

JOURNALISTS AND QUACKS.

AFTER the *Review of Reviews*, the *Daily News*, after Mattei, Gatchkowsky. If the irresponsible, unblushing, and most mischievous patronage of the wildest and most senseless form of quackery were not nowadays so frequent in British journalism, the insertion of such an editorial paragraph as the subjoined in a journal of weight and standing, and enjoying a well-deserved political and literary reputation, would be incredible and impossible. But no excess of fatuous absurdity and no extremity of self-evident ignorance are beyond the credulity of the political journalist of to-day. Nevertheless, it was not without regret that we read in the *Daily News* of this week the subjoined editorial paragraph, which embodies, perhaps, as much impudent and misleading and extravagant pretension as any in the annals even of mediæval darkness. The italics are ours.

"*Vitaline*, a Cure for Consumption.—About eight years ago M. Gatchkowsky, a Polish amateur chemist, struck, in the course of his medical studies, with the remarkable cures effected by the Chinese doctors, determined to turn his energies in that direction, and, after a long series of experiments, succeeded in obtaining, as a result of an admixture of borax and glycerine (1), a compound for which the most extraordinary virtues are claimed. After elaborate analysis on the part of numerous celebrated (?) French doctors, '*Vitaline*'—such being the name given by M. Gatchkowsky to his invention—obtained the necessary patent (?), and for some considerable time past the Polish doctor has employed it, in the form of subcutaneous injections, in drops and by inhalation, with the most astonishing results. It is claimed for '*Vitaline*' that it is capable of effecting a complete cure of consumption in a fortnight or three weeks. Inhalation is said to be the most successful means of administration. The patient first inhales for a period of half an hour; then the dose is gradually increased, and finally the sufferer is made to sleep in a room filled with the vapours of '*Vitaline*.' While consumption, or phthisis, is the chief malady against which M. Gatchkowsky's invention is directed, it is also described as being extremely efficacious as a stimulant and nerve tonic, proving most beneficial also in cases of paralysis and certain diseases of the stomach. Among M. Gatchkowsky's many cures, one of the most satisfactory is that of Comtesse Lydie Rostoptchine, who, since benefiting by the inventor's treatment, has been assiduous in making known the virtues of his '*Vitaline*.' M. Gatchkowsky, who contemplates the establishment of a dispensary for extending his treatment, receives his patients in Paris at No. 34, Rue de Turin. Those desirous of consulting him are required first to obtain a certificate to the effect that they really need treatment from Dr. Ivanichévitch, 13, Rue du Poteau, Paris."

This would be hard to beat.

CORRECTIONS.

By a clerical error in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of October 6th we were made to say that "crammers" do not know how to teach. We intended to say just the reverse, namely, that "crammers" do know how to teach, for they are "naturally selected" for this purpose. That their method is a "stuffing" rather than an education of the mind is not their fault: their aid is sought not for the latter but for the former purpose, and their results are judged by this immediate test only.

DR. R. W. CARTER (Weymouth) writes: Allow me to correct two errors in my communication published in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of October 6th. Page 768, line 4, read "and when I administer," and line 6, "dies from an underdose."

ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL.—The name of the winner of the Mead Medal for Practical Medicine and the Treasurer's Gold Medal should have been given as Mr. G. G. Genge, and not as printed in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of October 6th.

THE BEAT-TTRANSFER: A VERBAL CORRECTION.

DR. WILLIAM EWART (Curzon Street, W.) writes: A friendly critic points out in my contribution in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of October 6th a verbal inaccuracy, which, inasmuch as it might lead to confusion, I trust you will permit me to correct. On page 750, line 5, instead of "the beat migrated from the proximal to the distal side of the finger" the following would have been a clearer and a more accurate statement: "The beat migrated from the proximal to the distal portion of the artery." And, again, at line 12, "strong pulsation on its proximal side" should be read as meaning "strong pulsation in the proximal portion of the vessel."

INCOME TAX ASSESSMENT.

A GENERAL PRACTITIONER writes: My experience is as follows: Several years ago I appealed to the Special Commissioners against excessive assessment for income tax. I sent in my balance sheets for the past three years, and, at the surveyor of taxes' request, had an interview with him at his office. He went through the particulars of expenditure *seriatim*; said the Commissioners would not allow me anything at all for carriage expenses, which figured at £170, because, he said, no medical man ever used his brougham solely for professional purposes, but would use it for private shopping, taking him out to dinner, or theatre, etc.; also for similar reasons he disallowed £18, the expenses of the boy I am obliged to keep to take my medicines out (I do my own dispensing), because he would naturally do odd jobs as well, such as clean knives and boots. From my rent, which was £105, without taxes, I deducted a fair proportion—£40—which he cut down to £30. He would not allow me more than about one-half the amount I had estimated my bad debts, which were not excessive, and, with one or two other minor matters of dispute, I had a most unsatisfactory half-hour with him.

It ended in his offering to recommend the Commissioners to reduce my assessment by £50 only, and, if I would not agree to that, the appeal must go on, and I must take my chance, but he would be present at the appeal, and should object to all the items mentioned above, and advise the Commissioners to disallow them all.

To save further inconvenience, loss of time, loss of temper, etc., I accepted his offer, but came away with the feeling that he might be acting under the strict letter of the law, but it was not being administered with even a small amount of justice.

LETTERS, COMMUNICATIONS, Etc., have been received from:

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BOOKS, Etc., RECEIVED.

- A Textbook of Inorganic Chemistry. By G. S. Newth. London: Longmans, Green, and Co. 1894. 6s. 6d.
- A Manual of Human Physiology prepared with special reference to Students of Medicine. By Dr. J. H. Raymond. Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders. 1894. 1.25 dollars.
- Essentials of the Diseases of the Ear. By Dr. E. B. Gleason. Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders. 1894. 1 dollar.
- The Complete Poetical Works of Constance Naden; with an Explanatory Foreword. By Dr. R. Lewis. London: Bickers and Son. 1894.
- Our Secret Friends and Foes. Expanded from Lectures delivered before popular audiences in London, Edinburgh, and elsewhere. By Professor Percy F. Frankland. New Edition. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. 1894.
- Lectures on Human and Animal Psychology. By Wilhelm Wundt. Translated from the Second German Edition by J. E. Creighton and E. B. Titchener. London: Swan Sonnenschein and Co. 1894.
- First Aid to the Injured and Management of the Sick. By Dr. E. J. Lawless. Edinburgh and London: Young J. Pentland. 1894.
- A Treatise on the Diseases of the Ear, including the Anatomy and Physiology of the Organ. By T. Mark Hovell. London: J. and A. Churchill. 1894. 18s.
- Asthma and Chronic Bronchitis. By Dr. J. C. Thorowgood. New Edition. London: Baillière, Tindall, and Cox. 1894. 4s.
- Dissections Illustrated; A Graphic Handbook for Students of Practical Anatomy. Part III. By C. G. Brodie, F.R.C.S. London: Whittaker and Co. 10s.
- Atlas of the Diseases of the Skin. By Dr. H. Radcliffe Crocker. Fasciculus VI. London: Young J. Pentland. 1894. 21s.

. In forwarding books the publishers are requested to state the selling prices.