

Science Notes.

ACCORDING to Dr. Marcus H. Thomas, who points out the importance to the railroads of first aid to the injured, both from a humane and economic standpoint, in the January 6th issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, the railway accident, in spite of modern inventions and appliances, is not only apparently inevitable, but on the increase. Among the 1,300,000 persons engaged in operating the railroads in the United States, statistics show that one in each 500 was killed during 1904, and one in every 24 was injured. Taking up the consideration of the subject from the standpoint of sordid advantage, "the one which should be of paramount importance to the railroad, with whom the economic question is always one of vital interest," the author says: "The steam railroads of the United States pay annually in damages to injured persons 0.74 per cent. of their gross earnings. This is seemingly a trifling decimal, but in coin and currency it amounts approximately to \$14,000,000. In addition to this sum, \$1,000,000 is spent annually in the maintenance of a legal department, one-half of which expense may safely be attributed to the defense and settlement of personal injury damage suits. These figures do not cover the total expense of injuries by common carriers by any means. This compilation pertains solely to the steam railroads, while the interurban electric lines and local street railway lines increase the above totals many fold. Particularly do the local street railways add enormously to the list. It is estimated that the Metropolitan Elevated of New York alone pays annually \$2,000,000 for personal injuries, and has constantly on hand nearly six thousand suits of this nature. The Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company's annual personal injury budget is in the neighborhood of \$1,000,000. The ease with which evidence can be purchased, and the ubiquity of the professional damage suit lawyer in the large centers of population, gives the simulator and impostor a larger percentage of successful chances than with the transcontinental railroad." Dr. Thomas contends that the surgeon who is qualified in the negligence law is in a position to render the most effective and economic service as adjuster of personal injury claims. "There exists to-day," says he, "in most of otherwise well-organized railroads a lack of co-ordination between the legal and surgical staffs, as a result of the