

effects of weakness within and against the encroachments of exacting combinations from without?

I shall be glad to forward a copy of the rules of the Medical Guild to any practitioner who will apply, and to give every information in my power with reference thereto.—I am, etc.,

ALEXANDER STEWART, M.D.,
Honorary Secretary of the Medical Guild.

Pendleton, Manchester, March 19th.

PAYING HOSPITALS.

SIR,—Dr. Herringham's scheme for the establishment of nursing homes or hospitals for the benefit of the lower middle class would, if carried out on his lines, tend to still further reduce the general practitioner's income.

If the proposed hospitals must be large to make them pay, then the plan cannot commend itself to the rank and file of the profession. That patients should continue to be under the care of their own doctor is without doubt earnestly intended by your correspondent. But this will only be possible to those medical men who happen to be located within an easy distance of the institution; for it is obvious long journeys would not "pay" at ordinary fees. Another point is there should be no consulting staff; patients and their doctors should be as free to call in whom they like in consultation as they are at present.

By these modifications of an otherwise commendable scheme, not only would the specified class benefit, but the profession all round would not be the loser—a matter too frequently lost sight of.—I am, etc.,

Weymouth Street, W., March 19th.

CHAS. W. CHAPMAN.

SIR,—I quite endorse everything that Dr. Herringham has said in his letter. We want nursing homes, not hospitals, where patients can be taken in at 2 guineas a week, and attended there by their own private medical attendants. The lowest charge at existing nursing homes is 5 guineas a week, and this is quite out of the power of a clerk, unmarried, and earning, let us say, £200 a year, to pay. He is thus driven to enter the pay hospitals which compete with the general practitioner. Such a patient could well afford to pay the customary medical fee of his ordinary attendant, and 2 guineas a week for the nursing and accommodation. A home of this description might be started in every district of London by the co-operation of the medical men in that district, and, if properly worked, would pay a decent interest upon the money invested. Money placed in such a scheme by a local medical man would be well invested, for not only would he receive at least the current rate of interest upon it, but he would be spared the chagrin of seeing his middle-class patients when seriously ill pass out of his hands into some charitable institution. One reason why fees are so high at a nursing home is that the proprietors who live out of it must make at least 50 per cent. upon the money invested to enable them to do so.

This would be avoided at a co-operative nursing home. It might be arranged that the subscribing medical men had the first right for beds, and after that the patients of non-subscribing medical men of the district could be accommodated if there was room. If fifty medical men in a district took each a £10 share, £500 would be raised. This would be ample to furnish and equip a house large enough to hold fifty patients, and surely the aforesaid fifty medical men could always manage to keep, let us say, forty patients in the home between them. This would bring in an income of £4,000 a year, amply sufficient to keep the concern going, pay a handsome dividend, and put away a fund against future emergencies or slack times.—I am, etc.,

Queen Anne Street, W., March 17th.

GEORGE HERSCHELL.

MEDICO-LEGAL AND MEDICO-ETHICAL.

A NON-REGISTERED DENTIST.

ON March 16th Mr. Louis Levey appeared before the Dublin police magistrates charged with having described himself as a dentist, not being at the time registered under the Dentists Act of 1878. This was the first prosecution of the kind in Ireland. The charge was admitted, but it was urged in mitigation that defendant was in partnership with a registered dentist, the firm styling themselves American dentists. The defendant was fined £5, with £2 2s. costs.

QUACKERY.

A CORRESPONDENT writes to inquire whether it would be wise for him to take any action against a person under the circumstances specified in his letter. We gather from the letter the following facts, namely, that our correspondent had attended a club patient who consulted him respecting a severe wrench he had sustained of the first phalangeal joint of the middle finger of the left hand; that the patient did not call again till twelve or fourteen days afterwards, and then only for a certificate to declare off the funds of the club, stating that he had in the meantime been under the care of an unqualified person who follows the calling of a Primitive Methodist minister. This person, it appears, had told the club patient that our correspondent had overlooked a dislocation, but that he had successfully returned it. Further, that the unqualified person referred to whilst on his ministerial journeys carries a bag of nostrums, including a liniment "Black Wonder Oil" at 1s. 6d. and 2s. a bottle, "guaranteed to cure every disease known"; that payment for services is demanded and received in every case.

The above statement of facts suggests three courses which might be taken: (a) Proceedings for slander at the instance of our correspondent personally; a solicitor should, however, be consulted before writing or taking any steps in reference to this. (b) Proof of purchase of a bottle of the oil with the label representing the ailments for which it could be applied might be forwarded to the Commissioners of the Inland Revenue, Somerset House, Strand. (c) If evidence is forthcoming from two or three persons that the unqualified person in question has prescribed and compounded medicines for them in cases requiring medical, as distinguished from surgical, treatment, particulars of such cases might be forwarded to the Clerk to the Society of Apothecaries, Blackfriars, London.

MEDICO-PARLIAMENTARY.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Poor-law Officers Superannuation Bill.—Mr. W. LONG, in moving the second reading of this Bill, explained that its object was to give a statutory right of pension to Poor-law officers. The Poor-law official had to make a contribution similar to that which was made under the Civil Service Pension Fund, to vary according to the rate of the number of years' service. He believed it to be a compromise which could be accepted generally by the House, and which, if passed into law, would remove what had been for more than twenty years a very vexed question.—Mr. SHAW LEFEBVRE said that, on behalf of the Government, he had no hesitation in supporting the second reading of the Bill. It would require a good deal of consideration in Committee, but, so far as he could understand, its general principle was not unfair to the public. Mr. LOGAN objected.—Mr. J. A. PRASE, Mr. WARNER, and Captain NORTON appealed to the hon. gentleman to withdraw his objection, but he persisted, and the debate stood adjourned.

Eyesight Tests for Railway Servants.—Sir JOHN LENG asked the President of the Board of Trade whether it was obligatory on railway companies to subject experienced guards, drivers, and signmen to eyesight tests for colour blindness; whether it had come to his knowledge that a railway company in Scotland had adopted a theoretical test which men had failed to pass who had never mistaken the semaphore arms and flags by day or lamps by night as practically used in railway working; and that notices of dismissal had been given to a number of old servants of the company, thus causing great uneasiness and alarm amongst the railway employes; and whether this was consequent upon any action of the Government or any order by the Board of Trade.—Mr. BRYCE said that railway companies were not legally compellable to subject their servants to eyesight tests for colour blindness. The facts stated in regard to the railway in Scotland had not come to his knowledge. Having no powers, the Board of Trade had made no order. The subject was, however, one of great interest and importance to the companies and the travelling public whose interests obviously required that adequate tests for colour vision should be applied. In 1892 the Board of Trade communicated to the railway companies the report of a committee of the Royal Society on colour vision, and corresponded with the companies in order to ascertain what action they had taken or proposed to take to test the colour vision of their servants.

UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES.

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

EXAMINATION FOR MEDICAL AND SURGICAL DEGREES.—The third examination for the degrees of M.B. and B.C., Part I, will commence on April 23rd; Part II will commence on the same day. The examination for the degree of M.C. will commence on April 26th. The names of candidates for these examinations must be sent to the Registry on or before April 11th. Candidates who are members of the Senate may send their names to the Registry direct. All other names must be sent through the Praelectors of the respective Colleges. The first examination for the degree of M.B. and B.C., Part I, Chemistry and Physics, will commence on June 7th; Part II, Elementary Biology, on June 10th. The second examination, Part I, Pharmaceutical Chemistry, will commence on June 13th; Part II, Human Anatomy and Physiology, on June 17th. The names of candidates for these examinations must be sent to the Registry through the Praelectors of their respective Colleges on or before May 27th.