

Numerous hypotheses have been offered explanatory of the explosion of gas in tubes and pipes. M. Provat of Metz at last offers what appears to be the true explanation. He shows that acetylene—a mixture of copper and acetylen (one of the ingredients of coal-gas)—is formed in the gas-pipes; and that this compound explodes spontaneously, and especially when it contains a portion of oxide of copper. Consequently, it is of importance that copper be not employed in the manufacture of pipes used for conveying gas.

At Valencia, in Spain, some members of the profession have been condemned to prison for twelve years, and with twenty-four years loss of civil rights for having granted certificates whereby a lady of *haute société* was confined in a lunatic asylum. The lady escaped; brought her action; and with the above results.

The contractility of the large veins, and especially of the inferior and superior venæ cavæ at their openings into the heart, in some lower vertebrata, has long been known; but now M. Colin informs us that the venæ cavæ of mammalia, at their openings into the heart, possess rhythmic and pulsatile movements similar to those pointed out by M. Flourens as existing in the veins of batrachia.

Dr. Bruno has been nominated to the chair of surgery left vacant by the death of Riberi.

ON THE PREVALENCE OF SUICIDE IN ENGLAND.

THE following are notes of a paper read by Mr. Radcliffe, before the Social Science Congress.

During the five years 1852-56, according to the Registrar-General's returns, 5,415 suicides were committed in this country (including Wales), shewing an annual average of nearly 6 suicides (5·87) to 100,000 persons living at all ages, and of 26 to 10,000 deaths from all causes.

In 1838-40 the annual average of suicides amounted to a fraction more than 6 (6·2) in 100,000 population, and to 28 in 10,000 deaths from all causes. It would seem, then, that in the two periods, 1838-40 and 1852-56, the tendency to suicide was nearly stationary. There would appear, therefore, to be no sufficient reason for the very prevalent belief that suicide has of late years largely increased in the kingdom.

Again, the belief that England is "the classic land of suicide"—can no longer be entertained in the face of these figures. The number of suicides in France, during the seventeen years 1836-52, averaged about 8 (8·3) in 100,000 population—1 in 12,013 inhabitants. In England, as we have seen, the proportion in the two periods, 1838-40, 1852-56, was 1 in 17,039 and 1 in 16,129 inhabitants. But then the English statistics of suicide are at the best imperfect. The Registrar-General's returns do not show, probably by one-tenth, the whole amount of suicides actually distinguished as such at the time of death.

The Home Office returns of suicide now, however, extend over five years, 1856-60, and show an annual average of 6·7 per 100,000 population, or 1 in 14,906 inhabitants; a proportion in excess of the Registrar-General's returns

for 1852-56, still comparing most favourably with those for France.

The positive records we possess, certainly show that, as far as our present information extends, England holds only a second or third-rate position in the suicide scale among civilised nations.

The justness of this conclusion will become still more apparent by a glance at the Prussian statistics of suicide. In 1834, according to Dr. Morel, the proportion of suicides in that kingdom was 1 in 9,941 inhabitants, and in 1843, 1 in 8,081. In the three years 1850-52 the number averaged 38 in 100,000 deaths from all causes. Even France, then, as well as England, must yield the sad precedence to Prussia in this matter, unless the progress of suicide in France since 1852 has been such as to overtake that which had previously been observed in Prussia.

It is very noteworthy that the most recent statistical return on the health of the army shows a proportion of suicides occurring among the troops on the Home Station more than *double that found in civil life*! The proportion of suicides occurring among 1,000,000 males of the military age (20-40) in civil life, may be estimated approximately, according to the Registrar-General's returns for 1852-56, at 124·6. But the proportion occurring in the troops on the Home Station in 1859 (20 in a strength of 71,715 men) shows a ratio of no less than 278·8 in 1,000,000! It is difficult to escape the conclusion, even if subsequent returns prove that the proportion of suicide in 1859 was exceptional, that the causes leading to so extraordinary an excess of suicide among the troops at home, and those which have given rise to the recent outbreak of murders by soldiers, have much in common. However this may be, there can be no question that the army returns of suicide confirm the necessity, made too apparent by the late murders, for a careful inquiry into such grievances as may exist among the troops.

The returns of suicide in the navy show also an excess over those occurring in civil life, but not so great as in the army. The average proportion of suicides annually occurring among the sailors on the Home Station, to 1,000,000 of the strength, was, in the three years 1856-58, 135·4. (*Social Science Review*.)

Association Intelligence.

BRANCH MEETINGS TO BE HELD.

NAME OF BRANCH.	PLACE OF MEETING.	DATE.
SOUTH MIDLAND. [Annual Autumnal.]	Infirmary, Aylesbury.	Thursday, Oct. 23rd, 1 P.M.

BIRMINGHAM AND MIDLAND COUNTIES BRANCH: GENERAL MEETING.

A general meeting of this Branch was held in the Medical Department of the Birmingham Library, on October 9th, 1862; HENRY DUNCALFE, Esq., of West-bromwich, President, in the Chair. There were also present eighteen members.

New Member. Mr. J. S. Gamgee was elected a member of the Branch.

Papers. The following papers were read:—

1. Observations on a Successful Case of Compound Comminuted Fracture of the Patella; and on one of Compound Comminuted Fracture of the Os Calcis. By J. H. Houghton, Esq. (The patients attended.)

2. A Demonstration of the Use of the Laryngoscope was given by F. Jordan, Esq.

3. Encephaloid Cancer of the Breast. By Oliver Pemberton, Esq.

which they are adduced, when we consider the extraordinary, but very carefully verified, instances given in Dr. Briere de Boismont's admirable book on *Hallucinations*, and other works, of persons who in ecstasy, catalepsy, and insanity, have lived for a length of time not "on any form of alcohol alone", but—more wonderful still—without either meat or drink of any kind. But, if this be not thought conclusive, I will take up the argument on Dr. Inman's own principles. If alcohol nourishes, and "one form of alcohol or another is available for the support of life", and saccharine and amylaceous foods only "nourish" because they are changed into alcohol by the salivary glands, the liver, and the lungs of every mammal, a dog ought to be able to live on sugar. But Magendie's elaborate experiments prove exactly the contrary, as also those of Mr. Simon in this country; the latter of which I had the honour and satisfaction of witnessing, while connected with St. Thomas's Hospital. I may add, that the urine taken out of the bladder of one of these dogs after death could not be proved, by the most careful chemical testing, to contain a trace of alcohol.

Certainly the argument above seems, as I re-peruse it, to be a very strange one. It is so; but it is from Dr. Inman's own premises. "There is no essential atomic difference between a sweet cake, and brandy and soda-water; nor is there any *primæ facie* reason to believe that the constitution cannot assimilate one as readily as the other. Nay, experience in medicine has even demonstrated . . ." are Dr. Inman's own words. As well might he argue that atmospheric air and nitric acid, or a shoe-sole and a slice of beef, "may be assimilated one as readily as the other".

But I must now refer to Dr. Inman's last case. "At the end of twelve months she still kept up her flesh", but "her nervous system was thoroughly exhausted". How could her "flesh" keep up? If flesh means flesh, and the lady really "subsisted wholly on bitter ale and brandy and water", I do not believe that she did keep up her "flesh". It is impossible. And how could her nervous system be otherwise than "thoroughly exhausted"? I ask, in the name of chemistry and reason, how could a brain and a muscular system, the solid parts of which contain respectively six, and ten, and eighteen and a half per cent. of nitrogen and phosphorus, be nourished by alcohol, which does not contain an atom of either the one element or the other? And how could the albumen and phosphates of the blood, saliva, and urine, be supplied by bitter ale, which contains so small a percentage?

With respect to the "increased power" of the brain induced by alcohol, I can only say that I have never seen it, though I have had peculiarly good opportunities of doing so, if it had been to be observed readily. The effect of alcohol which I have witnessed, has rather been that blunting of sensation which Dr. Chambers so well describes, and which, on superficial examination, might so easily be mistaken for increased brain function.

Whatever may be the real physiological action of alcohol, there is one drawback to its use which appears to me to have been overlooked by Dr. Inman; namely, its property of preventing the healthy textural drainage of the body. It used to be said that alcohol prevented the waste of tissue; but this was never proved, and it is a theory, I believe, which is now pretty nearly effete. It is true that the urine, sweat, and expired air of the drunkard contain less nitrogenous matter than those of the temperate; but it does not follow from this that the drunkard has less waste to be excreted. There is a deficiency of uric acid in the urine before a paroxysm of gout; but do the masses of urate of soda found in the tissues after the explosion, justify the conclusion that therefore there had been less uric acid in the body to be excreted? Mr. Simon seems to have placed the matter in the right light, when he says that "alcoholic stimu-

lants retard the excretory changes of tissue, and tend to produce an artificial diathesis in which the organic substance is unduly loaded with refuse". This explains why consumers of alcohol are so liable to affections universally attributed to imperfect defecation of the body; so very peculiarly predisposed to inflammation; so subject to high degrees of inflammatory fever; so apt to suffer from gangrene and sloughing; so prone to die from speedy exhaustion!

In conclusion, may I be allowed to state, that I have never known any one who thought that alcohol was a stimulant of exactly the same kind as Cayenne pepper; or a tonic exactly like gentian; or that one might not eat too much meat; or who denied that a "lying child" or a "bloody Turk" both might be teetotallers. To raise up castles of this kind simply for the purpose of demolishing them, is "to contend without an opponent, and to triumph without victory."

I am, etc.,

JAMES FOWLER,

Formerly House-Surg. to St. Thomas's Hospital, London.

October 11, 1862.

Medical News.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS. The following gentlemen passed the first part of the Professional Examination for the License of the College, on October 10th:—

Carter, Richard, Charing Cross Hospital
Forman, Elijah Baxter, Guy's Hospital
Frost, Walter, Charing Cross Hospital
Greatrex, Adolphus Burnell, St. Bartholomew's Hospital
Haward, John Warrington, St. George's Hospital
Lyle, Thomas, St. Mary's Hospital
Moore, Harry Gage, Guy's Hospital
Nash, Walter Llewellyn, St. Bartholomew's Hospital
Terry, Septimus, St. George's Hospital

APOTHECARIES' HALL. On October 9th, the following Licentiates were admitted:—

Bennett, James Edward, Arlington Street, Camden Town
Horton, Henry, Wednesbury, Staffordshire
Miller, William, Scotland Road, Liverpool
Oswald, James Waddell Jeffreys, Berwick-on-Tweed

APPOINTMENTS.

LEE, William E., Esq., appointed House-Surgeon to the Middlesex Hospital.

ROYAL NAVY.

Cox, William B., Esq., Acting Assistant-Surgeon, to the *Nile*.
LILBURN, James, Esq., Surgeon, to the *Leopard*.
MACDONNELL, Henry, Esq., Assistant-Surgeon (confirmed), to the *Virago*.
RAYNER, F. M., Esq., Surgeon, to the *St. Vincent*.
RIORDAN, John, M.D. } Acting Assistant-Surgeons, to the
ROBERTSON, Adam, M.D. } *Royal Adelaide*, for Plymouth
SIMPSON, John, M.D. } Hospital.
ASHFORD, John W., Esq. }
BRISBANE, Thomas, M.D. } Acting Assistant-Surgeons, to the
DONOVAN, Daniel, M.D. } *Victory*, for Haslar
MORE, Robert, M.D. } Hospital.
SHARWOOD, Edward J., M.D.)

DEATHS.

BECK, Edward, M.D., at Ipswich, on October 10.
CHALMERS, William, M.D., late Surgeon H.E.I.C.S., at Brighton, aged 76, on October 13.
CHATTERTON, James T., Esq., Surgeon, of Kingston-on-Thames, on October 10.
EARLE. On October 13th, at Woodbury, Devon, aged 74, Wilhelmina Sophia, widow of the late Henry Earle, Esq., F.R.S., Surgeon to St. Bartholomew's Hospital.
LENGER, Matthew, Esq., Surgeon, of Harrow Road, at Hastings, aged 37, on October 12.
MORLEY. On October 10th, aged 44, Elizabeth, wife of *John Morley, Esq., Barton-on-Humber.
NASH, Charles S., M.D., at 1, Cromwell Terrace, Harrow Road, on October 7th.
SAVAGE. On October 9th, at 101, Gloucester Place, Sophia, widow of John Savage, M.D.

BEQUEST. The City of London Hospital for Diseases of the Chest, Victoria Park, has just received a legacy of £500, under the will of the late Mr. Richard Attenuborough.

THE PUCKETT SUBSCRIPTION. Mr. Griffin, who has acted so energetically in behalf of the family of the late Mr. Puckett, gives the following account of his stewardship:—There have been subscribed £1016:19:6, which, minus expenses, has been placed in the hands of trustees. The trustees have invested £810:9:8 in East India stock, which will bring in £37 per annum, and on November 24th, the anniversary of Mrs. Puckett's birth, they intend to sink with the Norwich Union Life Office, where the deceased had insured his own life, the sum of £161:7:8, for which the widow will receive £15 per annum, thus securing for her an annual income of £52. The trustees reserve the arrangement for the final distribution of the fund until after the death of the widow, fearing that if a vested interest were given in the money, the trustees would have no power to prevent its anticipation; they however trust that no cause will arise to prevent its equal distribution amongst the four children of the deceased, or, in case of death, their representatives.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE HOSPITAL. At a meeting of the Hospital Committee the receipt of the following legacies was reported: £300 by Mr. John Watson, and £100 by Mr. Charles Cope. Notice was also received that the late Miss Charlotte Chitty, had left to the hospital a legacy of £500. At the same meeting the committee had under consideration the proceedings for providing an improved system of nursing for the wards, and for procuring for the sick inmates, by means of a special fund, many additional comforts for which the general resources of the hospital were inapplicable. It appeared that the contributions to the special fund having been sufficient to authorise the execution of the desired improvements, they had far advanced towards completion; that the receipts on account of the special fund had amounted to £830; that the committee had made themselves liable to an expenditure for the purposes mentioned of at least £1,000; consequently further subscriptions to the amount of £170: were required.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND. From Midsummer-day 1861 to Midsummer-day last, this institution has received £14,135:13 from the following sources of income, viz.:—classical examination of candidates for diploma of member, £180; primary and pass examinations for diploma of member, £11,429:15; certificate of qualification for the navy, £5:5; certificates of qualification in dental surgery, £126; licences in midwifery, £99:15; fellowship, £451:10; certificates of having received diploma, £15:15; fee on admission to council, £21; rent, £697:2:6; list of members, catalogues, etc.; £12:6; incidental, £5; dividends on investments in government securities, £1092:4:6. This sum of £14,135:13 is an excess over the receipts of last year of £241:2:8. The disbursements amounted to £14,290:7:6, divided under the following heads, viz.:—college department, including council, court of examiners, dental board, midwifery board, auditors, fellowship, diploma stamps, list of members, salaries, wages, coals, law expenses, etc., £8035:11:7; museum department, including catalogues, specimens, spirit, bottles, salaries, wages, etc., £2012:5:7; library department, including purchase and binding of books, salaries, etc., £620:17:6; miscellaneous, including taxes, insurance, furniture, pensions, etc., £1041:7:3; repairs and painting, £598:6:10; under deeds of trust, including oration, lectures, prizes, etc., £176:18:9; investment in government securities, £1805.

EVIDENCE OF EXPERTS. At the recent meeting of the British Association it was stated that the committee of the Association recommended that by a legislative Act

judges should be empowered, on application from a suitor, in causes of a technical character, to convene skilled assessors, the number of whom should be limited to three, and who should give their opinions on the statements of the witnesses, in such manner as they should be required to do by the judge, previous to his adjudication of the cause. A court so constituted might see a necessity in some cases for independent evidence of the facts on which either party relied. The allowing the judge to call in witnesses independent of the parties in such cases, as was done on various occasions by the Courts of Chancery and by Parliamentary committees, had been suggested by a high judicial authority, and would, in the opinion of the committee, be a valuable supplement to the preceding provision. Mr. Whiteside observed that in criminal cases the Crown already possessed the proper power; but in civil cases he feared the report of the committee left the evil untouched. He did not think Parliament would sanction the appointment of assessors. The length of these investigations had undoubtedly led to public scandal. But the law entrusted nothing to be decided by experts. It was a question of fact whether a man's eccentricities amounted to insanity, and practically he thought a fair result was attained in such inquiries. Mr. Napier thought it would be a great improvement of the present system, in questions of conflicting scientific issues, that the judge should have the benefit of one or two assessors, not to control or coerce him, but to give him the best assistance in their power. In criminal cases the real remedy would be found in the appointment of a public prosecutor. He entirely approved the recommendation of the committee. The President Mr. E. Chadwick, thought the French practice was preferable to what prevailed in this country. In cases involving any question of mechanical science it was usual to give the parties their election as to who should determine the question; and it would be well to give greater latitude for that purpose than was now sanctioned.

LIVERPOOL ROYAL INFIRMARY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE. The prizes in the several classes of this institution were distributed on October 1st, by Robert Hutchison, Esq., Mayor of Liverpool, to the following successful candidates:—*Senior Anatomy*—Certificates, Mr. W. Cross and Mr. G. Griffith. *Junior Anatomy*—J. H. Gornall, silver medal; Mr. Warburton and Mr. Leigh, certificates. *Surgery*—Mr. Nash, silver medal; Mr. J. M. Johnson, certificate. *Medicine*—Mr. Nash, silver medal; Mr. J. M. Johnson, certificate. *Chemistry*—Mr. Visick, silver medal; Mr. Houghton, certificate. *Practical Chemistry*—Mr. J. H. Gornall and Mr. Griffith (equal), prize of books. *Midwifery*—Mr. Warburton, silver medal; Mr. Lowndes, certificate. *Materia Medica*—Mr. J. H. Gornall, silver medal; Mr. Houghton, certificate. *Medical Jurisprudence*—Mr. Cross and Mr. Lowndes, prizes of books. *Pathology*—Mr. Irvine, silver medal; Mr. Cross, certificate. After the distribution, the Mayor addressed the students, congratulating those who had been successful. To themselves it must be an incentive to increased exertion to attain the highest honours in their profession; and to their friends an earnest that, by the blessing of God, the exertions which they were making would confer honour upon them, and redound to the credit of those who were directing their studies with anxious solicitude. To those who had not been successful in obtaining prizes, he would say, "be not discouraged; though all run, one only can obtain the prize." In the very success which had crowned the efforts of their fellow students, they had encouragement to persevere, and to indulge the hope that upon a future occasion they too might win distinction. There was one other class of students to whom he would venture to offer a few words of encouragement—those who have not possessed sufficient confidence to go in for an examination for honours. He attributed this—not to a conscious-

ness that they had not paid attention to their studies; but to a feeling of distrust (groundless in many cases) in their own powers, and to a want of that self-reliance, which is so marked a characteristic in the man of enterprise, and so necessary to the achievement of success in every walk of life. He would earnestly entreat those who were in such a case not to be disheartened by misgivings and apprehensions of failure. A child, in its first attempts to walk, gets many falls; but by repeated efforts it at length walks erect, and by continued practice at last attains the desired end. Application, and perseverance, and a firm determination to excel, never fail in the accomplishment of their object, and such a course of action he commended to their earnest consideration. In consenting to speak a few words to the body of medical students present collectively, he would remember that he addressed the nurslings of a noble profession—a class, whose power and influence, for good or evil, could scarcely be overrated. He, therefore, earnestly urged upon them ever to bear in mind the high destiny to which they were called. To the student of a thoughtful, philosophical, and investigating turn of mind in any profession, but more particularly in the medical, there was presented that master heresy of the mechanical and inventive age in which we live, the heresy of dealing with man as a mere piece of materialism. He feared that this mischievous opinion had a strong hold on the mind of many anatomists, and lay at the root of much popular infidelity. The habit of dealing with the material properties of human nature, of examining the manner in which we are acted upon by mechanical forces, of tracing certain functions to their apparent origin and source, was apt to lead the intellectual student, by its plausible appearance, its fascination, its beguilement of the imagination, and a delicate and subtle logic, to imagine that a man is a mere mass of well compacted earth; and unless the inquiry were pursued in a reverent and religious spirit, it had a tendency to land the superficial, and especially the evil disposed, in a withering and blighting scepticism. Such a course of reasoning undermined the first principles of moral duty, and lent its aid to every corrupt and degrading passion. He held it, however, to be a great advantage as a corrective to such baneful effects, and one of the most important features of this institution, that it enabled young men to prosecute their studies in medical science whilst still residing under the eye and guardianship of their parents and friends; and thus, whilst enjoying the succour and the solace of the paternal roof, to be removed as far as may be from the full force of those temptations to which the isolated student is peculiarly exposed, when removed far away from those wholesome and endearing restraints, which the affectionate ties of a well regulated family, and those only, can effectually supply.

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE IN THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION. In the lecture of zoology and botany, the president, Professor Huxley, in his inaugural address subdivided the science into the four heads of morphology, physiology, distribution and ætiology, or investigation of the laws which concern the origin, development, and extinction of all organic beings. He narrated the history and progress of each branch, and specially adverted to the fact that almost all the valuable progress had been made during the last fifty years. In the lifetime of the present generation he anticipated a still more brilliant and startling progress. The Professor affirmed that Mr. Darwin's work was as perfect in its logical method as it was accurate in its scientific facts. He concluded by inculcating the importance of promoting the advance of biological science, and insisting on the advantages which had been already attained by the examinations conducted by the Department of Science and Art. He made a warm appeal to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge no longer to confine their fellowships and the

other great advantages of their endowments to success obtained in classics and mathematics. He trusted that before long, biological science would receive a practical recognition in both Universities. In the sub-section of physiology, the president, Dr. G. E. Paget, remarked on the limited cultivation of physiology in Cambridge, and referred the cause of its comparative neglect to the most able students being attracted by the prizes, scholarships, and fellowships which had hitherto been given almost exclusively for proficiency in classics or mathematics. He described its prospects as improving under recent academical changes, and particularly the establishment of the Natural Sciences Tripos. He eulogised the labours of Dr. Clark, and referred to the elaborate discourse by Dr. Sharpey, read before the British Medical Association, on the progress of physiology as a reason for abstaining from the usual course of addressing the section on that subject.

Varieties.

THE PHARMACOPŒIA COMMITTEE v. THE METRIC SYSTEM. The pupils of the London University make their calculations by the *gramme*. Professor Miller, of Cambridge, is asked, "How long has the metric system been introduced in scientific operations?" He answers, "As long as I can remember. I should think that, since the year 1836, no chemist ever made use of weights which were not decimally divided." Mr. Graham, Master of the Mint, states that "the divisions of the metric system form a sort of common language for scientific men; and that where it is not used in English scientific papers," those papers remain unnoticed in France. He adds, that it is also beginning to find a place in elementary scientific works in England." (*Athenæum*.)

SMALL-POX IN SHEEP. In his introduction address at the opening of the Veterinary College, Professor Simonds said that small-pox in sheep was less familiarly known than small-pox in man, but it was more fatal. Before the year 1847 the malady had never been observed among the flocks of this kingdom. It had long, however, been prevalent and well-known in several of the great sheep districts of the Continent. One sheep would infect a flock; a flock would infect a district; and in this way the malady would be spread over the area of a vast country. In the case of the human small-pox, we possessed a simple, efficacious, and an almost harmless means of prevention in vaccination; but it was not so in the case of small-pox in sheep. Vaccination afforded them no protection. Where the separation of the affected animals from the healthy ones proved insufficient to stay the disease, there remained only inoculation to be had recourse to. Nothing was more efficacious than this for securing the ultimate welfare of the flock. It had been forgotten that in the case of sheep we had no option between vaccination and inoculation. Wide and extended experience had shown that vaccination was valueless as a protection against small-pox in sheep; and had on the other hand shown the great value of inoculation. Small-pox first appeared among the flocks of England in 1847. It had been introduced by foreign sheep sold in Smithfield Market. The disease spread rapidly, and committed frightful ravages in several countries during the years 1847-48-49 and 1850. Since 1850 the malady had not been heard of among our flocks until the month of July last, when it broke out at Allington, near Devizes. The introduction of the disease into Mr. Parry's flock was still left in uncertainty. At the present moment there was good hope, thanks to the preventive measures adopted, that the malady had been stayed in the vicinity where it had first showed itself. The nature of the disease and the period of the year alike forbade a hasty conclusion

in the matter. He trusted that the malady was stayed, but he could not conceal from himself the probability—a probability taught by bitter experience—that the disease might still spread more widely, and that our flocks might ultimately suffer from as calamitous a visitation as that which befel them in 1847-50.

FLIES. Spanish flies, and cantharides, are also beetles. At Pisa, certain (uncertain?) flies are found which give out an agreeable odour. They feed on orange and lemon flowers, and resemble bees; they have four wings, and therefore are not real flies. A saw-fly carries a saw on its head; a scorpion-fly has terrible pincers, like scorpions' or lobsters' claws, in its tail. The destructive Hessian fly is a tipula, or daddy-long-legs. The May-fly is the ephemeral beauty which lives, as a caddis-worm, for months in the water, and only a single day in the air. A gad-fly is one of the winged scourges which must have been included among the divers sorts of flies which devoured the Egyptians. Swarms of flies, in houses and on the ground, are thus acknowledged to be a plague. And it is not man alone that suffers from them. In several parts of the world, insects end the existence of cattle. Perhaps Paraguay offers the most curious instance of this; for neither cattle nor horses nor dogs have ever run wild there, although they swarm southward and northward in a feral state; and Azara and Rengger have shown that this is caused by the greater prevalence, in Paraguay, of a certain fly, which lays its eggs in the navels of those animals when first born. The increase of these flies, numerous as they are, must still be habitually checked by some means, probably by birds. Hence, if insectivorous birds could increase in Paraguay, flies would decrease, and cattle and horses might run wild. (*All the Year Round.*)

OPERATION DAYS AT THE HOSPITALS.

MONDAY...... Royal Free, 2 P.M.—Metropolitan Free, 2 P.M.—St. Mark's for Fistula and other Diseases of the Rectum, 1.15 P.M.—Samarian, 2.30 P.M.
TUESDAY..... Guy's, 1½ P.M.—Westminster, 2 P.M.
WEDNESDAY.... St. Mary's, 1 P.M.—Middlesex, 1 P.M.—University College, 2 P.M.
THURSDAY..... St. George's, 1 P.M.—Central London Ophthalmic, 1 P.M.—London, 1.30 P.M.—Great Northern, 2 P.M.—London Surgical Home, 2 P.M.—Royal Orthopædic, 2 P.M.
FRIDAY...... Westminster Ophthalmic, 1.30 P.M.
SATURDAY..... St. Thomas's, 1 P.M.—St. Bartholomew's, 1.30 P.M.—King's College, 1.30 P.M.—Charing Cross, 2 P.M.

MEETINGS OF SOCIETIES DURING THE NEXT WEEK.

MONDAY. Medical Society of London, 8.30 P.M.: Dr. Cotton, "On the Therapeutics of Consumption."
TUESDAY. Junior Medical Society of London (Charing Cross), 8 P.M.: Mr. Frank W. Cooper, "Some Points in the Treatment of Delirium Tremens."

POPULATION STATISTICS AND METEOROLOGY OF LONDON—OCTOBER 11, 1862.

[From the Registrar-General's Report.]

	Births.	Deaths.
During week.....	{ Boys .. 901 Girls.. 856 }	1757 1121
Average of corresponding weeks 1852-61		1801 1156

Barometer:
 Highest (Sun.) 30.183; lowest (Sat.) 29.916; mean, 29.980.

Thermometer:
 Highest in sun—extremes (Mon.) 110.1 degs.; (Tu.) 92.7 degs.
 In shade—highest (Mon.) 70 degrees; lowest (Sun.) 47.7 degs.
 Mean—56.3 degrees; difference from mean of 43 yrs. 4.2 degs.
 Range—during week, 22.3 degrees; mean daily, 14.9 degrees.
 Mean humidity of air (saturation = 10) .89.
 Mean direction of wind, N.E.—Rain in inches, 1.22.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

* * * *All letters and communications for the JOURNAL, to be addressed to the EDITOR, 37, Great Queen St., Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C.*

CORRESPONDENTS, who wish notice to be taken of their communications, should authenticate them with their names—of course not necessarily for publication.

THE GEOLOGY OF LINCOLN.—SIR: In the abstract of my address, which appeared in the JOURNAL for August 2nd, the clay over which a part of Lincoln is built is mentioned as "Oxford" clay; whereas it is really a bed belonging to the lias—lias-clay. I much regret this error, which was owing to my having relied on the accuracy of the Report of Mr. Giles, C.E., on the Drainage. Should you deem the mistake a matter of sufficient importance to notice, perhaps you will oblige me by setting it right.

I am, etc., T. SYMPSON.

S.D.—We cannot believe that the following extract is from the work of any man who can legitimately write M.R.C.S. after his name:—

"*A Novel Test for Worms.* There exists in nature an agent equal to the destruction of intestinal worms, far superior in power, certainty, and safety, to all the medicines with which I am acquainted, and which I have found unerring as a test of the presence of the parasite—the living trout. In the Vale of Cleveland, probably elsewhere, the custom has existed, for at least one hundred years, of applying to children, either known or suspected to be infested with worms, a trout in the following manner:—A fresh lively trout is inclosed in a linen bag, and applied to the surface of the abdomen at bed-time, and the condition in which it was found the following morning determines the presence or absence of the parasite. Should the trout be taken off merely dead, and in appearance similar to one killed in the ordinary manner the same time previously, worms do not exist; on the other hand, should it be removed dark-coloured, decomposed, and offensive, the case can be as unhesitatingly pronounced one of worms, and the operation of a purgative will expel the intruders. I profess no theory here beyond this—the fish absorbs the vitality of the worm." (*The Mortality of Childhood*, by Mr. Crumney, M.R.C.S.)

COMMUNICATIONS have been received from:—MR. WILLIAM COPNEY; MR. M. B. HILL; DR. FOWLER; DR. STIFF; MR. RICHARD GRIFFIN; DR. WALKER; DR. DAY; MR. G. RIDGEN; DR. HUGHES BENNETT; DR. KIDD; MR. JAMES FOWLER; THE HONORARY SECRETARY OF THE JUNIOR MEDICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON; DR. DAVEY; THE HONORARY SECRETARIES OF THE MEDICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON; MRS. BAINES; DR. MITCHINSON; DR. P. BOULTON; and MR. MORRIS.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

1. Transactions of the Medical Society of London. Volume II. London: 1862.
2. An Introductory Address on the Future of St. Thomas's Hospital. By J. S. Bristowe, M.D. London: 1862.
3. La Médecine et le Monopole. Par le Docteur Romain Vigouroux. London: 1862.
4. Air and Water: their Impurities and Purification. By Henry B. Condy. London: 1862.

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