

all Nurses under the form of green or red Condy's Fluid (we only use the latter). It arrests, as you know, putrefactive changes in animal substances and on diseased surfaces, and, being *non-poisonous*, it is absolutely safe for domestic Obstetric Nursing. The characteristic colour (purple) gives it a diagnostic value that none of our other antiseptics have when used for vaginal douching, for if the returning fluid be changed to a dirty brownish hue, it indicates in a measure the amount of septic mischief that may be going on, and hence its mere physical property of *colour* gives it a great clinical significance in our portion of nursing work. Condy's Fluid, when mixed with water and exposed to the air in shallow vessels such as plates or saucers, and placed about the sick room, acts as an atmospheric purifier, a giver out of oxygen, somewhat resembling the action of vegetation, which, as you know, takes up the poisonous carbonic acid gas exhaled by animals, and decomposing it in the leaves of trees and plants, gives us back the life-giving oxygen instead. You can thus see the value of permanganate of potash in your town work, and in the winter when there is no foliage about. It is practically odourless, for it is only on coming into close contact with it you perceive the faint kind of smell that is peculiar to it.

Carbolic acid is a germicide, poisonous, colourless and malodorous. Though used to quell stench, it acts on the particular surfaces to which it may be applied, such as drains, sinks, soil pipes, &c. In Midwifery Nursing we employ it usually in two forms—powder for disinfecting all utensils, and for manual use, and for appliances and instruments; dissolved in glycerine, the glycerine and carbolic B.P. 1 in 4 or 1 in 4½, which can be diluted to any strength we require, and for vaginal douching I *never* use any other preparation of carbolic acid. The carbolated vaseline belongs rather to Midwifery practice than Nursing, but even here I never use the carbolated vaseline of commerce, for I cannot find out its *strength*, so prefer to carbolate my own vaseline. I shall point out to you as we go on how useful carbolated vaseline is in Obstetric Nursing—to many, I believe, not generally known. Before leaving the subject of carbolic acid as a disinfectant, &c., I must remind you that it has as much value *outside* the lying-in room as in it—I mean for the disinfection of the house sinks, soil pipes, and drains, where alone the foul sewer gas and sulphuretted hydrogen can be met at the outset of the invasion, and in all probability conquered. For the purposes indicated the fluid preparations of carbolic acid are by far the best, being, as you know, of much greater strength than the powders. Two tablespoonfuls to a pail of water should be

poured down the drain at night. This is not exactly a Nurse's duty, but a householder's; but it is as well for a Nurse to *suggest* that it *should be done*. The practical importance of these measures to the safety of your patients I pointed out in my last paper (No. 92 of our journal), for our best efforts may be baffled if we are being *constantly* supplied with contaminated air from household sources. We have now to say a word or two about the last mentioned of our antiseptic allies, perchloride of mercury, well known as a vermin killer, under the name of corrosive sublimate. It is said to be a most potent germicide, and I need scarcely tell you it is a most deadly poison. It is not an aerial purifier like permanganate of potash, nor a deodoriser like carbolic acid; it is used and acts topically as a disinfectant for the hands, appliances and instruments, diluted to an extreme degree. There are two ways of using it—in loose powders that the Nurse can dissolve from time to time to make her antiseptic lotions; or prepared in glycerine to a strength of which one drachm of the solution makes one pint of antiseptic lotion.

I strongly recommend the latter; first, because you secure a *perfect solution* of the crystals, an important point; secondly, a bottle of poison can be better guarded and kept out of harm's way than loose powders. We must bear in mind that the lying-in room is open to all comers—relations, children, servants, visitors; in cases of other sickness the sick room may be shunned, but in our portion of nursing work it is often a matter of the greatest difficulty to keep people out, and a *lost* powder would put a Nurse into a very uncomfortable state of mind. Whatever might be the form in which perchloride of mercury were introduced into the lying-in room, I should strongly deprecate its being introduced into my patients as a vaginal douche, more especially if it were frequently repeated, nor can I think it well for a Nurse to be dipping her hands at least a dozen times in the day in a solution of mercury for ten or fifteen days at a stretch.

(To be continued.)

THE POWER OF INSPIRATION.—No man ever forgot the visitations of that power to his heart and brain, which created all things new; which was the dawn in him of music, poetry, and art; which made the face of nature radiant with purple light, the morning and the night varied enchantments; when a single tone of one voice could make the heart beat, and the most trivial circumstance associated with one form is put in the amber of memory; when he became all eye when one was present, and all memory when one was gone.

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