

carries granted since June 30th, 1887, confers the right to practise medicine, surgery, and midwifery, and therefore the holder may style himself "surgeon." On the points whether or not he is entitled to ever call himself "Physician" and to prefix "Dr." to his name it is very likely an authoritative judicial decision will shortly be given, and therefore it may be well to await the result.

Yours truly,
JAMES R. UPTON,
Clerk to the Society of Apothecaries.

I would also refer him to an answer to a query on p. 1071 of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, of November 14th, 1891.

I wrote to Mr. Upton in September, but did not get a reply till November.

If we are not allowed to call ourselves "Surgeons" what in the name of wonder are we to style ourselves. The present L.S.A. is misleading and is not distinctive from the old single qualification. Cannot the Society confer a more distinctive title on us?—I am, etc.,

B.A. CANTAB., L.S.A. LONDON.

HONORARY DEGREES IN PUBLIC HEALTH.

SIR,—Your correspondent (in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of December 26th, 1891). Dr. Smith, usually expresses himself so ably and so fully on any matter in which he takes an interest that I am rather surprised he omitted to mention that the gentleman to whom he referred as having received the degree of Doctor in Hygiene without examination occupied an exceptionally high position in having been two years' President of the Society of Medical Officers of Health, besides the high position he holds in his own locality as a teacher and as a medical officer of health. Neither does the possession of a degree enable him to compete for an appointment for which he would otherwise have been ineligible, as the statute makes three years' experience as medical officer to a town of more than 20,000 inhabitants of equal value as a qualification with a diploma in public health.

For my part I am pleased that a university can and will give a degree in public health, *honoris causa*, to a worthy recipient.—I am, etc.,

HENRY MAY,
M.O.H. Aston Manor.

LEPROSY IN INDIA.

SIR,—The article on the "Leprosy Commission" in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of December 26th, 1891, states that "It is certain that the amount of leprosy in India has been much exaggerated in certain quarters. The maximum number of lepers given in the *Journal of the Leprosy Investigation Committee* for the British Empire alone was 500,000," etc. As this statement is misleading, as far as the *Journal* which I have the honour to edit is concerned, I trust that you will allow me to point out that no estimate for lepers in the "British Empire" has been attempted in that *Journal*, and that no such number as 500,000 is given for India, by its editor or by any of its contributors.

At the Marlborough House meeting, and at the subsequent dinner in aid of the "National Leprosy Fund"—reports of which are included in No. 1 of the *Journal*—His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and other speakers alluded to the question of leprosy in India, but no one put down the number of lepers at above 250,000. The only other reference to the matter which occurs in the *Journal* is in a letter from Mr. Bayne, Officiating Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Burma, addressed to the Government of India, which, with a great many other "opinions of local governments and administrations," I was enabled to quote by the courtesy of the Indian Government. That gentleman, indeed, in speaking of the practical difficulties of segregation, observes that "There are, it is estimated, half a million lepers in India;" but his remark has been in no way endorsed in the *Journal*. Wild statements in connection with this and other points have been made within the last few years by several lay and clerical writers on the subject of leprosy; but those who are responsible for the *Journal of the Leprosy Investigation Committee* have not given their authority to such statements.

Three years ago I had occasion to collate the information then extant on the leprosy question in India, and some of the results were included in a paper—"Leprosy: a Review of some Facts and Figures"—read before the Epidemiological Society in May, 1889. The census returns of 1872 and 1881

were quoted, which gave 99,073¹ and 131,618 respectively; and I was able also to quote the statement of a high authority at the India Office to the effect that he did "not know of any good ground for believing that leprosy is increasing in India, or that it is diminishing."—I am, etc.,

Henrietta Street, W.

PHIN. S. ABRAHAM.

ACTIONS IN LUNACY AGAINST MEDICAL MEN.

SIR,—Dr. Bateman's letter in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of December 19th, 1891, requires a certain amount of notice from myself. I am quite competent to take care of my own interests without the aid of the Defence Association, much as I approve of its objects; but the case of my colleague is different. He has to find the money, and it is difficult for him to do so. I am surprised to find that his case, at least, is not taken up. As regards myself, I am a member of the sub-committee on Parliamentary Bills to whom the Lunacy Act was referred. I fought for the interests of the profession in the consideration of that measure, and it was at my suggestion that clauses were introduced into the Act for our protection in the case of such actions. I must say that I was somewhat surprised at the ease with which the Lord Chancellor accepted the proposals made, but I now see that he knew they would be of very little use. During the five-and-twenty years that I have been connected with the Council I have always endeavoured to promote the best interests of the general practitioner without having any selfish end in view. I am now laid aside—it may or may not be for a time only—but I trust that I may yet have an opportunity of taking part in measures for the improvement of the Lunacy Act, and the better protection of medical men.—I am, etc.,

Esplanade Hotel, Ventnor.

ALFRED CARPENTER.

IRISH DISPENSARY DOCTORS.

SIR,—I am sorry I have so much stirred up the ire of "Practical Experience" by my reference to guinea fees in Ireland. I can assure your correspondent that neither am I "more of a Londoner than an Irishman," nor am I "very ignorant of the true facts of the case," nor "very much misinformed." I have spent the most of my life in Ireland, and number among my friends scores of dispensary doctors, many of whom I have heard bitterly complain of the professional etiquette which compelled them to charge a guinea or nothing. I do not know in what part of the country "Practical Experience" practises, but I know beyond a doubt that in the west, the poorest part of Ireland, the bulk of the doctors charge a guinea to farmers and others who would pay fees of 2s. 6d. or 3s. 6d. in England. I admit that many of them throw in several extra visits gratis, so that for a long illness the bill comes to much the same as it would here, perhaps even less; but the fact remains that the fee for the first visit is one guinea, the thought of which prevents all but the richest classes sending for a doctor unless they are very seriously ill indeed.

"Practical Experience" is evidently one of the wiser class of men who prefer smaller fees and many of them, but I think he is in error in assuming that all country practitioners in Ireland see their interests in the same light.

A LONDON IRISHMAN.

THE LATE SIR RISDON BENNETT.

SIR,—Permit me to correct a slight error in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of December 26th, 1891, in reference to the funeral of the late Sir Risdon Bennett. I did not represent the Royal College of Physicians on that occasion as stated. I attended the funeral at the request of the Principal of the University of Edinburgh, as a representative of that University, and also to pay the last personal tribute of respect to the great physician whose loss I, in common with many others, deeply deplored.—I am, etc.,

Wimpole Street, W.

J. FAYBER.

A DANGER FROM HYPODERMIC INJECTIONS OF CANTHARIDIN.

SIR,—Among the unpleasant symptoms brought about by hypodermic injections of cantharidinate of potash are vomiting and pain in the stomach, coming on some time after the

¹ British India only.