

a poor parson the other day for saying that a remark of Mr. Coleridge's involved a *suppressio veri*. He suppress the truth! Why he would not add to that procession by the thickness of the epidermis on a dog's nose or the last hair of the end of its tail. So there is no escape by any loopholes or byways, the issue is a plain one. As we are forbidden by the amenities of polite debate to describe Mr. Coleridge's statement in the only language which is applicable, we must accept the other alternative and believe it is true, and that the procession is really there, though we cannot see it, which, as Euclid says, is absurd.

There were no more speeches worth commenting on, with perhaps the exception of a single remark by Lord Ernest Hamilton. He said doctors were no better judges of the utility of vivisection than any of his hearers, and added, I don't ask my bootmaker how many pairs of boots I require, why should I ask my doctor about the utility of vivisection? As he was talking of cobblers it was a pity he did not recall the advice of Horace and stick to his last if he has one. Any schoolboy could see that the analogy is false and the argument misleading. The utility of vivisection or experiments on living animals involves the relation of medicine to physiology, and a fair comprehension of the question requires an acquaintance with both sciences which may need more application than Lord Ernest has ever bestowed on any subject in his life. If he cannot see the difference between a cobbler giving his opinion on his own work and his customer's business, what of his intelligence? If he can see it and merely uses the argument like a penny in the slot to extract a grin from the great unwashed, what of his honesty?—I am, etc.,
London, W., May 3rd. R. H. CLARKE.

SOME ANTIVIVISECTION MISSTATEMENTS.

SIR,—Your anonymous correspondent, "*Magna est Veritas*," criticizing my book, *Scientific Research*, points out that I accused Crile of experimenting without anaesthetics in the face of Crile's assertion that "in all cases the animals were anaesthetised." My reason for the assertion is as follows:—Crile admits that in some cases he used morphine and curare only. Now my experience has been that, even with ether, to give just enough to produce anaesthesia without killing the dog (dogs were the animals used) is much more difficult than in human administration. Without curare the struggles and cries of the animal furnish a guide; with curare this guide is absent. Proper anaesthesia with ether and without curare is possible, for the drug can be regulated from moment to moment as indications require; but with a slower agent, morphine, how can the quantity be adjusted? And, when curare is combined, what evidence is there that the animal is unconscious?

These considerations I indicated in the context of the passage criticized and on other pages. It was pointed out to me that they might be overlooked by a careless reader, and in the third edition I suppressed the assertion that Crile had experimented without anaesthetics, substituting the statement that some were done with anaesthetics and others under morphine and curare.

Your correspondent has "been given to understand that morphine is the best anaesthetic to use when curare is given to dogs." Possibly—from the experimenter's point of view. But what about the point of view of the dog? If "*Magna est Veritas*" wishes to set the matter for ever at rest and thoroughly expose my fallacy I suggest that he should undergo one of Crile's experiments under morphine and curare and publish his experience. I shall be pleased to look on and to select the experiment from Crile's book.

His letter is headed "Some Antivivisection Misstatements." "*Magna est Veritas*" cannot write without making some himself. He says "the chief experiments attacked in the book are those of Dr. Crile." I think any one else would say that the chief experiments attacked are those I have myself witnessed and described. To heighten the effect he quotes me as saying that "horrors openly and without shame" are practised in English laboratories. Like the Irish orator who electrified his audience by stating that the British Government had murdered a priest in his vestments, and artistically omitting the fact that it was a pagan priest in Burmah, so "*Magna est Veritas*" artistically omits that the said horrors referred to experiments I had seen on the Continent on struggling and howling dogs. What I did say is—after a passage stating the impossibility of being sure of anaesthesia under curare—that similar experiments are conducted in England under curare.

Lastly—and this is so unimportant that I should apologize

for dwelling on it—"Magna est Veritas" thinks most medical readers of the book thought it unworthy of notice. Is the writer a lady or Sir Fretful Plagiary redivivus?

While Mr. Stephen Paget has "gone for" other publications which must be equally unworthy of notice, he has given a most severe letting alone to *Scientific Research*, which was heavily advertised and "boomed," not, however, by myself. I think the real reason for his silent contempt was that the gist of the volume is a plain narrative, almost without comment, of what the author had seen.—I am, etc.,
April 29th.

THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOK.

THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL AND SPECIALLY-SKILLED PATHOLOGISTS.

SIR,—With reference to the article in the *BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL* for April 25th last, on the subject of the Council and specially-skilled pathologists, stating that while special pathologists were desirable £2 2s. was too small a fee, and that the Council had made no arrangement for calling in the practitioner who had been in attendance during life, I desire to point out to you: (1) That the only object of the Council is to secure the services of skilled pathologists in cases of special difficulty; (2) that the fee for making *post-mortem* examinations and giving evidence thereon is determined by statute, and that the Council has sought an amendment of the law in the direction of the appointment of medical investigators in inquest cases on more than one occasion, but hitherto unsuccessfully; and (3) that the recommendation of the Public Control Committee, which was adopted by the Council on March 3rd, 1903, was as follows:

That an intimation be given to coroners that in those special cases where a pathologist is employed to make a *post-mortem* examination, and where a medical practitioner had been in attendance on the deceased, such practitioner may be summoned to give evidence, and paid the statutory fee whenever the coroner is satisfied that his evidence will be material.

—I am, etc.,

GODDARD CLARKE,

Chairman of the Public Control Committee of the Council.
Spring Gardens, S.W., May 5th.

SIR,—I fully appreciate the good intentions of the London County Council on the one hand, and the inconvenience to which St. Thomas's Hospital has been recently put on the other. But it appears to me that neither the one nor the other should lead the hospitals to the action which Dr. Turney wishes them to take.

In matters of business, and especially of public business, it is not wise to rely on the good intentions expressed by others, nor on the pious opinions to which we ourselves may give utterance, when we at the same time take the very steps which will render both abortive.

It is acknowledged that the work which is proposed requires special skill and training. To say that such work ought to be properly paid for by the public body which needs it, and then to add that, although we are of that opinion, we are ready to recommend certain specially-skilled persons to do it at the fee which we have already said is inadequate, is a course of action not only undignified, but impolitic. It will effectually prevent any proper recognition of such services ever being made.

That this or that individual has done, or may in the future do, the work for this or that fee is no concern of any one beside the individual. It is an entirely different thing for large public bodies to sanction, and thereby to perpetuate, inadequate remuneration for medical men.

But the matter has another side still. It is allowed by all that such important work as this ought to be performed by an officer or officers specially appointed. Such an appointment the present state of the law renders impossible. But that is no reason for us to make the necessary change of the law impossible by providing, in order to remove a temporary inconvenience, a makeshift which, while itself unsatisfactory, will certainly prevent all chance of improvement.—I am, etc.,
Wimpole Street, W., May 5th.

W. P. HERRINGHAM.

PROPOSED DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON VACCINATION.

SIR,—I am requested by the Council of this Association to send you the following resolution, which was unanimously passed by them at their meeting on Friday, May 1st, and

which has been forwarded to the President of the Local Government Board:

That this Association would welcome the appointment of a Departmental Committee of the Local Government Board to inquire into the details of the working of the Vaccination Acts, 1867 to 1898, and would be prepared to give every possible assistance in any such inquiry.

I am, etc.,

CHAS. GREENWOOD,
Secretary, Association of Public Vaccinators of England
and Wales.
Temple, E.C., May 5th.

OPERATIONS ON THE BILIARY PASSAGES: A CORRECTION.

SIR,—I feel that a note of explanation is necessary from me in connexion with an address that was given before the London Polyclinic, and published in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL for January 24th.

I had not noticed, until it was pointed out to me a few days ago, that one case is referred to both under the headings of "Choledochotomy" and "Intravisceral Fistula." The case does actually illustrate both conditions, as a gall stone was removed from the common duct and at the same operation a gall-bladder colic fistula was closed by suture; yet it might have been better to give separate cases as examples, which could easily have been done, seeing that I have performed nearly 100 choledochotomies (60 of which have been published) as well as a number of operations for intravisceral fistula.

As a matter of fact, the cases illustrating my lecture were got out for me by my secretary from abstracted notes furnished by my colleague who assists me in my work, and when I read over the type-written copy of my address I did not notice the two references to one case.

The choledochotomy was an interesting one in the fact that an incision was continued down the shrunken cystic duct until it reached the dilated common duct, and through the opening the crushed fragments of calculus were extracted by a scoop, and a drainage tube was inserted directly into the common duct through the part where the cystic duct joins it; in the brief abstract of the case these details have been omitted.

Trusting that this note will suffice to explain an oversight for which I must hold myself responsible, I am, etc.,
Park Crescent, W., May 4th.

A. W. MAYO ROBSON.

POST-OFFICE MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS.

SIR,—I am obliged for your courteous insertion of my letter on this subject. May I ask you to allow me to make a few further remarks on the matter? I understand that the Postmaster-General has now decided to divide the Brompton postal district, for medical purposes, into four parts. I am therefore anxious to point out that there is thus some risk of a very undesirable precedent being created. In the case of the district in question, the total receipts for the undivided area did not amount, on an average, to more than £250 per annum, from which the cost of medicine, etc., must be deducted. As this appointment involved the care of over 500 persons, it must, I think, be admitted that this remuneration was in no way excessive. It is consequently obvious that the division of the district into four parts means that the annual remuneration of each of the medical officers will amount to a very small sum. I do not suggest for a moment that the Post Office has not, in this particular instance, found gentlemen willing to accept the positions who are thoroughly qualified to perform the work; but I do feel compelled to point out that, if it becomes the practice to so cut up medical postal appointments that they cease to be attractive, the public service is likely to be a severe sufferer by the change.

I should also like to draw attention to the very singular manner in which the new medical officers have been selected. The vacancy was not advertised in either the local or medical press; and in one of the subdivisions, a gentleman who has acted as deputy medical officer for the past six years, apparently to the satisfaction of the Department, and who has done the work since the death of the late holder of the position, has been passed over, together with all the other applicants, in favour of a gentleman who was not a candidate, and who has had no experience of postal duties. It would seem that proximity of residence to the various postal centres has been the only qualification considered.—I am, etc.,

Sydney Street, S.W., April 28th.

JAMES HAMILTON, M.D.

SIR,—Dr. James Hamilton of Chelsea has raised, in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of April 18th, the important question whether, in filling up Post-office medical appointments,

the Department should advertise vacancies or fill them up at once by the exercise of patronage in favour of practitioners known or recommended privately to one or more of the leading officials. I imagine the profession would as a whole prefer an open competition. At all events this would give all aspirants an equal chance, and prevent discontent.—I am, etc.,

South Kensington, April 23rd.

T. R. A.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON SENATORIAL ELECTION.

SIR,—It has not hitherto been the custom that candidates for election to the Senate of the University of London should issue an address to the members of Convocation, and we do not apprehend that Sir Thomas Barlow will in the present instance depart from so laudable a practice.

We therefore ask you to allow us to make known through the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL that Sir Thomas Barlow, by his long and well-sustained service to the University, continues, in our opinion, to merit the strong support of all those graduates who have at heart the development of the University in the interests of true education.—We are, etc.,

CHARLES A. BALLANCE.

J. MITCHELL BRUCE.

JUDSON BURY.

ALFRED HY. CARTER.

NORMAN DALTON.

A. PEARCE GOULD.

F. DE HAVILLAND HALL.

J. A. NUNNELEY.

RUSHTON PARKER.

May 6th.

F. G. PENROSE.

SIDNEY PHILLIPS.

FRED. T. ROBERTS.

A. ERNEST SANSOM.

MARY SCHARLIEB.

E. MARKHAM SKERRITT.

FREDERICK TAYLOR.

H. J. WARING.

SIR,—I have received a note from Dr. Colman telling me that Sir Thomas Barlow is in Spain and his present address is not known. For this reason I am unable to give to your readers Sir Thomas Barlow's answer to the important questions relating to the University of London mentioned in my letter last week.—I am, etc.,

Burton, Westmorland, May 6th.

HERBERT RHODES.

THE IRISH POOR-LAW MEDICAL SERVICE.

SIR,—With reference to your article in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of April 25th on the Irish Poor-law Medical Service and the efforts made by the Association to help us, I think that the Medico-Legal Committee might now give substantial aid by endeavouring to impress on the Chief Secretary for Ireland the necessity which exists for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the grievances of the dispensary doctors and the general dissatisfaction which is growing in the service. This inquiry might be included in the Commission which is about to take evidence with regard to the amalgamation of the Irish Unions, or might be an independent one if desired. At all events, it is time that all our organizations should be up and stirring if the present deplorable condition of the Irish Dispensary Service is ever to be remedied.—I am, etc.,

April 27th.

RED TICKET.

MEDICO-LEGAL APPLICATION OF STEREOSCOPIC PHOTOGRAPHY.

SIR,—May I call attention to a fact which should be of some medico-legal interest?

I have for some years been in the habit of taking stereoscopic photographs of naked-eye appearances in fractures and dislocations, skin diseases, abnormalities, etc., and it occurs to me that as records in certain cases for the purposes of legal evidence these are reliable. The ordinary photograph (single) is not so, for the obvious reason that it can be "retouched" or "faked" by a skillful manipulator in such a manner as to produce very false appearances. The stereoscopic photographs cannot be tampered with in any way without the fact becoming obvious at a glance. The reason for this will become at once apparent to any one who will make the attempt, say, by "manipulating" a view such as one buys at the photographers. He may ever so carefully touch up or alter one of the pair of views, but he cannot make the other match it in this respect, and all adventitious work will stand out of the combined picture and be easily recognized as such when seen through the stereoscope.—I am, etc.,

C. H. SOUTER, M.B., C.M. Aberd.

Balaklava, South Australia, March 30th.