

operating on gall-stone cases when the evidence was clear that they were present, surgeons should not forget that they owe a great deal of what they know to-day to Pasteur and Koch. It is the work of Pasteur, Koch, Lister and others that has enabled surgeons to open the abdomen in these cases and to treat them successfully. The medical treatment of gall-stones was instituted long before surgeons thought of opening the abdomen for the relief of this condition. The Carlsbad treatment has been in vogue for years, and surgeons should not censure medical men too much for sending their patients to Carlsbad or resorting to medical treatment, when it is known that a celebrated surgeon who, two years after operating on his own father for gall-stone, was attacked himself, and instead of undergoing an operation, went to Carlsbad for treatment. Frank Billings (Transactions of the Chicago Surgical Society, Annals of Surgery, September, 1903).

#### THE TREATMENT OF INSOMNIA.

H. Richardson, Baltimore, urges the importance of proper hygiene, and objects to many drugs commonly used. Opium does not produce the conditions necessary for normal sleep and may induce the opium habit.

Chloral produces effects which are more likely to produce natural sleep; it depresses the heart, dilates the peripheral vessels, lowers arterial tension, but decreases oxidation and lowers temperature. It seems to have a selective action on the brain cells, producing sopor, which may, however, be due to the cerebral anemia. In some cases, probably of anemia with want of tone of the vessels, it produces headache and insomnia. It is also said to increase fluidity of the blood and to crenate the red corpuscles. Although its physiologic action comes near producing the circulatory conditions of normal sleep it must act as a poison, for the chloral habit soon shatters the constitution.

Bromids reduce blood pressure and diminish the caliber of the vessels, showing that their action must be to reduce the output of the heart and not to dilate the vessels; they also reduce respiration and slow and weaken the heart, being a direct nerve poison, producing sluggish reflexes and defective co-ordination.

Hyoscin hydrobromate acts upon the spinal and cerebral