

considers that when taken into the alimentary canal, a lesion is necessary to admit the entrance of the morbid germ.

IN THE ADDRESS ON STATE medicine at the late meeting, in the early part of this month, of the American Medical Association, Dr. J. Deering Roberts, of Nashville, chairman of the Section on State Medicine, dwelt upon the importance of investigation into the causation of disease. In conclusion, he advocated the establishment of a National Bureau of Health, the chief of which should sit in the Cabinet, as an equal officer, to consider all questions of international hygiene and State medicine.

TRAINED NURSES.—The editor of the *Philadelphia Medical Times* writes: "If in this country we had fewer medical colleges and more nurse-training schools, the community and the profession would have cause for being sincerely grateful." It is said, too, that "nursing is rapidly assuming the form of a dignified profession. It is no longer a menial occupation, but an art and a science."

POISONOUS SLEEP PRODUCERS.—The *Lancet* enters a protest against the wholly indefensible practice of giving and taking such depressing narcotics as chloral and bromide of potassium as a remedy for sleeplessness. "Sleeplessness is always wakefulness in one or more of its multitudinous forms, and the recourse to narcotic poisons for its relief is utterly unscientific and deplorable from a therapeutical point of view. It is as clumsy in theory—in so far as it can be said to have a theory—as knocking a man down because he needs rest." It is so much easier to write a prescription or make up a bottle of medicine or a box of pills with one of the rank poisons that mimic sleep, and as they do so deprave cerebral and nerve tissue, than it would be to search out the real and active cause of wakefulness.

ON BACTERIA, evidently there is a great deal yet to be learned. Dr. Miller, of Berlin, (*Philadelphia Medical Times*) has made some experiments upon fermentation in the human mouth, and its

relation to caries in teeth. He found, in his cultures, that the microscope revealed the constant presence of a fungus, chiefly in the form of diplococci, either single or in chains, less often in form of bacteria, bacilli, or even threads. Sometimes all these forms are found on a single thread. He states that "the particular form in which the fungus occurs depends somewhat upon the culture-medium, as well as upon the age of the culture." This confirms the statement of Bastian, that the rapidity of growth affects not only the size but the form of bacteria. The experiments of Zweifel appeared to demonstrate conclusively (1) the existence in normal blood of spores; (2) the possibility, by deprivation of oxygen, of the development of these spores into bacilli; (3) the production of septic poisoning by these bacilli when injected into the peritoneal cavity of animals.

RECENT CULTURE EXPERIMENTS of Pasteur with the micrococcus of chicken cholera seem finally to establish the fact that specific virulence is an accidental or acquired property, since, by cultivation, micro-organisms can be obtained which are not noxious or infective. The question remains to be decided is, whence this power of specific infection, and what are the conditions governing its development and mode of accommodation.

INFECTIOUSNESS OF PNEUMONIA.—So long ago as 1875, Klebs asserted that pneumonia was a parasitic disease, and both he, and subsequently Eberth and Koch, had found a micro-organism in cases of pneumonia (inflammation of the lungs). That pleasing writer, Dr. Bunce Yeo, F. R. C. P. &c., physician to King's College hospital, in an address at a recent branch meeting of the British Medical Association, referred to a number of severe epidemics of pneumonia, he believed the disease to be infectious, and says: I have here brought before you but a small fragment of the mass of observations which are on record, and upon which was based the view that pneumonia is an infective disease, dependent on the presence of a specific pathogenic organ-