

A provident dispensary places efficient medical attendance within the reach of those wage-earners who, though they may be unable to pay ordinary medical fees, are yet not poor enough to justify them in seeking free medical treatment.

A provident dispensary properly so-called should have a membership on the basis of regular payments on insurance principles, a reasonable wage-limit being fixed as a condition of membership, and its medical staff should be sufficient in number to preclude the suggestion that it is established for the benefit of one or two practitioners.

It should, moreover, be managed by a committee, upon which the medical staff should be represented, and a properly audited balance sheet should be published annually.

While there exist in various parts of London many excellent dispensaries established upon the principles I have indicated, they are not sufficiently numerous or well distributed to be able to undertake the treatment of the respectable and provident poor of the whole of the metropolis.

In these circumstances the London Provident Dispensaries' Council has been lately formed as the outcome of a conference of the provident dispensaries of London.

Its objects are to circulate information on the provident medical movement among the medical profession and the public at large and to promote the establishment over the whole area of London of well-equipped and well-regulated provident dispensaries. It will endeavour, while promoting the independence and individuality of existing provident dispensaries, to promote co-operation between them, and to afford opportunities for comparing their methods of administration.

It will also endeavour to promote that co-operation between provident dispensaries and hospitals which is essential for the relief of the out-patient departments of the latter institutions. Every provident dispensary of London has been asked to send a representative—medical or lay—to the Council, and it is intended to add a few co-opted members, including nominees of the British Medical Association.

It is hoped that all those who are interested in existing dispensaries, and all who desire to encourage habits of thrift and self-reliance among the poor, will endeavour to further the objects of the London Provident Dispensaries' Council. Further information will be gladly supplied by the honorary secretary, Charles H. Warren, and may be obtained at the temporary offices of the Council at 5, Lamb's Conduit Street, W.C.—I am, etc.,

H. A. HARBEN,  
Chairman, London Provident Dispensaries' Council.  
London, W.C., Oct. 17th.

#### THE INSTRUCTION OF MIDWIVES.

SIR,—Allow me to thank Dr. F. Knight for pointing out the clerical error in my address on abnormal labour. "Presentation" of the cord is where it is felt through unruptured membrane, and "prolapse" of the cord is where it has slipped through the rent when the membranes rupture. When the head bulges the perineum, and each pain increases the bulge, the head receding, in between the pains, to the same place as before, so that no advance is made, a midwife should send for assistance and the doctor should deliver at once, preferably with forceps. It will be found in many such cases that the cord is round the neck and the child partially or completely asphyxiated. The explanation of this is quite another matter. Let me add that in some such cases the cord is not round the neck, and in some cases where it is round the neck this to-and-fro movement of the head does not take place.

It is very gratifying to me that Dr. Knight and others who have written or spoken to me, agree that the routine practice of dropping a germicide into the eyes of every newly-born child is, to say the least, an unnecessary measure; and before long, it is to be hoped, it will become as obsolete as routine vaginal syringing after labour.—I am, etc.,

London, W., Oct. 19th. PETER HORROCKS.

#### THE DISORGANIZATION OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE.

SIR,—The article on the above subject in the JOURNAL of October 12th shows at least that you, at any rate, are

cognizant of the conditions now existing in the above service, and it is sincerely to be hoped that the proper authorities will mark, learn, and inwardly digest its contents. It is simply astounding to behold the manner in which medical officers of health of high standing, both by experience and qualification, have been compelled to relinquish their position and their places given to men of neither experience nor qualification, and in fact in some cases almost absolutely ignorant of public health matters. That the Medical Officer of Health Bill which was introduced last Parliament sitting, and passed the first reading, requires to be reintroduced at the earliest possible time and put in force, there is no possible question of doubt.—I am, etc.,

October 22nd.

EFFICIENCY.

#### THE WARFARE AGAINST QUACKERY.

SIR,—I believe myself that a Royal Commission would do a great deal of good to expose the ways of the patent medicine vendors, and would open the eyes of the public to the way that they are exploited.

Newspapers reap a rich harvest from the insertion of the special "news" letters of the purveyors of these medicines, but the question is whether they would like to have their means of making extra profits exposed to the public eye.—I am, etc.,

Cardiff, Oct. 17th.

T. GARRETT HORDER.

#### THE ORTHODIASCOPE.

SIR,—I see in the number of your JOURNAL for September 14th an article on the orthodiascope by Drs. Hugh Walsham and Halls Dally, illustrated by representations of my improved form of orthodiascope. In this article no mention is made either of myself as the inventor of the improvements or of the maker of the apparatus, Messrs. Reiniger, Gebert, and Schall. I trust you will of your courtesy repair the omission.

A full description of my orthodiascope and its evolution from earlier instruments is appearing in the November number of the *Archives of the Roentgen Ray*.—I am, Sir,

Bad-Nauheim, Oct. 15th.

DR. FRANZ M. GROEDEL.

## UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES.

### UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

#### Romanes Lecture.

THE Romanes Lecture will be delivered by the Right Honourable Lord Curzon of Kedleston, D.C.L., F.R.S., All Souls' College, Chancellor of the University, in the Sheldonian Theatre, on Saturday, November 2nd, at 2.30 p.m. Subject, "Frontiers."

#### Philip Walker Studentship in Pathology.

Upon the nomination of Professor Dreyer, the Board of Managers of the Philip Walker Studentship have unanimously elected to the studentship James Sholto Cameron Douglas, B.M., Christ Church.

#### Hospital and Other Scholarships.

Norman Glover, B.A., Trinity College, has been elected to a Senior Entrance Scholarship in Science at St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

Mr. Victor T. Ellwood, of Merchant Taylors' School, has been elected to the Theodore Williams Medical Scholarship at Pembroke College.

### UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

#### APPOINTMENTS.

DR. GASKELL has been elected a member of the Senate, and the following appointments have been made:

University Lecturer in Botany.—R. P. Gregory, M.A., St. John's College.

Demonstrator in Botany.—A. M. Smith, B.A., Emanuel College.

Member of General Board of Studies.—Professor Sims Woodhead.

Elected to Professorship of Anatomy.—Dr. Langley.

Elected to Downing Professorship of Medicine.—Dr. Gaskell.

Member of State Medicine Syndicate.—Dr. Louis Cobbett.

Examiners in Pharmacology.—W. E. Dixon, M.A., Downing College, and Professor Stockman, M.D. Edin.

Examiners in General Pathology.—T. S. P. Strangeways, M.A., St. John's College, and J. Ritchie, M.D. Edin.

On October 17th the degree of D.Sc., *honoris causa*, was conferred on Dr. Emil Fischer, Professor of Chemistry in the University of Berlin.