

possibility, and, since herein lie many of the sources of the present growing deterioration, surely, in the closing words of the writer, "it only remains for this generation to apply to them the methods of common sense, so as to save the next generation from untoward consequences, and arrest the progress of national decay before it is too late."

Among the books announced by Messrs. Archibald Constable and Co. for early publication is *Leprosy and Fish Eating* by Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson. The volume will contain information as to the history of leprosy, its prevalence in different countries, and the circumstances under which it had disappeared from many. The author contends that the disease is not ordinarily contagious, and that its real cause is the use as food of badly-cured fish. He argues that the segregation of lepers is useless, and compulsory laws wholly unjustifiable. Mr. Hutchinson gives some account of his tours of inquiry in South Africa and in India, and discusses the measures for the suppression of the disease best adapted for different countries. The volume will contain maps and illustrations. The same publishers announce a new book on tropical diseases by Sir Patrick Manson, and a work on the bacteriology of peritonitis by Drs. Leonard Dudgeon and Percy W. G. Sargent.

MEDICAL NEWS.

THE one hundred and first session of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London will commence on Tuesday, October 24th, at 8.30 p.m.

A COURSE of lectures on the prevention of infection will be delivered at Gresham College by Dr. E. Symes Thompson, Gresham Professor of Medicine, on October 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th, at 6 p.m.

DR. F. J. WALDO, Barrister, of the Middle Temple, His Majesty's Coroner for the City of London and Southwark, has been placed by the Lord Chancellor on the Commission of the Peace for the County of London.

DR. BARNARDO, whose name is so well known as the founder of the National Incorporated Society for the Reclamation of Destitute Waif Children, died on September 19th; he was in his 60th year and had suffered for some time from angina pectoris.

MEDICAL MAGISTRATES.—Dr. J. Blair, Honorary Assistant Medical Officer to the Royal Albert Edward Infirmary, and Dr. George Wolstenholme, have recently been appointed magistrates for the County Borough of Wigan.

THE Local Government Board has issued to local authorities an order called the Organization (Unemployed Workmen) Establishment Order, 1905, establishing distress committees of the Common Council of the City of London and of every metropolitan borough council, and also a central body for the whole of the administrative county of London.

As the result of the resignation of three of the assistant medical officers of Darenth Asylum, and of the correspondence which subsequently took place in our columns, the Metropolitan Asylums Board has appointed a special Committee of nine members to inquire into the whole circumstances which had led to the resignations. It is hoped that the report of the special Committee will be presented to the Board at its meeting on October 14th.

THE Society of Abstaining German-Speaking Medical Practitioners, which numbers over 200 members, is holding its annual meeting at Meran during the session of the Congress of German Scientists and Medical Men. Professor Sims Woodhead, of Cambridge, President of the British Medical Temperance Association, is an honorary member of the German society.

THE Harben Lectures of the Royal Institute of Public Health will be delivered in the lecture room of the Institute on Tuesday, October 10th, Thursday, October 12th, and Tuesday, October 17th, at 5 p.m. on each day by Professor Thomas Oliver, Physician to the Royal Infirmary, Newcastle-on-Tyne, the subject of the lectures will be, Some of the maladies caused by the air we breathe in the home, factory, and the mine, including a description of caisson disease or compressed air illness.

THE situation in New Orleans as regards yellow fever is reported to have been steadily improving during the past two weeks, and the number of cases notified daily to have

dropped to a low figure. From the beginning of the outbreak in August to September 6th, 2,111 cases in all had been recognized and 294 deaths had occurred. On the other hand, conditions in some of the neighbouring cities, which have relied upon shotguns instead of oil and culicicides, have, according to the *Medical Record*, grown worse.

THE collection of relics of Dr. Livingstone in the possession of the Royal Geographical Society include a section of the great tree at Chitambo in Central Africa beneath which the great explorer's heart lies buried, some leaves from the tree, a portrait bust, his sextant and maps, the medal presented to him by his native followers, and some of the slave chains which he brought back with him to England. To this collection is now added a collar once worn by him, presented by Sir Clement Hill, who has just retired from the position of Superintendent of African Protectorates in the Foreign Office.

At the North London Police Court recently a young married man was sternly rebuked by the presiding magistrate, and condemned to a penalty of a £5 fine or a month's imprisonment for wilfully exposing himself in public when suffering from an infectious disorder. Having presented himself at the Great Northern Central Hospital with a sore throat he was informed that he had diphtheria, and was asked to remain in an isolation room until he could be sent to a fever hospital. He refused to remain, but promised to return in an hour, and was warned that meantime he was a danger to other people. He did not return, but three days later visited a private surgery, where he was given a tonic and told he could go to work. There seems to have been nothing at that date to suggest diphtheria, and the man himself said nothing about his visit to a hospital, or what he had been told. The defendant's excuse was that on leaving the hospital (where the diagnosis made was bacteriologically confirmed) he felt so much better that he thought the diagnosis must have been erroneous.

NATURAL IMMUNITY TO PUTREFACTIVE BACTERIA.—Mr. R. Greig Smith, D.Sc., Macleay Bacteriologist to the Linnean Society of New South Wales, has contributed to its *Proceedings* a paper on the origin of natural immunity towards the putrefactive bacteria that normally inhabit the intestines, in which he endeavours to show (1) that bacteria traverse the intestinal wall, (2) that agglutination is of importance in the production of immunity, (3) that there is a "close analogy or identity between the production of bacteriolytic bodies and the digestion of food," (4) that "natural immunity . . . is occasioned and maintained by the comparatively few bacteria which, in crossing the intestinal wall and possibly gaining access to the body fluids and organs, stimulate the cells to produce immune bodies." Granted that these four points required establishment, it nevertheless appears that not a single new fact or piece of evidence of any kind is brought forward by him, and even his theoretical deductions have no coherence. Again, the author's style does not lend itself to lucid explanation. Speaking of agglutination as a definite chemical phenomenon, he says "flocculation has not been deeply studied, especially with regard to the precipitation of the weak organic acids and bases, but when it shall have been, there can be no doubt that parallels will be found to show that agglutination and precipitation are one and the same thing." Surely this is reminiscent of the imaginary brother's probable predilection for cheese. It is not often nowadays that one meets with such statements as the following in scientific papers: "Does it not seem possible," Mr. Greig Smith asks, "that the non-continuity of the epithelium of the alimentary tract of young animals is the means by which an all-wise Providence endeavours to accelerate the formation of protective bodies before the immunity bestowed upon them by parents has become exhausted." It is, of course, true that many of the micro-organisms under consideration have been empirically dubbed non-pathogenic, and shelved, without searching inquiry into the causes of their impotence. In the present state of our knowledge of immunity it does not require a very vivid imagination to apply the principles which hold for pathogenic organisms to others which do not as a rule induce disease; it would be far more profitable to institute an inquiry into the changed conditions which occasionally allow our natural immunity to fade into a serious susceptibility. But perhaps this paper is only an introductory study to some such piece of solid work.

BEQUESTS TO MEDICAL CHARITIES.—The late Mrs. Irene Forrest, of Lytham, Lancashire, who died on August 17th, left £1,000 to the Lytham Cottage Hospital.