simple ointment, 7 drachams; glycerine, 1 dram. The ointment of lead of the present pharmacopœia is too strong for cases of chronic eczema or psoriasis, it contains 62 grains to the ounce; whereas, from one-fifth to one-fourth of that quantity is sufficient, and more useful than the pharmacopœial strength. The use of constitutional treatment must be combined with this.—[*Dr. W. T. Belcher.*]—*Retrospect.*

Military Hospital Arrangements in Prussia.—Professor Esmarch, of Kiel, has substituted the ordinary shirting triangle for the bandage which Prussian soldiers used to carry in their knapsacks. He has managed the triangle in such a way that the first dressing of wounds and fractures can, behind the firing line, be instantly applied, guns and bayonets being used as temporary splints. M. Wittmaack has sent to the exhibition of Kiel an oil painting representing an action, and the manner in which the triangle should be used. The picture has attracted much attention, and it has been ordered to be printed on each of the triangles given to the troops, so that they may, on the very linen used, see the manner of employing it.

The Treatment of Tongue-tie.—The method which Mr. Maunder has been in the habit of employing to remedy this malformation is to tear or lacerate the membrane with the forefinger. The finger is, of course, introduced into the mouth to ascertain the existence of the deformity, and this is no sooner recognized than pressure directed downwards and backwards towards the floor of the mouth (the finger-nail resting on the frenum) tears the latter, and the object is effected. This means, Mr. Maunder remarks, is very simple, can be carried out under the veil of making a digital examination, and as no surgical instrument is employed, is highly acceptable to mothers.—*Lancet.*

To the Editor of The Lancet.

Sir,—In *The Times* of Friday, 16th July, there is an interesting account from Melborne, Australia, of the death of a respected magistrate of that town from the bite of a tiger-snake. A showman was exhibiting venomous snakes of this description, pretending at the same time that he had a remedy for their bite, which he sold. To prove the asserted fact, he was in the habit of allowing himself to be bitten, and then applying his remedy, without evil consequences. Mr. Drummond declared the snakes were harmless, that the whole business was an imposture, and insisting on being bitten himself to prove his assertion. Although the showman was very averse to the experiment, Mr. Drummond was bitten above the wrist. The usual symptoms of snake-poisoning came on, and notwithstanding the remedy, he died the next day.

The important medical or physiological feature in this case is the undeniable fact that the showman was in the habit of exposing himself to the bites of the same snakes without suffering to any perceptible extent; in other words, that he was proof against the animal poison of the snake.

I believe this fact corroborates an opinion which I have long held, that there are many animal poisons, besides the pathological ones of smallpox, measles, etc., which have the power of so modifying the animal economy, if it does not succumb to their influence, as to render it subsequently all but proof against them. This fact I may illustrate by the mosquito, whose attacks I witness every autumn on the Genoese Riviera. Most newcomers, fresh from northern countries, are terribly punished on their arrival in the south of Europe, as also in all warm climates; and when these same persons return to the South a second or third winter, they are still bitten, but the poison produces scarce any pain or swelling, as is the case with the natives of the district. In tropical climates it is generally considered, I believe, that the skin gradually becomes less freely supplied with blood, under the influence of continued heat, and less liable to inflame under the influence of the poison. But in my opinion the real cause of this comparative immunity is that the entire economy has been inoculated with the poison, and is henceforth less liable to its action.

A friend of mine, Colonel Meadows Taylor, tells me that he has known in India snake-charmers and others who could bear the bite of the cobra di capello, a most venomous snake, with perfect immunity. Probably, having escaped death the first time they were bitten, the inoculation rendered them proof against the poison afterwards. These facts certainly open the field to much speculation with regard to the influence of inoculation of animal poisons generally on the human economy.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. Henry Bennet, M.D.

Grosvenor street, July, 1868.

Treatment of Abscess by Chloride of Zinc.—At a meeting of the Clinical Society of London, Mr. de Morgan read a paper on the use of Chloride of Zinc Solution in the treatment of abscess connected with diseased joints, insisting upon the utility of antiseptics in general, which he considered a great boon in the treatment of hospital patients. At the Middlesex there had been a remarkable diminution in the number of cases of pyæmia and erysipelas occurring in the wards since these remedies had been generally used. The chloride of zinc seems to form a coagulum over the wound, and this is incapable of decomposition, and fluids in the wound are thus kept free from taint. After some remarks respecting the causes of putrefactive decomposition, he mentioned several cases in which abscess was treated with the chloride under the most unfavorable circumstances. Their cure had been as rapid as could be the case in abscess of the same extent in the most healthy persons, placed under the most favorable conditions. The cases related were chosen simply because they all happened to be in the hospital at the same time.—*Medical Record.*

To Relieve Pain in Open Cancer.—In the London Middlesex Hospital (*Lancet*, Aug. 8, 1868) the intense pain of open cancer is best relieved by the stramonium ointment. The following formula is the one in use at that institution: Half a pound of fresh stramonium leaves and two pounds of lard; mix the bruised leaves with the lard, and expose to a mild heat until the leaves become friable, then strain through lint. The ointment is spread upon lint, and the dressing changed three times a day.