

Philosophy and Physics; (2) Chemistry; (3) Physiology. But candidates will not be expected to offer themselves in more than two of these. There will also be a practical examination in one or more of the above subjects, if the examiners think it expedient. Candidates are requested to communicate their intentions to the Master of Balliol by letter, on or before Monday, November 10th, inclosing testimonials from their colleges or schools, and (if members of the University) certificates of their matriculation, and stating the subjects in which they offer themselves for examination.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PROVIDENT DISPENSARIES.

SIR,—I have read with much pleasure in one of the Coventry newspapers—the *Herald and Free Press* of October 10th—an extract from your JOURNAL describing the benefits of provident dispensaries, and especially of the one at Coventry, now numbering nine thousand free members, who contributed last year £1,251, divided amongst the medical officers. I am confident that the principles upon which these institutions are founded are capable of much further adoption than during my father's lifetime, who for so many years devoted his time and energies gratuitously to the establishment of them in so many towns throughout the kingdom. The institution at Coventry was one of the first that he founded, amidst considerable opposition and the prejudiced dislike of some of his profession; yet, in spite of all, he succeeded, and the result you have before you. Dr. Nankivell of Torquay, whom you name as founder, was only one of the first medical officers, who successfully and with much ability carried out for some years my father's plans; but we feel sure he would disclaim being the originator of them.

In the Twenty-seventh Annual Report of the Coventry Provident Dispensary, read at a general meeting in St. Mary's Hall on May 3rd, 1859, occurs the following. "The Committee much regret to have to notice the death of the founder of provident dispensaries, Mr. H. L. Smith of Southam. He assisted at the establishment of this institution in the year 1831. He was a kind-hearted, generous-minded man, and has been the cause of good to thousands. At his request, a meeting was held at St. Mary's Hall on the 21st October, for the purpose of assisting the Society for Promoting a Knowledge of Provident Dispensaries, when those present will not soon forget the excellent paper he read, and the kind philanthropic spirit he evinced." Again, the sixth resolution is in these terms: "That this meeting desires to record its admiration for the character, and deep respect for the memory, of the late Mr. Henry Lilley Smith. The Coventry Provident Dispensary, in common with all similar institutions, owes its origin to his untiring zeal and earnest heartfelt philanthropy; and the meeting desires to convey to Mrs. Smith and the family their sincere sorrow for a loss which will be long felt by all who are interested and occupied in promoting the well-being of the poor around them."

The ascription in your paper of the merit of being founder of the Coventry Provident Dispensary to Dr. Nankivell is, therefore, a mistake which, in memory of the lifelong services and sacrifices to that cause of my respected father, I write, hoping that (either by the publication of this letter or in some other manner), you will do me the kindness to correct.

I am, etc., W. L. SMITH.

Dorsington Rectory, Stratford-on-Avon, October 25th, 1873.

REST IN PULMONARY CONSUMPTION.

SIR,—In a paragraph which appears in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of Oct. 4th, it is mentioned that Dr. Berkart has instituted a novel plan of treating pulmonary consumption by the application of mechanical compression made in such a manner by strapping and bandaging as to control the respiratory movements and prevent contact of the atmosphere with the inflamed portion of the lung. Will you kindly allow me, in justice to Dr. Horace Dobell, to state that I have for several months had constructed, at his request, what he designates a "lung-splint", which acts on precisely the same principle as Dr. Berkart's strapping and bandages, with the additional advantage of being able to regulate the amount of compressing force?

Dr. Dobell's "lung-splint" consists of two padded metal plates adjusted to the anterior and posterior surfaces of the thorax at the affected pulmonary region, and held together by a thin steel band, the force of which can be easily increased or diminished at will.

Wimpole Street.

I am, etc. HEATHER BIGG.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SANITARY DEPARTMENT.

PROPOSITION OF DR. ROBINSON FOR CARRYING INTO OPERATION THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1872, IN EAST KENT.

AT a meeting of delegates from the various Urban and Rural Sanitary Authorities of the combined district of East Kent, held at Canterbury, on Saturday, October 18th, Dr. Robinson read the following report:—

"In order to secure the entire services of an officer who should be debarred from private practice, the Urban Sanitary Authority of Dover, with the Rural Authorities of Thanet, East Ashford, Blean, Eastry, Bridge, West Ashford, Elham, and Dover Rural, following the course advised by the Local Government Board, and pursued in many other parts of England, united together for the purpose of appointing a Medical Officer of Health; but, after the appointment was made, the Central Committee, composed of representatives from the several authorities concerned, ceased to act further in their collective capacity. Inasmuch, however, as for the original purpose the act of this Combination Committee required and received the confirmation of the several authorities involved in their proceedings, so a like course can probably be adopted with advantage for other purposes, if the separate authorities are pleased to do so. In the administration of the new powers conferred by the Public Act of 1872, it is not unnatural to suppose that conferences (of those who, like chairmen and other gentlemen connected with the different Boards, take the most active part in their respective capacities, and upon whom necessarily falls the greatest share of the work and responsibility) should be deemed advantageous, as such conferences would afford opportunity for mutual counsel, the free interchange of ideas and suggestions, and the promotion of a healthy stimulus to action. Chairmen, too, would, on return to the occupation of their respective posts, feel more confidence in commending to their Boards measures for adoption, which had been carefully considered and decided upon at such representative meetings, and, on the other hand, the various Boards might reasonably be expected to take more decided and regular action from a knowledge that they were not pursuing a separate and distinct course of procedure, but one in unison with a large and important combination, acting in furtherance of a common interest in the limitation of disease and exaltation of the tone of the public health. Again, the work of the medical officer of health would be considerably facilitated, if, instead of reporting to the several authorities, he could communicate simultaneously with the representatives of all to whom he might make his reports, and from whom he could receive his instructions. In order to give effect to any proceedings, all that appears to me necessary to be done would be, that each authority represented should by resolution endorse the acts of the Combination Committee, as was the case in the appointment of the medical officer. Since the time you conferred upon me the honour of appointing me as your sanitary adviser, I have been engaged chiefly in making myself acquainted with the general leading characteristics of the districts, by personal visitation and collection of information from all available sources; without entering into details, I will merely say, that there is work, neither trivial in character nor extent, to be done, and that the object of this meeting will be attained, if the base of operations is to-day well established. From an analysis of the requirements contained in the instructions issued by the Local Government Board, it appears that there are three prominent matters which require arranging, viz., 1st, the collection and tabulation (for convenient reference) of facts; 2nd, reports on same to sanitary authority; 3rd, administration of sanitary acts. 1st, the facts to be collected are the number of deaths and causes of same, cases and causes of sickness, nuisances deemed to be prejudicial to the public health. The mortality returns can be furnished by the registrars, on forms similar to the one now produced and compiled by myself (No. 2 Form). A bill was introduced last session, providing for the supply of these returns to sanitary authorities on payment of 2d. per case, which will probably be again brought forward and passed. In the meantime, it is desirable to arrange for their present supply, and payment of the same. I should now have been in possession of the returns for the entire combined district, had not some question arisen as to the legality of payment for their supply. The Local Government Board has just issued instructions, requiring medical officers of health to tabulate and arrange on forms provided the cases and causes of sickness of the pauper and hospital population. I shall be able to compile these, if the returns on Form 3 are sent to me under instruction of the