

formed the subjects of coroners' inquiries. The first case was that of a young woman employed at an aeroplane factory at Rochester, who died from toxic jaundice with uræmic symptoms; the inquest was held on Jan. 5th. The second case was that of a girl, aged 19, an employee at Vickers's works at Crayford, and at the inquest on Jan. 8th the medical evidence showed that death occurred with symptoms of intense jaundice, the result of toxic degeneration of the liver. In each case the jury brought in a verdict of death from poisoning by tetrachlorethane vapour used in the aeroplane "dope." We understand that the Home Office are taking energetic measures to prevent the occurrence of any further accidents from this cause; but in view of the fact that tetrachlorethane and similar substances are being used in various parts of the country, not only at aircraft works but in other industries—such as the manufacture of various preparations of cellulose—we think it advisable to draw public attention to the dangers involved in the employment of this very toxic chemical.

A METHOD OF STAINING PARASITIC AMŒBÆ.

THE difficulty of satisfactorily staining the amœbæ of dysentery and allied forms is in practice considerable, so that any method which can be relied on to give good results is of interest. The following directions are given in a recent communication by Mr. Alexander Marshall,¹ of the Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories at Khartoum. Smears are made from dysenteric stools and transferred rapidly, while still wet, to Schaudinn's fluid. They are then washed in alcohol of different strengths and finally in distilled water, after which they are stained in Delafield's hæmatoxylin for 20 minutes. They are next washed in tap water and stained with carbol-fuchsin, as for tubercle bacilli; after which they are again washed with water and finally differentiated with Sprengel's solution of picric acid, consisting of equal parts of absolute alcohol and of saturated watery solution of the acid. This is applied for three to five minutes, during which time the reagent is changed three or four times. The stained films are then dehydrated in absolute alcohol, cleared in xylol, and mounted in Canada balsam. Thus treated, the nuclei of the parasites are stained a purplish black, while the cytoplasm is a pale translucent yellow colour. Red blood corpuscles are also stained yellow. The method is described as easy, rapid, and certain in its results, and is certainly well worth trial by those called upon to make this investigation.

¹ Reprint from the Laboratory Journal, September, 1914.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE PREVENTION OF INFANT MORTALITY AND FOR THE WELFARE OF INFANCY.—This association, whose chairman is Sir Thomas Barlow, has arranged for an advanced course of lectures on infant care for voluntary health workers, mothers, nurses, &c., to be held at the Royal Society of Medicine, 1, Wimpole-street, W., on Mondays, at 5.30 P.M., from Feb. 1st, 1915, onwards. In addition to the lectures arrangements can be made for the attendance of every student at four infant consultations at selected infant welfare centres. For tickets and all further particulars, application should be made to Miss Halford, Secretary, National Association for the Prevention of Infant Mortality, 4, Tavistock-square, London, W.C.

THE CLAIMS OF BRITISH SPAS.

(Concluded from Dec. 5th, 1914, p. 1323.)

VIII.—WOODHALL SPA.

DEVELOPMENTS of real importance from a balneological point of view commenced at Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire, in 1887, since which time the place has advanced considerably. The spa was brought prominently before the notice of the medical profession in 1909, when a large party of medical men from London and the provinces visited the place in response to an invitation of the directors of the Woodhall Spa Company to come and see for themselves the facilities for bath treatment offered at an increasingly popular health-seeking station. It is only three hours' journey from London, and is situated amongst most attractive surroundings of a rich moorland country with charming woodland scenes in which pine and birch trees chiefly figure. The place has a restful air, and is well suited to the temperament of those persons who are likely to derive benefit from the therapeutic waters of the bromo-iodine wells.

The principal chemical feature of the Woodhall Spa water is the presence of both the bromide and iodide of potassium in distinctly important quantity, the former occurring to the extent of 3.51 grains per gallon and the latter to 0.53 grain per gallon. The total saline matters present amount to 1562.48 grains per gallon, of which 1406 grains are due to common salt according to Professor T. E. Thorpe's analysis.

Taken internally in small quantities this water is said to produce a sedative and tonic effect upon gastric and intestinal mucous membranes which is useful in some gastric and dyspeptic conditions. In larger quantities the gastric activity is increased and chronic catarrhal conditions are benefited, while the functions of the pancreas and liver are stimulated and altogether a healthier state of nutrition ensues. This alterative action of the waters is particularly observed in cases of rheumatism, gout, arthritis, enlarged glands, and inflammatory exudations. In full doses the water is mildly but distinctly purgative, while effecting a marked diuretic action. These waters, unlike so many natural waters which contain merely indifferent mineral constituents, show a composition upon which the explanation of their therapeutic action may reasonably be based. The presence of bromide and iodide of potassium, for example, may be associated with definite therapeutic results, especially when they are accompanied by chloride of sodium. In this matter the waters of Woodhall Spa are unique, as no other mineral water in this country is known to contain such important quantities of the elements iodine and bromine.

The external application of the water is provided for in many ways, a course of hot mineral baths being a routine of great assistance in cases of rheumatism and neuritis. As an adjunct a hot spray is employed. Local applications are given in the form of sprays and douches to joints, vapour inhalations and douches to the internal cavities of the nose and throat. Compresses for application to painful joints have their basis in a specially concentrated mineral water, which is further used in the form of douche or spray when a marked local reaction is desirable.

The programme of social arrangements at Woodhall Spa is attractive but unobtrusive.