

THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL, GLYCERINE AND OLIVE OIL ON THE ACTION OF DISINFECTANTS.—Lenti summarizes in the *British Medical Journal* the results of a series of researches as follows: (1) Alcohol in the absence of water neutralizes all bactericidal power on the part of sublimate or phenol with regard to anthrax spores, and the bactericidal action is not exercised until the dilution of the alcohol with water becomes greater than two per cent. in the case of 1 in 1000 sublimate solution, or than seventy per cent. in the case of carbolic acid. The length of time to which the spores were subjected to the action of the solutions was twenty-four hours in the case of sublimate, and forty-eight hours in that of phenol. (2) Glycerine has a similar impending action, interfering with the action even of a 2 in 1000 solution of sublimate, if the proportion of water be less than forty per cent. In the case of phenol it is still more manifest. (3) Phenol and lysol dissolved in olive oil have no disinfectant action when tested as above. (4) In the preparation of a disinfecting fluid one ought, therefore, to avoid the addition either of alcohol, glycerine or fats.

AN EPIDEMIC OF PRIAPISM.—The *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* reports the following unique epidemic: Dr. Meynier, a French army surgeon, has recently published a curious bit of medical experience. A company of troops *en route* having halted for some time at El Hacaiba, the men were nearly all seized with priapism and prolonged and painful erections. Considering that an absence for some time from a garrison town might be the cause, the surgeon ordered light diet and flax-seed tea. The condition, however, became steadily worse. The erections continued throughout the company, and the men began to complain of great lassitude and dryness in the throat. Finally many had marked hæmaturia. Careful investigation disclosed the real cause of the trouble. During their leisure the men had been hunting frogs at a neighboring stream. The poplar and willow trees along the banks were found to be thickly covered with coleoptera of the family of cantharides, *meloe*. Chilled in the early morning, they fell by thousands into the water, where they were gladly and greedily devoured by the frogs—which latter gave similar

pleasure to the soldiers. The taste of the flesh was in no way injured, but its effect upon the genito-urinary system of the divers was disastrous. The removal of frogs' legs from the bill of fare put an end to the curious epidemic in a few days.

A SUIT FOR MALPRACTICE IN CINCINNATI.—Dr. C. D. Palmer, of Cincinnati (*Phys. and Surgs.*), has just had a suit for malpractice decided in his favor. In 1888, while performing a perineal operation upon a woman, he broke the needle, and careful search failed to find one of the fragments, either in the tissues or elsewhere. The patient not acting satisfactorily under the anæsthetic, further search was considered unwise, and the operation was concluded. Soon afterward the doctor received injuries in a runaway accident, remaining unconscious, or semi-unconscious, for about a month, and being utterly unable to attend to practice for a year. In the meantime another physician operated on the woman, and found the needle encysted. Suit was brought for \$10,000. The jury rendered a verdict for the defendant on the first ballot. Dr. Palmer has been Professor of Gynecology in the Medical College of Ohio for a quarter of a century, and is connected with the Cincinnati and Presbyterian Hospitals.

AN ANTIDOTE TO STRYCHNINE.—M. G. Grigorescu (*Archives de Physiologie*, 1894, No. 1, p. 32), in the course of some experiments to determine the action of toxic substances upon the excitability of peripheral nerves and muscles, developed the fact that butyl-chloral opposes the toxic action of strychnine. He found that if injections of strychnine were made (in frogs), those which received also the butyl-chloral remained torpid, while those with strychnine alone were tetanized; the least noise increased the tetanus of the latter, but the former did not show any spasm. After some hours the butyl-chloral was eliminated, and then these frogs were seized with tetanus, as were the others. On repeating the antidote up to the elimination of the strychnine, complete cures resulted. On experimenting with larger frogs similar results were obtained. The observations demonstrate that butyl-chloral energetically opposes its physiological action to the physiological action of strychnine.

AN IMPERIAL BRITISH PHARMACOPŒIA.—It is