

ACTION OF VALERIAN IN DIABETES.—Dr. Bouchard, of La Charité Hospital, has been making a trial of valerian in diabetes. In diabetes without sugar the medicament did not seem to diminish the quantity of urine, but azoturia was obviously amended. The quantity of urea discharged in the twenty-four hours was much diminished; it decreased from forty-five grammes (about eleven drachms) to ten grammes (two drachms and a half). The same results were observed in diabetes mellitus. In these cases, when there existed azoturia together with glycosuria, the quantity of urea always diminished under the influence of valerian. In some cases there was less excretion of water and sugar; but these effects seemed uncertain. But decrease in the production of urea was invariable. Valerian therefore prevents de-nutrition, and may be considered a saving medicament (*medicament d'épargne*). Dr. Bouchard, in respect to this latter quality, quotes the customs of various Indian tribes, among whom the warriors, during a month previous to going out to fight, make use of valerian in every shape—in baths, in frictions, and internally. They ascribe to the substance the strength and courage which they feel in going through long marches, fatigue, and privation of food. This property of valerian has been observed in arsenic and bromide of potassium. Dr. Bouchard commenced with weak doses, which he gradually increased to one ounce of extract of valerian without noticing any inconvenience.

EXTRACTION OF RENAL CALCULUS MORE THAN A CENTURY AGO.—In a rather scarce book called "Mem., Maxims, and Memoirs, by William Wadd, Esq., F.L.S., Surgeon Extraordinary to the King, London, 1827," I find, on page 24, the following note or memorandum:—"Mr. Paul, a surgeon at Stroud, in Gloucestershire, lately extracted from the kidneys of a woman, by an incision through her back, a rough stone as large as a pigeon's egg, and made an entire cure. It is the first of the kind ever performed in this kingdom.—*Gen's Magazine*, Aug., 1733." This struck me as so extraordinary, and, in view of some recent cases and articles in your medical journals, so interesting, that I thought perhaps you might think it worth a place in your journal. Should you desire it, I might send you some other curious reminiscences from this same book.—POOLEY.—*N. Y. Rev.*, Oct. 15, '73.—*The Clinic*.

FOR CHAFING OF INFANTS.—Take of powdered starch two parts, white oxide of zinc one part. Make a fine, well mixed powder. Dust the abraded places with the powder, after proper cleansing.

Sir James Paget says the best wash for hardening the skin to prevent bed-sores, is one part of sweet spirits of nitre to three parts of water.

AN INSTRUMENT FOR THE REMOVAL OF RETAINED PLACENTA.

Dr. Adolph Rasch, at the last meeting of the British Medical Association [*Obstet. Jour. of Great Britain*, Oct., '73.] advocated mechanical procedures for removing the ovum in those cases of abortion in which ergot and cold failed to arrest the hæmorrhage, and the tampon has been given a fair trial without bringing away the contents of the uterus. In most cases this can be done by the fingers in the vagina, aided by outward fixation of the uterus. But still cases occur where the retained placenta can be touched but not brought down, and where prolonged and dangerous hæmorrhage makes a speedy removal imperative. The instruments contrived for that purpose seem to Dr. Rasch to all have the fault in common that the operator does not feel what he has hold of. His instrument is a sensitive forceps, one half of which consists of the index finger, the other half of a scoop, with a finely toothed bowl just large enough for the tip of the index finger, on which it is to be introduced through the os. The scoop is pushed up on the outer side of the placenta, the index finger guiding, and at last pressing the latter into the bowl. Three fingers of the same hand perform, by pressing the stem into the hollow of the hand, what is necessary to transform this single blade, or half forceps, into a complete one. Thus all danger of injuring the uterus is obviated, and a firm purchase of the placenta or membranes effected. After five years' trial Dr. Rasch warmly recommends his simple and cheap instrument.—*Northwestern Med. and Surg. Jour.*

SKIN DISEASES.—Dr. L. D. Blakey uses in skin diseases an alkaline solution of tar. The prescription is as follows:

R.—Picis liquidæ,	ʒij.
Potassæ causticæ,	ʒj.
Aquæ destillatæ.	ʒv.

M. ft. "*Liquor picis alkalinus*."

He adds:—"I have used this very extensively in the treatment of skin diseases, and with results highly satisfactory; and a number of my professional friends have employed it with advantage also."

SUGAR AND MAGNESIA AN ANTIDOTE TO ARSENIC.—The *Mouvement Medical* relates various experiments conducted by Mr. Carl, with the result of showing that sugar, mixed with magnesia, may serve as an antidote in cases of poisoning by arsenious acid, in which cases, too, the internal use of hydrated magnesia is most valuable.—*Lancet*, August 2, 1873.