

the modern novels and one would find that it discussed hysteria, nymphomania, and other diseases; and it was the same in the newspapers. All the questions of legal medicine, public hygiene, and medical matters of all kinds were public, so that the doctor was no longer judged by the families that he might attend, but by the whole world. The doctor of fifty years ago had only a small library of books that he used as a student, and only added to this his clinical experience that he acquired. There were good doctors then, but their responsibility was limited to their patients, and no one thought of criticizing the correctness of the therapeutical measures that they might adopt. To-day, however, all was changed; the smallest village received or published several papers where scientific work was talked of and judged with more or less impartiality, and where the sittings of the great academies of medicine were analyzed. This led the modern patient to ask his doctor to prescribe for him the new drugs he read of, such as antipyrine or strophantine. The doctor might not know more than his patient about the new medicine, which he might not have tried yet; and even if he had an opinion about it, the editor of his patient's favorite journal might have an opposite one. So that he was obliged to prescribe what in reality was ordered by some one else, and his authority was so much lessened in modern times. Certainly the old doctor was treated with great esteem, confidence and affection, and he was almost a member of the family. To-day, however, the old family doctor was a myth; but, on the other hand, the scientific man of medicine and hygiene had become almost one of the wheels of state, or at least of city power, and he was consulted in regard to public health, so that in these days of progress his position was perhaps, after all, better than ever. We lived in a time when the public were well educated and wished to know the why and wherefore of everything, so that doctors must expect to have their diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment discussed by their patients, and even disputed by them. If one gave a certificate in lunacy he might expect the papers to say that he had been paid to do so; but, on the other hand, he might have the satisfaction of saving the whole city from an epidemic by intelligent prophylactic

measures. And again he could sometimes expose the errors of a lawyer who pleaded for the condemnation of a man when a wiser and more correct view of the matter, in a medical sense, would show that there was no guilt. Other occasions would present themselves when a doctor could do good in many ways, and show that, after all, his critics had only a superficial knowledge, and his more exact science would destroy their arguments. This would prove the superiority of the modern physician, but it could not be done except by hard work and hard study; then the general public could not say they knew as much as the doctors.—*Paris Letter N. Y. Med. Jour.*

LIME-WATER.—(Harnack, *Jahrb. f. Kinderh.*) Lime-water has a greater value as a pharmaceutical preparation than has generally been recognized. It acts in part as an astringent. Everywhere where the free lime comes in contact with neutral fats, but especially from the small quantity of fat-acids, soaps are formed which overlay the tissue in the form of a soft greasy mass. It is probable that there is also a direct chemical action of the lime-water upon the albuminous elements of the tissue, for if it does not directly precipitate solutions of albumen, still the albumen is precipitated by dilute muriatic acid if the albumen solution has been mixed with lime-water, and it is possible that the lime-water might gradually form insoluble compounds with the living albumen. The lime-water penetrating the tissues is precipitated in a very finely-divided condition in the presence of carbonic acid, and thereby forms a protecting layer about the cells of the surface of the tissue. The undoubted capability of lime-water to dissolve diphtheritic false membranes depends upon the fact that it is an excellent medium for dissolving mucin, which secures the false membranes to the surface of the mucous membrane and the particles of fibrin to each other. Lime-water may be used for solvent purposes either as a gargle or as a spray, for the atomized lime-water is immediately converted into carbonate of lime. The combined solvent and astringent effects of lime-water make it especially useful in the treatment of pharyngeal catarrh.—*Archives of Pediatrics.*