

infants, I sometimes almost fill the intestines with petroleum emulsion; either alone or in combination with carbonate of bismuth. I learned the value of large doses of bismuth in such cases when I was investigating the causes of motor disturbances in infants, by means of the bismuth food and the X-rays. In many of these cases I noticed that the crying and pain subsided immediately after the administration of the bismuth. Since then I have given very large doses of this drug in combination with petroleum emulsion with the greatest confidence, and generally with the most gratifying results. The chief objection to the administration of bismuth in large doses is that its gritty properties make it distasteful to infants; this disadvantage is overcome by using the preparation known as "Glycerinum Bismuthi carbonatis," a most elegant preparation of milky softness, details for the making of which are given in *The Codex*. One drachm or even two drachms of this combined with an equal quantity of petroleum emulsion serves as a most efficient carminative for infants troubled with wind or colic. It may be given independently or combined with the contents of the infant's bottle. A mixture of this kind is a most efficient substitute for meconium to the important physiological functions of which I have repeatedly drawn attention. When this natural intestinal lubricant and antiseptic is by design or accident discharged from the bowels of the new born infant, disturbances of motor functions and enterospasms are very liable to supervene. In such cases the free exhibition of this artificial meconium has the most excellent effect in restoring comfort.

I am not prepared to support the statement that petroleum is a powerful antiseptic agent. Our experiences in attempting to discover an efficient preservative for our emulsions gave the lie to this belief, but all the same there can be no doubt that it does in some degree limit and retard the decomposition of those nutrient media in which it is combined in large proportion. It does so, I feel convinced, by coating either the bacteria, or the nutriment on which they thrive, with an impenetrable film of a substance which cannot mix with, or become incorporated in, the protoplasmic contents of the living cell. We know from experience that the stools of persons who regularly take paraffin are, if not exactly odorless, at any rate far less offensive than when the oil is not taken. This is, however, open to the interpretation that it is quite as much due to the rapidity of transit of food through the intestinal tract, as to the inhibitory influence of the petroleum on the growth of the bacteria themselves.