

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 intervisceral 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 Post-master-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.

F. G. PENROSE.

J. MITCHELL BRUCE.

SIDNEY PHILLIPS.

JUDSON BURY.

FRED. T. ROBERTS.

ALFRED HY. CARTER.

A. ERNEST SANSOM.

NORMAN DALTON.

MARY SCHARLIEB.

A. PEARCE GOULD.

E. MARKHAM SKERRITT.

F. DE HAVILLAND HALL.

FREDERICK TAYLOR.

J. A. NUNNELEY.

H. J. WARING.

RUSHTON PARKER.

May 6th.

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.