

CHAPTER V

GALVANISM

GALVANISM is the term applied to the use of the unidirectional current for therapeutic purposes. It is usually derived from a motor generator of the pantostat type, a battery of dry cells, or, with the use of a suitable resistance, direct from the mains themselves (for precautions, see Chapter IV., full body baths). A simple and safe method of using the mains is to employ a water resistance, as in the appliance known as the galvanoset. Here two carbon electrodes lead the main current, after passing through lamps, into a glass bowl containing water. These electrodes (*A* and *B*, Fig. 6) dip into the water, and are fixed in position diametrically opposite to each other. Two more electrodes *C* and *D* are connected with the patient, and are placed at opposite ends of an insulated rod *E*, which is pivoted over the centre of the bowl. When *E* is at right angles to a line joining *A* and *B*, all the current passes directly through the water. *C* and *D* are then both equidistant from *A* and *B*, and are of equal potential. If *E* be now turned about its centre, so that *C* approaches *A* and *D* approaches *B*, an alternative path is provided for the current through the patient. This is increased the more *E* is turned, until the maximum current is obtained with *C* and *D* directly opposite *A* and *B*. *E* is made of considerably shorter length than the diameter of the bowl, so that the