

By promptly treating acute attacks. If the patient can be seen in the early stage, he should have at once a hot foot-bath and a bowl of hot lemonade. He should then be placed in bed and covered with blankets until copious perspiration is produced.

Dr. Stowell then goes on and gives the modern treatment of colds, which we cannot give in this JOURNAL, but which every

physician in general practice would do well to read and consider.

The point we desire to impress upon our readers is the absolute necessity for keeping the nasal passages in a healthy condition and to use them as the only passage way for the entrance of air into the lungs, keeping the lips habitually closed.

## ON DISINFECTION—FROM TWO VALUABLE PAPERS.

THE destruction of disease germs by disinfection is something with which both health officers and the intelligent public should be familiar. The following are extracts from two valuable papers which have recently appeared: one from J. S. Cameron, M. D., Medical Officer of Leeds and the other from Dr. Cyrus Edson, chief inspector of the health department of New York city.

### USE AND ABUSE OF DISINFECTANTS.

Dr. Cameron said (Sanitary Rec. Feb. '90): I say I am strongly of opinion that a large amount of ratepayers' money is wasted in applying disinfectants in such a manner that they are of no earthly use. To pour, for instance, a few tablespoonsful of carbolic acid into a drain, with the idea of disinfecting the sewer, is to my mind a pure waste of material. Carbolic acid, as I have already hinted, is an efficient disinfectant, but its action is probably due to the property it has of limiting the activity and productive power of minute organisms, some of which we know are the cause of putrefaction, and others we believe essential factors in infection. It may also act, and probably it often does act, on organic matter in such a manner as to render it less prone to changes which would make it a cause or conveyer of infection.

It is not merely with one or two varieties of germs that we have to deal as causes of disease; like the evil spirits in the New Testament narrative, their name is "Legion." Different kinds of organic matter afford suitable soils for different kinds of these minute vegetables to grow

upon, and the growth of a crop of one kind of bacterium in a certain given putrescible substance may limit, or entirely prevent, the development of a kindred germ—just as the fairy rings in the meadows are due to circles of fungi which have, by absorbing its needed nourishment quite destroyed the growing grass. The spores of the commoner bacteria, such as the bacterium termo, are probably very widely, if not quite universally, distributed in the atmosphere near the ground, and the use of disinfectants, or as they are more properly called in this connection, antiseptics, in regard to these bacteria, is not to destroy all these germs, which would be practically impossible, even if it were desirable, but to prevent their action on a particular organic material, or to intercept and destroy them on their way to the material to be preserved. The preservation of tinned meat, for instance, proceeds on the assumption (1) that putrefactive bacteria are present in the meat, and (2) that they may be conveyed to it by the air. To prevent those in the meat from becoming active, heat is employed to destroy them; and to prevent those in the atmosphere from reaching the food, the tin is sealed while still hot.

Putrefactive bacteria, however, are not disease germs; they may even be looked upon as some of Nature's scavengers. But, like them, bacteria, which we absolutely know to be the cause of disease (such as, for instance, the bacterium called the bacillus anthracis), can be also destroyed in this way. We know that the bacillus anthracis is