

THE WEEK.

MEDICAL men have been so accustomed of late to find their profession abused in *The Times*, that they are not so thin-skinned upon the matter as of old. Nevertheless we see no occasion to allow sneers of a most unwarrantable kind to pass without notice. In a leader, on Tuesday, in commenting on the conditions fatal to life, which so often exist in farm-houses, the writer draws a picture of a young child slowly succumbing beneath their baleful influence, and concludes as follows: "*Before long it is delivered to the tender care of the man who gallops in every other day, sends whole bales of pills and draughts, and soon settles either the life or the constitution of his unfortunate patient.*" We have italicised every word of this libellous passage, as we do not wish it to be lost even upon the most careless reader. This is not the first time that we have been publicly accused of dosing poor humanity to death, and we think it right that some answer should be given. We cannot deny that the system of dosing was carried to an extreme length in the age that has just passed, and we think there can be as little doubt that the gross delusion, Homœopathy, sprang up as a consequent reaction. We can and do deny, however, that the medical man is responsible for this evil practice. Every professional man is aware of the old longing of the patient for heroic treatment. If a medical man did not blister and bleed and pill and bolus, he stood a fair chance of being superseded by another who would. People used even to take a pride in having gone through "a course of medicine," and looked with as much satisfaction on the row of gallipots and six ounce phials, as the roisterer of old did at the number of "dead men" thrown under the table. The idea of paying a scientific man for his *time*, would have been considered preposterous; so the scientific man, if he intended to live, was obliged in a certain measure to humour his patient. We are happy to say, however, that the public having found out their mistake, the medical man is enabled in many cases to charge more liberally for his visits, and the overdrugging system is, as a consequence, slowly going out of fashion. In conclusion, we must say we do not believe in the existence of the man "who gallops in every other day, and sends whole bales of pills and draughts." He is the apothecary of the past, whom even the ill will of *The Times* cannot recall to life in this enlightened age.

The chapter of accidents seems to conspire with the public voice to force upon the Government the question of the sale of public poisons. There have been more cases of deaths from this cause within the last month than we ever remember to have noted before. The impediments thrown in the way of the public sale of arsenic have caused the demand to run upon laudanum. Dr. Rogers, the Medical Registrar of St. George's Hospital, in a letter to the *Times*, states, "Between 1 A.M. of November 3rd, and 3.30 P.M. of the same day, we have had no fewer than four women admitted who had taken laudanum in large quantities." This fact is certainly disgraceful to the metropolitan chemists. The laxity which prevails with respect to the sale of these

deadly drugs is not, however, we are glad to say, universally prevalent, as we learn from a police case at Worship Street, in which a poor girl was charged with attempting to commit suicide by swallowing laudanum, which she had purchased of a chemist in the Strand. On the bottle, however, which contained it, a label was found, inscribed with the names of Messrs. Corbyn and Stacey, wholesale chemists and druggists, of High Holborn and the Poultry—a fact which induced a gentleman of that establishment to acquaint the magistrate "that the laudanum was not supplied by them, and that it is the invariable practice of their establishment not to supply any persons unless the purchaser is provided with an authorisation from some medical practitioner." We are glad to find that one respectable firm has thought it worth their while to thus publicly repudiate the indiscriminate sale of poison; and we think that the most effectual way to bring less scrupulous chemists to their senses would be for the magistrates invariably to make public their names, when it is discovered that they have supplied would-be suicides with the means of self-destruction.

The Board of Health authorities are busily engaged in collecting materials for a new Vaccination Bill. We are given to understand that an enormous number of suggestions have been forwarded to the Board by medical men relative to the intended measure. If out of the multitude of counsellors a good Bill should really issue, we need not regret the failure of the last attempt at legislating upon the subject, although it would be difficult to forget the slighting way in which the President of the Board, Mr. Cowper, spoke of the differences of doctors with respect to the efficacy of vaccination.

The Court of City Sewers have refused to come to any decision upon the gas-work nuisance, and have referred the matter to the Home Secretary. Nevertheless, they seem to be mightily surprised and indignant that a complaint of a smoke nuisance had been forwarded to Sir George Grey, and not to them. If the Board abdicates its powers the first time it comes front to front with wealthy nuisance-makers, they must not be surprised if the citizens slight their authority, and appeal at once to a higher power.

NOTICE REGARDING THE PAYMENT OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

THE General Secretary of the British Medical Association begs to call the attention of members to the Laws regarding the payment of Subscriptions, which declare—

FIRST:—That on the 1st of January of each year, the annual subscription of one guinea becomes due in advance.

SECOND:—That "if any member's subscription remain unpaid twelve months after it shall become due, the MEDICAL JOURNAL and other publications of the Society shall be withheld from such member till his arrears be paid."

By a resolution of the Laws Committee, passed on December 21st, 1855, it was determined that each member of the Association, whose admission bears date prior to 1st January 1856, shall be requested to pay for this year the sum of Ten Shillings, in addition to his Annual Subscription.

Either of the following modes of payment may be adopted:—
1. Payment by Post Office Order to the Treasurer (Sir C. Hastings), or to the undersigned.

2. Payment to the Secretary of the Branch to which the member belongs.

3. Members residing in the Metropolis and vicinity can make their payments between 10 A.M. and 4 P.M. at the office of the JOURNAL, 37, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

PHILIP H. WILLIAMS, General Secretary.

Worcester, November, 1856.

or place, or in Scotland before a sheriff of the county or before the Justice of the Peace Court for the district in which the offence was committed, pay a sum not exceeding £20, nor less than £5, to be recoverable as hereinafter described, together with all costs.

20. Any two justices of the peace acting in and for the county, city, or place in which the offence has been committed, may hear and determine any complaint made under the next preceding clause, on the oath of one or more witnesses, or by the confession of the accused party, and shall award the penalty or punishment herein provided for such offence; and in every case of the adjudication of a pecuniary penalty and of non-payment thereof, it shall be lawful for the said justices, or in Scotland for the said sheriff or justice of peace court, to commit the offender to any gaol or house of correction within their jurisdiction, for a term not exceeding six calendar months, the imprisonment to cease on payment of the sum due.

21. If any person shall wilfully procure, or attempt to procure himself to be registered under this Act, by making, or producing, or causing to be made or produced, any false or fraudulent representation or declaration, either verbally or in writing, every such person so offending, and every person aiding and assisting him therein, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanour in England and Ireland, and in Scotland of a crime and offence, and shall, on conviction thereof, be sentenced to be imprisoned for any term not exceeding twelve months.

22. Every person who shall be registered under the provisions of this Act, shall be exempt, if he shall so desire, from serving on all juries and inquests whatsoever, and from serving all corporate, parochial, ward, hundred, and township offices, and in the militia; and the name of such person shall not be returned in any list of persons liable to serve in the militia, or in any such office as aforesaid.

CHOLERA IN CAPE VERD ISLANDS. St. Vincent, Cape de Verdes, has suffered terribly from cholera. Out of a population of 1,200, eight hundred persons have died, principally males. The bodies of the dead had to be burnt in the public square in the absence of means to inter them. The *Imperador* was coaled by women. (*Times*.)

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON. The Council's first session for the academical year was held on Saturday last. A vote of thanks was then passed to John Hibbert, Esq., of Braywick Lodge, near Maidenhead, for his donation of £100, lately presented to the hospital, the third of the same amount within twelve months, and making, with former gifts, £400. The Council received the report of the examiners for the Andrew's Scholarships, for the best proficients in Latin, Greek, mathematics, and natural philosophy, recommending Mr. Joseph Maurice Solomon for the first, and Mr. Percy Greg for the second scholarship, and commending the examination passed by Mr. Alexander Waugh Young. A letter from Mr. Greg, intimating that he could not hold the second scholarship, was read. The first scholarship (£100) was awarded to Mr. Joseph Maurice Solomon; the second (£60), to Mr. Alexander Waugh Young. The examiners for the Council, besides the Professors of Latin, Greek, Mathematics, and Natural Philosophy, were, Mr. Robert Baldwin Hayward, Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, Vice-Principal of University College, Durham, for mathematics; and for classics, Mr. John C. Addyes Scott, A.M., Fellow of University College, London.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

LETTERS and other COMMUNICATIONS for the JOURNAL should be directed to the private address of the Editor, 39, Curzon Street, May Fair.

Members should remember that corrections for the current week's JOURNAL should not arrive later than Wednesday.

TO CONTRIBUTORS. The Editor would feel glad if Members of the Association and others, would cooperate with him in establishing as a rule, that in future no paper for publication shall exceed two pages of the Journal in length. If the writers of long communications knew as well as the Editor does, that lengthy papers always deter the reader from commencing them, this great evil would never arise. Brevity is the soul of medical writing—still more than of wit.

DR. PAYNE (Barnsley). Yes.

Communications have been received from:—MR. H. TERRY, JUN.; MR. W. B. KESTVEN; MR. GRIFFIN; MR. HUMPHREYS; MR. W. D. HUBBARD; MR. HAYNES WALTON; DR. LINDO; MR. W. J. MOORE; MR. GEORGE ALLEN; MR. G. B. HALFORD; DR. JAMES WILLIAMS; DR. C. W. BEIL; DR. INMAN; MR. STONE; DR. HERBERT BARKER; DR. KIDD; DR. G. G. ROGERS; MR. POLLOCK; DR. OKE; MR. F. CHAVASSE; MR. E. BOULT; MR. G. E. NICHOLAS; and DR. LITV.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

[* An Asterisk is prefixed to the names of Members of the Association.]

1. Principles of Medicine. An Elementary View of the Causes, Nature, Treatment, Diagnosis, and Prognosis, of Disease. With brief Remarks on Hygienics or the Preservation of Health. By *Charles J. B. Williams, M.D., F.R.S. London: Churchill. 1856.
2. Investigation into the Primary Laws which determine and regulate Health and Disease. By Jacob Dixon. London: Piper & Co. 1856.
3. Illustrations of the Pathology of Cancer. By *John Zachariah Laurence, F.R.C.S. London: Richards. 1856.
4. Monthly Reports of the Sanitary Condition of St. Pancras, Middlesex. By Thomas Hillier, M.D., Medical Officer of Health for the Parish of Saint Pancras. London: 1856.
5. Reports to the Right Hon. William Cowper, M.P., President of the General Board of Health on the Metropolis Water Supply under the Provisions of the Metropolis Water Act. Blue Book. London: 1856.
6. Portrait of Benjamin Travers, Esq., F.R.C.S. From Mr. T. M. Stone.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

Williams and Son's Pure Glycerine

SOAP.—MESSRS. JOHN WILLIAMS and SON'S Pure Glycerine Soap has been analysed by two of the most able Chemists of London, and is strongly recommended by several eminent men in the Medical Profession. It is suited to the most delicate skin (whether arising from disease or otherwise), and is the only kind fit for nursery use. May be had of all respectable Chemists, Perfumers, etc.

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The objects of this Society are—

1st. To provide a safe and efficient medium by which the Medical Profession may secure more certain and regular payment for their services; with every consideration for the convenience of those who are willing, but unable directly to discharge their liabilities; with rigour from those who are able, but have not the disposition, to remunerate medical men.

2nd. With the machinery necessary for carrying out the foregoing purpose to establish a means of privately negotiating the transfer of Practices and Partnerships.

3rd. A Register is kept for Assistants and Pupils.

4th. To raise a Benevolent Fund by devoting to that object the profits arising from the general operations of the Society.

The Members of this Society consist of qualified Practitioners only. Annual Subscription, One Guinea; a Firm, consisting of two Partners, at Guinea and a half; a Firm of three Partners, Two Guineas. Fixed rates of Commission are charged on business transacted.