LETTERS, NOTES, AND ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE CURRENT WEEK'S JOURNAL SHOULD REACH THE OFFICE NOT LATER THAN MIDDAY POST ON WEDNESDAY. TELEGRAMS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE OFFICE OF THE JOURNAL, AND NOT TO ITS PRIVATE HOUSE.

Communications respecting Editorial matters should be addressed to the Editor, 429, Strand, W.C., London; those concerning business matters, non-delivery of the Journal, etc., should be addressed to the Manager, at the Office, 429, Strand, W.C., London.

In order to avoid delay, it is particularly requested that all letters on the editorial bus should be addressed to the Editor at the Office of the Journal, and not to his private house.

Authors desiring reprints of their articles published in the British Medical Journal are requested to communicate beforehand with the Manager, 429, Strand, W.C.

Correspondents who wish to be notified of their communications should authenticate them with their names—of course not necessarily for publication.

Correspondents not answered are requested to look to the Notices to Correspondents of the following week.

Manuscripts forwarded to the Office of this Journal cannot under any circumstances be returned.

Queries, answers, and communications relating to subjects to which special departments of the British Medical Journal are devoted, will be found under their respective headings.

QUERIES.

A MEMBER asks for information as to the endurance of Immisch's clinical thermometers from some one who has had them long to use.

COUNTRY DOCTOR:—An opinion of any medical man as to the adaptability of the "back-to-back" car used in Irish towns. Is it good for a hilly district, durable, the price, and the best place to procure one? Perhaps someone in Belfast or Dublin could give the desired information.

SACCHARIN.—A MEMBER wishes to use saccharin for a considerable time in cases of catarrh of the bladder and injury to the digestive system; does it have any action on other functions of the body, and how long may it be safely used in such cases?

MORTUARIES.—SANTANAS asks for information about mortuaries. Is it possible to erect a mortuary for 50, to serve the needs of a population of 10,000, and where can any plans be obtained?

ANSWERS.

M.D.—The Banana flour was forwarded to us by the South African Prepared Food Manufactury, W. Keidel and Co., Paul Terrace, Durban.

P. W. de Q. will find full information as to the methods of entering the medical profession of the United States in the 15th Edition of the British Medical Journal published on September 6th, 1891.

P.R.C.S.E.—We cannot undertake to insert questions as to where easy diplomas may be had. That is a kind of information likely to be abused.

MEMBER.—A reference to the index of the British Medical Journal, Vol. II, 1890, shows that the note on "Agreements of Principals and Assistants" in the form of bond was published at page 115 of that volume (July 12th, 1890).

Keeley's Treatment of Alcoholic Habit.

C. J. Bell.—We do not know that the author has explained this "cure" in any reputable medical journal. It belongs to the category of "secret remedies."

Practice in British Columbia.

W. E.—To obtain permission to practise in British Columbia it is necessary to pass an examination there. Further particulars will be found in the British Medical Journal for 1890, vol. I, p. 297; vol. II, p. 485; 1891, vol. I, p. 582; and vol. II, p. 458. We cannot undertake to answer inquiries by post.

Response to an Appeal.

Dr. J. E. Upland Topping (271, Ronford Road, Forest Gate) desires to acknowledge the following donation for the Boy Scout Fund: Dr. C. J. Stocker, Forest Gate, £1 1s.

Eratum.

Dr. James Parker (Glasgow) writes: A slight error has crept into my letter on "Chloroform as an Anæsthetic" in the British Medical Journal of February 4th. On page 305, in speaking of temperature, the sentence ought to read, "Another point of great importance for the success of administration of any anaesthetic is a relatively high temperature."

Efficient and Inefficient Vaccination.

Dr. M. Wadell (Public Vaccinator to Bishop Auckland District) writes: Much has been written both for and against vaccination, and the three popular opinions is that it is inefficient. Once convince the masses that it is a fair protection against small-pox, and a large part of the popular prejudice will disappear. But how can this be done? Any medical man can be found who, in order to please ignorant patients, or from the ignoble desire to get shillings, will perform the vaccination inefficiently? There is a medical man in this town who, under the guise of offering the public the best possible vaccination, has caused the weekly vaccination day, who vaccinates for 1s. 6d., and who puts on two small marks. The natural result is that large numbers of the working classes have, on this account, turned to the cheaper and more efficient methods, so that, in this district, 6d. is a mere nothing, to go to his weekly vaccination instead of bringing their children to the public station.

SHERBY.

The recent revelations as to the extraordinary compounds sold as cheap brandy will not have surprised anyone who knows how scarce old cognac is, and how high are the prices which it fetches in the country of its provenance. We have seen that having any of the necessary quality of age, is unattainable except at quite fancy rates. On the other hand, the prevailing habit of consuming whisky and adding a mixture of spirit, действительно, the use of sherry; and we learn from Spain that it is no exaggeration to say that the finest descriptions are being sold at less than half what they were fifteen or twenty years ago; so that, when care is taken to get the full benefit of the reduction, it is, or ought to be, quite easy to get the old sherry at 2s. and 2s. 6d. a bottle, which formerly would not have been obtainable at twice the price.

History of the Word "Grippe."

A French archeologist, M. Vacquer, states that the word grippe in the sense of influenza is first found in the diaries of the Comte de Turenne in 1688. A meteorological record kept at Versailles in 1748 appears the following: "During the months of February and March colds and inflammation of the lungs in the General Hospital at Versailles were daily noticed. The King gave the disease the name of 'grippe.'" It was remarked that venesection was of no use, and that persons were not well who drank a glass of alcohol. Once the disease had taken hold, it was fatal. The beverage of choice in the first years was brandy sherry; and we learn from Spain that it is no exaggeration to say that the finest descriptions are being sold at less than half what they were fifteen or twenty years ago; so that, when care is taken to get the full benefit of the reduction, it is, or ought to be, quite easy to get the old sherry at 2s. and 2s. 6d. a bottle, which formerly would not have been obtainable at twice the price.

The Nannech Institution.

Our attention is called to a prospectus issued by the Nannech Institution, Limited, of which the promoters, in a circular addressed to the members of the medical profession, state that in order to secure their annual payments to holders of founders' shares, they will retain a certain percent. Of the year, at the yearly distribution of profit a dividend would be paid on the amount which had been procured from the patients introduced by holders of founders' shares; it will thereby be seen that the holders of founders' shares, not having sent any patients or developed the work of the institution, will receive no benefit thereupon, and the whole benefit will be received by those persons who have introduced patients thereto. This idea we believe is novel, and yet at the same time its feasibility must necessarily present itself to you on carefully considering the method of appropriation of the revenue. Such a plan can be neither successful in its principle or in its effect; it must be successful.

Members of the medical profession are likely to repel with some indignation an endeavour to secure their co-operation on these terms, and we doubt whether any one would be proffered bribe.

Death Certificates and Insurance.

The following letter appeared in the Times of February 9th, and is reprinted to elsewhere in our columns:—

Sir,—As I am about to fill your yearly columns for the purpose of ventilating various social abuses, I venture to lay before you a question that has for some time occupied me. Is the relative increase of disease, especially in the manufacturing districts of Lancashire, where I have practised as a medical man for twenty years, it is the custom to insure the lives of persons everlastingly to a great extent, in one, two, three, or more offices; consequently it becomes a serious question, whenever a death occurs, "How will the doctor certify the death?" Some medical men have the reputation of being good, some bad. A good doctor will, if possible, certify phthisis of two years' duration as bronchitis of one year duration three months; cancer, duration three years, as cancer, duration three months; heart disease, known to have been there for years, as of unknown duration. Of course, the bad doctor puts down the truth, and merely says the patient's days do not get him his insurance money, and he himself gives everlasting offence to a whole family connection, and they consequently have no desire to go to any insurance office.

We believe that the medical profession have no right to either send or receive death certificates with a view to keeping their insurance money, and we wish to see it done away with. If any doctor is to get the money, the person to whom the money is due, but all will have a right to know the true state of the case.

NOTES, LETTERS, Etc.

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