

in his investigations on osmosis, found that the slightest trace of sulphurous acid stopped osmosis. It may be used in the proportion of 1 in 40. Whilst taking care to exclude foul stuff from the genital canal, we must be careful to exclude foul air from the lungs and skin. When the sun shines, open the windows. At night, especially, a fire is often the condition of good ventilation. It is of the utmost importance to guard against chill or any check upon the due action of the skin, lungs, kidneys, and intestinal canal; that is, maintain in due working order the excretory organs. Dr. Goodell has insisted upon the draining of the uterus as a means of getting rid of noxious stuff. The principle is admirable. There is no doubt that, in the ordinary recumbent posture, blood and discharges are apt to collect in the lax uterus and vagina. Dr. Goodell recommends that the patient should at times be raised into the sitting posture to allow the fluid to drain off. Where a woman is strong, and after a few days, this plan may, perhaps, be adopted without disadvantage; but in the weakly subjects most prone to septicæmia, especially after hæmorrhage, sitting up has been followed by syncope and sudden death. If firm pressure be maintained upon the hypogastrium, and antiseptic irrigations be duly observed, drainage is secured. At the same time if the bed be properly made, so that the head and shoulders are kept at a slightly higher level than the pelvis, drainage will be fairly accomplished. The dorsal decubitus is more favourable to drainage than the lateral. An effective barrier against the ingestion of noxious stuff from the parturient canal, is to supply the system with healthy nutriment by the stomach. The more the system is supplied in this way, the less will it absorb from vicious sources. Dr. Oldham was one of the first to lead the revolt against the old fashion of starving on gruel during the first week; but it is easy to err in reaction. During the first two days, the system craves rest as well as food. Food that is not easily assimilable is apt to load the stomach, lying undigested or badly digested. As regards antiseptic midwifery in lying-in hospitals, the dangers gather round the patient in an accelerating ratio. If the history of many lying-

in hospitals could be fairly written, we should have a terrible record of lives sacrificed to ignorance, to reckless disregard of medical authority, to architectural folly, to maladministration, to scandalous experimentation of fanciful crotchets. Unreformed benevolence, overriding the practical benevolence of science, has always been prolific of disaster. Nowhere can it count more victims than in lying-in hospitals. The first imperative condition for the safety of women in lying-in hospitals is the absolute single authority of the physician. The description given by Dr. Fancourt Barnes of the system in force at the British Lying-in Hospital is a practical illustration of the rules necessary to secure safety. Every patient is delivered under the carbolic spray. This disinfects nurses and pupils who are assisting, and prevents the entrance of germs or foul matter into the genital track, at the moment when it is distended and opened by the passage of the child. All washings, syringings, and examinations, are done with carbolic solution. Carbolic spray of 1 in 80 is almost continually playing in each ward. To secure contraction of the uterus, each patient has a mixture of quinine, ergot, and opium, three times a day, for the first week. Since instituting the above practice, he rarely finds any rise of temperature during the lying-in. We may thus hope to see the day when women can be delivered in lying-in hospitals as safely as in home practice.—*London Medical Record.*

NITRITE OF AMYL AS AN ANTIDOTE FOR STRYCHNIA, AND FOR SUBDUING PUERPERAL CONVULSIONS.—In noticing the experiments of Messrs. Greville Williams, and Waters, on the antidotal action of " $\beta$  lutidine," Dr. Robert Barnes, of St. George's Hospital, relates a case of strychnine poisoning. The administration of amyl nitrite by inhalation, whenever the twitching or facial expression indicated the onset of spasm, during sixteen hours carried the case to a successful termination. He also says he has saved several lives by utilising its spasm-subduing virtues in cases of Puerperal Convulsions, and regards it in such cases superior to chloroform.