

matter independent of the influence of micro-organisms. The existence of such a condition I hold to be utterly impossible, and to be at variance with results derived from recent experimental research. Ogston's experiments on this point are of singular interest. He found that micro-organisms were present in all acute, but *not* in chronic, abscesses. Twenty experiments were made on guinea-pigs and mice by injecting pus from cold abscesses into the tissues of the back. "The invariable result was that no illnesses or abscesses ensued; that the pus was, within a week, dried up into a film pervaded by living cells; and that within ten days this film had become totally absorbed, so that no trace of it remained when the animals were killed, and the site of it was not discovered." But when pus from an acute abscess containing micrococci was injected in the same manner, symptoms of blood-poisoning ensued and lasted from two to five days, and after a few more days the animals recovered. And from other experiments it would appear that to have puerperal septicæmia, we not only require the presence of germs in contact with wounds of the genital tract, but also that there be a quiescent state of dilute albuminous fluids supplied for them to live upon, and increase in their virulence, by means of a process of fermentation. The principle of thorough drainage is based upon these truths; it prevents the occurrence of the very conditions above-named, so essential to the thrift of the septic organisms. It must also be remembered that whatever tends to disturb the equilibrium between absorption and excretion, so active in the puerpera, favors germ activity, and it was here that aconite, which obtained so much renown some years ago as a remedy in puerperal fever, exerted its good influence.

*Treatment.*—Of the different interesting points of this disease, there are none so interesting and important as the one which appertains to the prevention of the disease occurring, and its cure when it does occur. Herein lies the great battle-field of opinion. Extreme views, often diametrically opposed to each other, are held by our most experienced observers. The list of precautionary measures which Dr. Thomas gives us is almost impossible for ordinary men to carry out in detail. He views every parturient woman in the