

consist almost entirely of paraffin, with the merest trace of adventitious emulsifying agents. He says: "The explanation of the semi-solid or jelly emulsions is clearer to me now than it was then (i.e., in 1907, at the time he wrote the paper referred to above. E.P.). Globules of uniform size in a liquid medium require that medium to amount to about 25 per cent. of the volume of the whole mixture, for filling up the interspaces; if the globules are not uniform, the volume of liquid will be somewhat less; but a very large reduction in it involves the globules becoming distorted so as to fit closer, and ultimately they must assume such a form as a dodecahedron, being tightly packed, like bricks, together, with only a film of liquid of molecular thickness separating them. This accounts for the rigidity of the mass, its transparency, and its showing no visible structure under the microscope. Dry air causes it to demulsify by drying up the separating film, and when wetted it becomes opaque, as the films increase in thickness and the oil particles assume a globular form."

These solid paraffins are an immense improvement on the old vaselines which, until two years ago, were practically the only solid form in which petroleum could be administered by way of the mouth. It is difficult to imagine anything more nauseating than vaseline naked and undisguised as a medicament for oral administration. And yet, to my knowledge, it was largely prescribed in this form, at least at one hospital in London, and given to the patients in wooden pill boxes, with directions to be eaten with a spoon.

This inartistic method of dispensing solid paraffin has now been superseded by these solid emulsions, which can be colored and flavored in a great variety of ways. Many people much prefer these solid preparations to the liquid forms, or even to the simple emulsions such as I have described, but for infants there can be no doubt that the liquid emulsions are more appropriate.

The general claims of paraffin as an intestinal lubricant require no corroboration on my part, but in its special application in the treatment of those heterogeneous disorders of infancy which are often classified as indigestion, its great value is not yet fully appreciated by the medical profession. As I have elsewhere pointed out, most of the so-called troubles of indigestion in infancy are associated with disturbances of the motor functions; such as spasms of sphincters, enterospasms or dysperistalses of one kind or another. In these conditions it is obviously extremely useful to know of an efficient lubricant, such as petroleum, which can penetrate to the lower reaches of the bowels without absorption, and without chemical change. In severe cases of so-called colic, or windy spasm in