

LETTERS, NOTES, AND ANSWERS TO
CORRESPONDENTS.

COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE CURRENT WEEK'S JOURNAL SHOULD REACH THE OFFICE NOT LATER THAN MIDDAY POST ON WEDNESDAY. TELEGRAMS CAN BE RECEIVED ON THURSDAY MORNING.

COMMUNICATIONS respecting Editorial matters should be addressed to the Editor, 429, Strand, W.C., London; those concerning business matters, non-delivery of the JOURNAL, etc., should be addressed to the Manager, at the Office, 429, Strand, W.C., London.

IN order to avoid delay, it is particularly requested that all letters on the editorial business of the JOURNAL be addressed to the Editor at the Office of the JOURNAL, and not to his private house.

AUTHORS desiring reprints of their articles published in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL are requested to communicate beforehand with the Manager, 429, Strand, W.C.

CORRESPONDENTS who wish notice to be taken of their communications should authenticate them with their names—of course not necessarily for publication.

CORRESPONDENTS not answered are requested to look to the Notices to Correspondents of the following week.

MANUSCRIPTS FORWARDED TO THE OFFICE OF THIS JOURNAL CANNOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES BE RETURNED.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT.—We shall be much obliged to Medical Officers of Health if they will, on forwarding their Annual and other Reports, favour us with *duplicate copies*.

Queries, answers, and communications relating to subjects to which special departments of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL are devoted will be found under their respective headings.

QUERIES.

A. R. would be glad of references to standard works wherein hiccup is treated of.

M.B., C.M., asks for advice in the treatment of a case of gleet of twelve months' duration. Injections of zinc sulphate, iodine, and silver nitrate, iodoform bougies, blistering the perineum, and the passing of instruments have been tried without benefit.

RECURRENT ACNE ROSACEA.

MEMBER would be glad to hear of suitable treatment of above in lady, aged 33. Congestion of the face occurs during or immediately after dinner, lasting some hours; it is greatly aggravated by cold or well diluted wines; the skin of the whole body very irritable; catamenia regular. Treatment adopted—careful diet, tonics, antidyseptics, lead—has completely cured eruption but only to recur.

COLONIAL DEGREES IN THE BRITISH ISLES.

B. D. T. inquires whether a medical graduate of the Melbourne University could sign a medical certificate of death in England.

. No certificate of the cause of death given by a medical practitioner, whatever his qualifications may be, is recognised unless his name be on the *Medical Register*

ANSWERS.

MEDICAL AID SOCIETIES.

FORNIX.—The Hallbankgate and District Medical Society, whose documents our correspondent forwards, is one of the new ones which are springing up in all parts of the country. The result of their establishment can only be disaster alike to the best interests of the public and the profession; for, on the one hand, it substitutes the inadequately remunerated labour of a wage-paid dependent medical servant for proper medical attendance; and, on the other, reduces to comparative poverty the members of a generous profession. The licensing bodies generally cannot, in our opinion, long abstain from following the clear lead of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland and the Royal College of Surgeons of England in forbidding their Licentiates and Members from holding offices in these "middlemen's practices."

VENEREAL DISEASE AND D.T. IN CLUB PRACTICE.

D. T.—All friendly societies specially refuse liability for sick claims arising from venereal diseases. This is always laid down in their rules, and if the medical officer of the society is called upon by a member to attend him for any such disease he is entitled to charge his ordinary fees for the same. In laying down this rule it must not be understood to include attendance for the remote effects of venereal disease; for, if this were so, a member of a friendly society, who had once contracted syphilis, might never afterwards be able to avail himself of the services of the society medical officer. With regard to delirium tremens, the case is not so clear. If it arose immediately in consequence of a drinking bout, strictly speaking, according to the rules of most friendly societies the medical officer would not be expected to attend the member in his official capacity; but this disease so often occurs in connection with other ailments, and is so bound up with chronic alcoholism, that in most cases it would be impossible for the medical officer to refuse to attend, for a large proportion of the disease he is ordinarily called upon to attend is chiefly caused by excess of alcohol.

NOTES, LETTERS, Etc.

ERRATUM.—In the case of Tibbitts v. Toye, reported in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of January 27th, p. 221, column 2, li. e. 4, for 515 per cent., read 15 per cent.

THE Balneological Congress, which was to have been held in Berlin this Easter, has at the suggestion of the President, Professor Oscar Liebreich, been postponed, in order that it may not clash with the Balneological Section of the International Congress at Rome.

PRIZES.

THE Turin Academy of Medicine has awarded the "international prize" of 10,000 lire to Professor Camillo Golgi, of Pavia, for his researches on Malaria. The Medical Faculty of the University of Würzburg has unanimously awarded the Rinecke prize of 1,000 marks and a silver medal to the same investigator for his work in Neurology.

BEER IN JAUNDICE.

DR. A. J. GARLAND (Oamaru, N.Z.) sends a note of the case of a business man, aged 56, who, in December, 1891, had an attack of biliary colic, and slight attack of jaundice in January, 1893. These two attacks occurred at times when he was suffering much anxiety. A fortnight after the last attack he became jaundiced suddenly, with foul tongue, bile pigments, and acids in the urine, and clay-coloured stools. The treatment adopted produced no effect until he began to drink "beer in the fermenting stage." Improvement began in a few days, and in three weeks he was quite well. The brewer who recommended the use of the beer states that its value has been known to his family for many years.

INSTANTANEOUS CURE OF HOUSEMAID'S KNEE.

DR. WM. RUSHTON PARKER (Kendal) writes: Mr. Hugh C. Roberts's report of the cure of a case of housemaid's knee by an accidental fall upon it reminds me of the treatment ordinarily adopted by the late Mr. Hugh Owen Thomas, of Liverpool, which I have often seen him successfully practise. Bending the patient's knee, he gave a sharp blow upon the swollen bursa with his fist, thus breaking the sac and dispersing the fluid subcutaneously; he then strapped the knee for a few days in order to keep up enough pressure to cause the absorption of the dispersed fluid.

PHYSIOLOGY OR CLINICAL MEDICINE.

M. D. EDINBURGH writes: Your correspondent who signs his name "An Honours Man in Professor Sharpey's Class" takes umbrage at what I consider to be two extremely fair questions which were given at the last examination of the Conjoint Board, and he says he would like to know the name of any professor of physiology who teaches his students the use of the laryngoscope. When I studied under Professor Rutherford at Edinburgh in 1879 every member of the class of physiology was taught the use of the laryngoscope, not on models, but on the living subject. In my opinion, a student who cannot answer such fair questions as the ones complained of deserves to be referred for at least six months.

PUBLIC HEALTH APPOINTMENTS.

FILTRATION writes: One can agree with Dr. Armstrong's suggestions as to the appointments in the future for the post of medical officer of health, "that the aspirant for the office should have some experience as an assistant to a medical officer of health of some county or large district." And one feels "immensely" grateful to the General Medical Council for raising the registration fee for diplomates in Public Health to £2, in order to "increase the status of holders of such in public and professional esteem." But one cannot see the good of these arguments when a candidate for a health appointment who is a graduate in Hygiene gets thrown against a rival candidate—I believe all the other candidates were the same non-diplomates—who has neither a degree nor a diploma in Public Health. One begins to ask, Where does the "pecuniary advantage" come in of a candidate having a diploma in Public Health over another that has not? Does the Local Government Board accept such men in preference? In conclusion, I would go further than Dr. Armstrong or the General Medical Council, and suggest "that all men appointed to the post of medical officer of health must possess a degree or diploma in Public Health irrespective of population." Then men who have spent time and money in obtaining the same will have a chance of obtaining posts they are fitted for against "practically the unqualified."

"SAVE ME FROM MY FRIENDS."

We offer the following to Mr. Punch as an interesting addition to his collection of "Things that might have been expressed differently." A certain Chicago clergyman is said to have recently announced from the pulpit that "our dear sister Mrs. X. is suffering from a serious and painful illness; she is being cared for by our dear brother Dr. —. Let us all pray for her safety!" We do not know whether the reverend gentleman had a grudge against the practitioner in question, or whether the mention of his name in this artless manner was intended as an advertisement. If the latter, it may perhaps be thought to have brought its own Nemesis.

THE SCIENTIFIC USES OF LIQUID AIR.

AMONGST the crowded audience that assembled to hear Professor Dewar's lecture at the Royal Institution on January 19th were many prominent members of the medical profession. Many flasks filled with liquid air (which is transparent like water), cooled to about -200°C ., were hanging in front of the lecturer. These flasks were of spiral construction, to prevent extraneous heat from reaching the liquid at the centre, and consisted of two glass flasks, one surrounded by the other, with a vacuum intervening. It is found that convection is annihilated by a vacuum. Similarly an electric spark can scarcely be made to pass in a high vacuum at -200° , and at -274° the passage of the spark would probably be absolutely impossible, except by an enormous increase of its voltage; but the magnetism of the magnetic needle is increased at a temperature of -180° . The conductivity of metals is increased at these low temperatures, also the tensile strain. The breaking strain of iron, for instance, is nearly doubled, the force of cohesion asserting itself with greatly increased power. The colours of various bodies—iodine and vermilion, for example—are much changed at a temperature of -180° , but blues and organic colouring matter of all tints are very little affected. At the end of the lecture some of the liquid air was solidified. In reference to this experiment a curious point was observed. Oxygen by itself will not solidify, but can be made to do so