

contain bacteria, would be impelled to pinch them off—thereby depriving the plant of its most valuable allies—the bacteria which “fix” the nitrogen from the air and which consequently place the pea plant in a more advantageous position than most of the members of the vegetable kingdom. It is true that doctors have not yet thoroughly examined or discovered exactly what part the bacteria in the vagina play in the internal economy of the woman, but sufficient evidence has accumulated to show the folly of destroying them and at the same time affecting the lining of the vaginal canal. For some years I have been against douching, save in emergencies. Recently a definite denunciation of douching was published in the *British Medical Journal*, of April 20, 1918, by Dr. Fothergill. This article is, of course, by no means final, any more than are my own private views on the matter, but it deserves the careful attention of the many people who indulge in or recommend the frequent use of the douche of all kinds.

Nevertheless, there are occasions when douching may be necessary, and when it is only used infrequently it can do no harm if the proper solutions are employed.

Regarding the solutions which should be employed when a douche seems advisable, a large number of substances, all of which are soluble or mixable with water, have been recommended by various people. It is to be remembered that at present I am recommending only those suitable for normal healthy people. Specific diseases, of course, require specific treatment.