

MEDICINAL AND DIETETIC PREPARATIONS.

Regulin.

IN spite of the large number of preparations in use for the treatment of chronic constipation, no one will deny the possibility that yet other means of dealing with it may possess advantages over any hitherto in vogue. The preparation known as "Regulin," supplied by the Regulin Syndicate, Limited (13, Cullum Street, London, E.C.), consists of agar-agar in the form of small flakes, containing a small proportion of an aqueous non-bitter extract of cascara sagrada. Agar-agar has been recommended for use as a laxative, its action being mechanical; after being swallowed, it absorbs large quantities of water in the stomach and retains it as it passes on into the intestine, and so causes the formation of soft faeces instead of the hard masses so usual in constipation; it is claimed that in the preparation under notice the extract of cascara slowly separates from the agar-agar in the lower intestine and stimulates evacuation by its purely local action on the mucous membrane. Our examination of the specimens of Regulin submitted show that it is a tasteless material which could be taken without difficulty or repugnance, and although the dose is somewhat large this disadvantage may be overcome by mixing it with food; it is also supplied in tablets made up with chocolate, which are quite attractive to taste.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS OF HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL SCHOOLS.

THE Honorary Secretaries of the King Edward's Hospital Fund for London have sent us the following correspondence for publication:

To His Gracious Majesty King George V.

May it please your Majesty,

The Metropolitan Radical Federation, for whom I am empowered to write, have observed with deep concern that some of those who manage the great hospitals of London are persons who have not attended with becoming respect to the recommendations clearly and emphatically pronounced by Sir Edward Fry, His Grace the Archbishop of York, and Lord Welby, in the report made by them in 1905 to the Council of King Edward's Hospital Fund after they had fully investigated the financial relations existing between the great hospitals and the schools contiguous to them.

Those three investigators, whose probity and wisdom none can gainsay, declared that the benefits reciprocally conferred by the hospitals and schools the one upon the other should be regarded as equivalent, and that, therefore, where money was taken from the coffers of the hospital and conveyed to those of the school, the school remained a debtor to the hospital to the amount of such diversion.

To this declaration the Metropolitan Radical Federation appended its cordial adhesion when it was published. The schools are private enterprises which do not reveal their accounts to the public, and their profits, if any, are retained by private persons, and do not find their way into the treasury of the hospital.

This salutary direction that money subscribed or bequeathed to the hospitals, by persons whose sole interest is centred in the tending of the sick poor, should not be conveyed away to schools where the public are not informed what becomes of it, has been openly flouted in one hospital and silently evaded in some others.

It has been openly flouted at St. George's, where Dr. Charles Slater in a speech to the school contemptuously spoke of the "ill-advised action of a commission of the King's Hospital Fund."¹ And this insubordinate utterance is fully endorsed in the last published accounts of St. George's Hospital, where we discover² that £1,026 was paid directly from the funds of the hospital in salaries to the laboratory staff of the school, and £550³ similarly diverted to the "medical school for work done for the hospital," although the report of Sir Edward Fry and his distinguished coadjutors pronounced any "work done for a hospital" by a school as being paid for fully by the reciprocal benefit conferred upon the school by admission of its pupils to the wards of the hospital, and any cash

payments, such as these of £550 and £1,026, to be debts of the school to the hospital.

In these very clear circumstances the Metropolitan Radical Federation are disturbed, astonished, and grieved to observe that the Distribution Committee of King Edward's Hospital Fund have condoned this open flouting of the directions of their own distinguished committee of inquiry by making a grant to St. George's Hospital of £1,500, which appears in the same published accounts as the above insubordinate diversions.

In many other London hospitals vast sums in the past have been taken from the funds of the hospitals and conveyed into the private accounts of the schools; these amounts remain debts owing by the schools to the hospitals, but no effort appears as yet to have been made to repay them.

The Metropolitan Radical Federation make no apology for coming into the presence of Your Majesty, who is President of King Edward's Hospital Fund, with the respectful request that Your Majesty will at least direct that no further grant from King Edward's Hospital Fund be made to St. George's Hospital until the £1,576 diverted to the school, according to the last accounts, are refunded.

The Metropolitan Radical Federation further respectfully suggest that it would certainly give the working classes of London greater confidence in King Edward's Hospital Fund, and in its influence for strict finance at the hospitals, if its Council were elected, like the councils of other great philanthropic bodies, by the subscribers at an annual meeting, and not, as at present, without any reference to the subscribers.

The Metropolitan Radical Federation, for whom I am empowered to write this letter, represents over 40,000 working men of London; they therefore claim to speak more representatively for those for whom the hospitals were founded, exist, and are supported, than the Council of King Edward's Hospital Fund, who represent no one but themselves, and they confidently hope that Your Majesty will not refer this letter to that Council, but will take it into your own gracious consideration, and direct that what we humbly ask for shall be done.

I am, Your Gracious Majesty,

Your obedient and humble servant,

(Signed) EDW. GARRITY,

Honorary Secretary.

37, Hall Street, City Road, London, E.C.

King Edward's Hospital Fund for London,
7, Walbrook, E.C.,
18th November, 1910.

Councillor E. Garrity, M.I.I.,

Honorary Secretary,

Metropolitan Radical Federation.

Dear Sir,

The communication addressed by you to His Majesty the King on the subject of the relations between hospitals and medical schools has been forwarded to the Fund by direction of the King, as His Majesty is now Patron and no longer President of the Fund, and it has been considered by the Executive Committee.

The Committee feel sure that a knowledge of the facts will convince you that there is no ground whatever for the allegations against the Fund contained in your memorandum.

Your communication suggests that two departures from the findings of Sir Edward Fry's Commission of Inquiry have been committed by hospitals and condoned by this Fund. In the case of St. George's Hospital it is alleged that, contrary to the recommendations of the Commission, moneys were diverted in the year 1909 from the hospital to the school, and that the Fund by making a grant in that year condoned such diversions. It is also stated that in many other London hospitals vast sums have been conveyed in the past into the private accounts of the schools, and that no effort appears as yet to have been made to repay them.

In view of the reflections contained in your communication upon the alleged action of the King's Fund, we are directed to say, in the first place, that there is no ground for the suggestion that by making a grant to St. George's Hospital in 1909 the Fund has condoned any "flouting" of the directions of the Committee of Inquiry. A mere consideration of the date at which the grant was made will show that even if there has been any breach of the direc-

¹ BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, October 3rd, 1908.

² Page 23 of Report for 1909.

³ Page 27.