

CHARCOAL FILTERS.

The *Annales d'Hygiène* for October, contain an elaborate article on this subject by M. Gaultier de Claubry. The disinfecting power of charcoal depends on a property which has been long known to reside in that substance. When charcoal, from the pores of which all gas has been expelled, is placed in contact with gas, it absorbs the latter in variable quantities; hence when charcoal disinfects water, it does so by absorbing the impure gases, which are gradually formed by the decomposition of certain substances contained in the fluid. The first point, then, to be ascertained is, to determine the limits of the purifying power of charcoal. The experiments of M. Gaultier, prove that the charcoal loses its effect after having purified 333 times its weight of tainted water. However, as the fluid generally submitted to the filtering process is but slightly tainted, we may allow one part of charcoal to one thousand of water. Hence, we may conclude that the quantity of charcoal employed in large establishments and in domestic filters, is never proportionate to the quantity of water to be purified, and that, after a short time, it merely acts as a filtering substance, its disinfecting properties being completely exhausted.

DEATH OF PROFESSOR DON.

We regret to have to announce the death of this distinguished naturalist, which took place at the Linnean Society's apartments, Soho-square, London, on Wednesday, the 8th instant. He was the second son of the late Mr. George Don, whom some of our readers will remember as long the Curator of the Royal Botanic Garden, Leith-walk. About twenty-five years ago, Mr. David Don went to London, carrying with him an introduction from a friend to the celebrated Robert Brown. This gentleman soon perceived and duly appreciated the merits of the young Scotch botanist; and through his powerful recommendation he was successively appointed Keeper of the Lambertian Herbarium and Librarian to the Linnean Society. In 1821, he accompanied his early friend to Paris, and thus formed acquaintance with some of the most eminent continental naturalists, among whom were Humboldt, Cuvier, and Delessert. Mr. Don's *Prodromus Floræ Nepalensis*, and various excellent papers in the Linnean Transactions, having brought him prominently into notice in the botanical world, he was chosen Professor of Botany in King's College; and he may be said to have fallen a martyr to his zeal as a lecturer there, for he resolutely delayed till the end of the session an operation, recommended by Sir B. Brodie, by which his life might have been saved, and it was then found too late.—*Edinburgh Courant*.

LIFE OF A MEDICAL MAN.

There is not any career which so rapidly wears away the powers of life, because there is no other which requires a greater activity of mind and body. He has to bear the changes of weather, continual fatigue, irregularity in his meals, and broken rest; to live in the midst of miasma and contagion. If in the country, he has to traverse considerable distances on horseback, exposed to wind and storm; to brave all dangers, to go to the relief of suffering humanity. A fearful truth for medical men has been established, by the table of mortality of Dr. Casper, published in the "British Review." Of 1,000 members of the medical profession, 600 died before their 36th year; whilst of persons leading a quiet life, such as agriculturists or theologians, the mortality is only 347. If we take 100 individuals of each of these classes, 43 theologians, 40 agriculturists, 85 clerks, and 32 soldiers, will reach their 70th year; of 100 professors of the healing art, 24 only will reach that age. They are the sign-posts to health; they can show the road to old age, but rarely tread it themselves.—*Chambers' Journal*.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

It is gratifying to find the friends of public health are bestirring themselves. Cemeterial interment is rapidly progressing. In several of the provincial towns, as, for instance, Reading and Southampton, cemeteries are already in process of formation. The medical practitioners of Carmarthen have, within the last month, unanimously denounced the grave-yards, justly considering them as nurseries and hotbeds of disease.

PROFESSORSHIP OF POLITICAL MEDICINE.

As we predicted, Dr. Maunsell has been elected to this professorship, recently created by the College of Surgeons in Ireland. Dr. Maunsell is well qualified to fill the office which has been bestowed upon him, and we anticipate much benefit from his labours in this sadly neglected branch of political economy.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Traite Pratique des Accouchements. By F. G. Moreau. Tome II. Paris: Germer Bailliere, 1841. 8vo.

The Double Flap and Circular Amputations Contrasted, &c. By F. N. Machardy, M.D. London: Simpkin and Co., 1841.

Researches on the Non-Vascularity and the Peculiar Organization, &c., of Certain Animal Tissues. By Joseph Toynebee, &c. From the Philosophical Transactions, 1841.

The Retrospective Address, delivered at the York Meetings of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association. By R. J. N. Streeten, M.D.

Hints Towards the Adoption of an Improved Principle of Remunerating the General Practitioner. By T. M. Greenhow, Newcastle.

CORRESPONDENTS.

An Old Correspondent.—We have seen the dastardly note, which has merely excited our profound contempt. The allusion to "a certain place" comes well from a person who is notoriously dishonourable in his money transactions; and, instead of a "cripple," he may chance to light upon one who is as able as he is ready to teach him civility.

We are unable to find room this week for several communications, and amongst them, for the Report of the Westminster Medical Society.

We shall be glad to receive Mr. C. T. Edwards's communication on the "Metalloids," &c.

Probe.—We are quite aware of the character of the "abortion" who spies for the notorious medical print, "which no respectable person would be seen reading." If the tiny eaves-dropper does not look sharp, he may get a squeeze which he will not easily forget.

Spontaneous Combustion.—Our correspondent's remarks are too unconnected in their present form for insertion. We beg to refer him to the editor of the "Lancet" for more precise information on that singularly interesting phenomenon.

Letters and communications have been received from Dr. Fosbrooke; Dr. Knight; Mr. Toogood; Dr. Burgess; Dr. Burton; Mr. C. T. Edwards; Mr. Nottingham; Mr. Chalmers; Dr. Tunstall; Dr. Knott; Mr. Husband; Dr. Moran; Veritas; most of which we hope to find room for in our next.

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