

scabbing, which is the method to be desired in burns. After removing the cotton, because of suppuration it may be, it is not necessary to remove the bismuth scab entirely, but cleanse any point of suppuration and powder a little bismuth on, then reapply fresh cotton. This method saves the surgeon much labor, the patient much pain, and does much to save life from septic absorption and suppurative exhaustion. Finally by promoting healing by scabbing instead of by granulation, it will do much to lessen subsequent contraction in burn cicatrices.—*Progress, Louisville, Ky.*

### WEANING.

This important process has called forth the most careful thought on the part of such eminent men as Trousseau, Archambault, and Julius Simon, and others. If it is done prematurely, suddenly or at an unseasonable period of the year, one may expect as a result diarrhoea, gastro-enteritis, or cholera infantum, this result being due to the irritation which is caused to the organs which are accustomed to and adapted to the digestion of human milk. If an acute affection is produced, the symptoms are indigestion, diarrhoea, and vomiting, which may come on in repeated attacks and may quickly prove fatal. Acute gastro-enteritis sometimes takes the form of cholera infantum. Instead of the acute form there may be a sub-acute or a chronic one, the belly becomes enlarged and the stomach dilated and rachitis with its well known phenomena may intervene. In other cases the skin, the mucous membranes, and the lymphatic glands may be involved, and scrofula appear as the result of improper weaning. Two questions are to be considered in connection with this subject: (1) When (that is, at what age) should weaning take place; (2) how should it be done? Of decided importance, also, is a consideration as to the time of the year when this may best be accomplished. The summer is the least desirable season for it, for reasons which will at once occur. The most favorable is the winter, and then, in turn, the spring and the autumn. As to the proper age for weaning Trousseau made the mistake of laying down the general rule that it should be accomplished when the child had cut his sixteen teeth, whatever might be his age. But if a child has been nursed at the breast he will have his teeth when he is twelve or fifteen months of age; while, if he has been nourished in part at the breast and in part by the bottle, the first dentition will not be finished until he is two years or two and a quarter years of age. As to the disturbances which Trousseau attributed to dentition, or to weaning in the interval between the eruption of two groups of teeth, it is believed that they have been exaggerated. The age of eighteen months is considered as a good average for the period of weaning, modifying circumstances occasionally requiring an earlier time, but more frequently a later one. Should weaning be attempted earlier than the twelfth

month, it will be attended with danger to the child's life, and this attempt is in reality responsible for the great mortality among infants. When artificial nourishment must be adopted, milk alone should be used, and the author protests against the soups, panadas, and other more or less indigestible substances which are given to infants from four to six months of age under the pretext of preparing them for weaning. He considers that the advice of Trousseau and others upon this point has done great harm.

*How* are children to be weaned? If the child has reached the age of twenty months the question is easily answered. If he persists in wanting the breast, having already been fed, in part, upon milk, eggs, and other easily digested food, the nipple and the surrounding surface may be smeared with some saline or bitter substance, and this will speedily produce the desired result. Should weaning occur between the ages of twelve and fifteen months the difficulties will be greater, for diarrhoea, athrepsia, and rachitis are among the possible results. Milk should still form the basis of the child's diet, and this should continue for several months, soft-boiled eggs and light gruels being added. When the child must be weaned under the age of twelve months, the greatest care must be taken, mother's milk should be very gradually replaced by cow's milk or better by asses's milk. Should cow's milk be given, it must be heated over a water bath and fed from a cup—not from a spoon or a bottle. Any food excepting milk must be considered positively dangerous for children under the age of twelve months. Meat, vegetables, and other substances, has been which are fit only for strong stomachs, must be withheld for months after the breast has been entirely abandoned. Wine, coffee, beer, and cider must also be entirely withheld from young children.—*Archives of Pediatrics.*

### INSOMNIA IN THE AGED.

D. C. L. Dana (New York Bulletin of Clin. Soc.) has found the information contained in the text-books upon insomnia in the aged to be but very slight in amount. Insomnia was not frequent in the aged, but when it was present it was sometimes very intractable. In his experience iron did not relieve the anemia of the aged so as to produce sleep. Alcohol with food is another remedy, and many recommended hot gruel with alcohol before going to bed. While alcohol will relieve some cases, there are others in which the insomnia was increased. The bromides and chloral, even when given in enormous doses, often failed to give relief. Opium was another remedy. Good results have been obtained with a combination of cannabis indica and codeia; from five to six minims of the fluid extract of cannabis indica with one-sixth to one-eighth of a grain of codeia might be used. One-fourth of a grain of the extract of cannabis taken alone sometimes might