

directly opposed systems—one acting on apparently rational principles, the other apparently in direct violation of them: the advocates of the latter, however, adduce positive evidence of the value of their system, which is confirmed, they say, by numerous independent witnesses who have no motive to deceive, indeed quite the reverse, for they suffer persecution because they have the courage to announce and to practise what they believe to be true. Opposed to this positive evidence of large numbers of self-sacrificing men, they see arrayed on the other side the great bulk, including the *élite*, of the profession, but who simply pit against it their negative evidence, and rational and scientific opinion; in other words, their unbelief against firm belief from conviction. Can we doubt what must be their verdict? Homœopathy and allopathy they have decided to be only two rival systems, in each of which truth and error are blended; they accordingly patronise both indifferently,* and go to the physician who can relieve them, whether on rational principles or otherwise they care not.

We may not yet be ripe for the change; but the time will assuredly come when it will be seen that the honour, dignity, and interests of our profession will be best maintained by sweeping away the barriers which now separate its members, and opening its portals to all of them, irrespective of creed.—Yours obediently,

London, May 23rd, 1881.

C. HOLTHOUSE.

THOUGHT-READING.

SIR,—You state in your issue of the 21st ultimo on the above subject, that I requested Mr. Moncure D. Conway to fix his attention on the article he had hidden, and not upon the place in which it was concealed, and upon this statement you proceed to found an elaborate argument. I beg to inform you that I requested Mr. Conway, Dr. Playfair, and Professor Croom Robertson each to think of the object he had concealed, and of the place in which it was hidden, and I stated that these conditions were absolutely essential to the success of the experiments; in corroboration of which, I beg to refer you to the gentlemen themselves, and also to the following extract from the *Lancet* of the 14th ultimo, in which it is reported: "The condition for success was, that the 'thinker' should be all the time forming in his mind an exact and vivid picture of the place where the object was."

You further add that, although my eyes were bandaged, I was not thoroughly blindfolded; and, as you lay some stress upon this, I would call your attention to my second experiment with Dr. Playfair. I first found the spot on which he had placed an article, and afterwards discovered the article itself in its final hiding-place. Had my eyes been open, that fact would not have detracted from the value of the first part of this experiment as a test of my power.

In your concluding remarks, you state that I entirely repudiated the kind of thought-reading described in Dr. Carpenter's letter. This statement I most emphatically deny. When asked to give my own explanation of the phenomena which had been witnessed, I distinctly declined to do so, on the ground that the witnesses themselves were, by reason of their eminent scientific attainments, more qualified to explain them.

In your own article, you have explained how I found out the pain in Professor Ray Lankester's face, viz., by guessing; and how I discovered that Mr. Conway had shut his eyes—viz., by a knowledge of the associated muscular movement.

In the face of these explanations, it would be mere presumption on my part to put forward any theories on the subject; but I am presumptuous enough to believe that a subject, to the consideration of which Dr. Carpenter, Professors Huxley and Croom Robertson, and Messrs. Francis Galton and G. J. Romanes, have devoted considerable time and thought, and to which the last three are still giving their attention, is one which the scientific world will continue to be interested in, notwithstanding the "no uncertain verdict" which you have felt it your duty to pass upon my recent experiments.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

W. IRVING BISHOP.

SILVERLOCK'S MEDICAL REFERENCE BOOK.

SIR,—In a critical notice of Silverlock's *Medical Reference Book*, which appears in the *JOURNAL* of the 21st, you take me to task for permitting the publication in it of a List of Consulting Physicians and Surgeons. I shall feel obliged if you will permit me to state that I had nothing whatever to do with the compilation of that list, and in fact

* Any one passing the Homœopathic Hospital a week ago, might have noticed a large placard announcing an entertainment in aid of its funds, and patronised by the Prince and Princess Christian, the Duke and Duchess of Teck, the Duke of Westminster, etc. The latter is President of the Westminster Hospital. If homœopathy be "a sham, delusion, and a snare" its patrons must be aiders and abettors of the fraud.

knew nothing whatever about it until some time after the work was published. It is true that I am supposed to have edited the *Reference Book*, and I compiled a portion of its contents; but, unfortunately for my reputation, Mr. Silverlock did not take me into his confidence as to what should or should not be published in its pages. Had he done so, I should have emphatically vetoed the publication of the List of Consultants, or my name would not have appeared on the title-page of the work as editor.

It is now beyond Mr. Silverlock's power to repair the injury he has done me by affixing my name to that for which I am in no way responsible; still I hope he will at least do me the justice of suppressing the remaining copies of the edition.—Yours faithfully,

5, Gibson Square, May 23rd, 1881.

GEORGE BROWN.

REVACCINATION WITH CALF-LYMPH.

SIR,—I have revaccinated at my establishment 345 persons. In 181 of them, I had the opportunity of examining the results.

Eighty-one cases of the latter number were first revaccinations. In sixty-nine of them, two or more perfect and characteristic vesicles were developed; in four, there was only one perfect vesicle, the other insertions being either papular elevations or indifferent; and six cases were complete failures. Therefore, rather more than 90 per cent. proved successful in first revaccination.—I am, sir, yours obediently,

C. A. RENNER.

DR. LYONS AND THE COMPULSORY NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

SIR,—I must respectfully take exception to the statement of your Dublin correspondent, in your number of to-day, that the recent action of Dr. Lyons, M.P., in arresting the progress of Mr. Gray's Bill for the compulsory notification of infectious diseases, is extensively disapproved of here; as far as I can gather, the feeling is quite the opposite.

The cardinal principle of Mr. Gray's Bill is, that the attending physician should be the direct informant; and the proposal has been emphatically and officially condemned by all our leading medical bodies and by the vast bulk of the profession. They do not, however, appear to object to notification, provided that that duty be imposed exclusively upon the occupier of the infected dwelling; but this plan Mr. Gray does not accept.

I think that Dr. Lyons has done good service by having this important question held over till next year, when it will be more ripe for consideration; and when, above all, we can have the experience of its working in the only large centre of population which has adopted it. The question might thus be referred to a Select Committee, who would hear and calmly consider both sides of the case; and, on their report, a measure satisfactory to all might be framed.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

F. J. B. QUINLAN, M.D., M.R.I.A.,

Fellow of the College of Physicians, Ireland.

29, Lower Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin, May 28th, 1881.

THE BRITISH MEDICAL TEMPERANCE ASSOCIATION.—On Friday, May 27th, the annual meeting of the British Medical Temperance Association was held in the rooms of the Medical Society of London, Chandos Street. Dr. B. W. Richardson presided. The report was read by the Honorary Secretary, Dr. J. J. Ridge, and gave a *résumé* of the operations of the Association during the past year. It stated that the membership had increased to two hundred and fifty, and the number of associates (who are medical students) to sixteen. The president and other officers had been re-elected for another year; and in returning thanks, the chairman said that he felt increasingly the value of such an association, and looking at the large number of medical men who were now abstainers, there was no reason why their numbers should not be soon doubled or trebled. An excellent paper on the Practical Treatment of Dipsomania was then read by S. S. Alford, Esq., in which he insisted most strongly upon the necessity for complete and unbroken abstinence from alcohol, which was rarely possible, unless with compulsory powers of detention. Tonic remedies were often required at first, but subsequently moral measures must be brought to bear, and, above all, religious influences. An animated and interesting discussion followed the reading of the paper, in which the following gentlemen took part: Dr. Eytton Jones, Dr. Norman Kerr, E. Meacham, Esq., Rev. J. H. Gatchell (Chaplain to the St. James's Home for Inebriates), Dr. A. Carpenter, Dr. C. R. Drysdale, and Dr. Branson. On the motion of Dr. Edmunds, the discussion was adjourned till June 24th.