of his experience, he states that a 50 or 40 per cent. solution of alcohol is a sure bactericide for the staphylococcus. If a mixture of alcohol and carbolic acid is employed the result is less satisfactory than when alcohol alone is used, since a chemical combination results, with the formation of a kind of ether. A mixture of 5 per cent. carbolic solution with 10, 20 or 30 per cent. absolutely pure alcohol is entirely inefficacious.

For three years Senger has employed a method of disinfection of the skin based upon his chemical studies. Two agents were employed which had the power of destroying the cocci, and which entered into a chemical combination which in itself is bactericidal. He employs first a 2 and 5 per cent. warm solution of hydrochloric acid for two minutes, then a  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 per cent. warm solution of potassium permanganate for one minute. The resultant brown discoloration of the skin may be removed in a few seconds by sulphurous acid. The action of the hydrochloric acid on the potassium permanganate causes