

## Association Intelligence.

### LETTERS AND COMMUNICATIONS.

Letters or communications for the JOURNAL should be addressed to Dr. WYNTER, Coleherne Court, Old Brompton, S.W.

Letters regarding the business department of the JOURNAL, and corrected proofs, should be sent to 37, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C.

### BRANCH MEETINGS TO BE HELD.

NAME OF BRANCH.	PLACE OF MEETING.	DATE.
BATH AND BRISTOL. [Ordinary Meeting.]	York House, Bath.	Thurs., Sept. 24, 6½ P.M.
EAST YORK AND NORTH LINCOLN. [General Meeting.]	Yarborough Hotel, Grimsby.	Thursday, Sept. 24th, 2 P.M.
BIRMINGHAM AND MID- LAND COUNTIES. [Ordinary Meeting.]		Thursday, Oct. 8th.

## Reports of Societies.

### BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE.

#### TWENTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING.

[Held in Dublin, August 26th, and following days, 1857.]

[Continued from page 780.]

#### SECTION OF ZOOLOGY AND BOTANY, INCLUDING PHYSIOLOGY.

##### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED TO INVESTIGATE THE VITALITY OF SEEDS. BY C. G. DAUBENY, M.D.

Dr. DAUBENY alluded to the circumstances which called the committee into existence, and stated, that after planting year after year all the seeds they were able to collect, they had now left but four species of plants whose seeds continued to grow. These were species belonging to the genera *Ulex*, *Dolichos*, *Malva*, and *Ipomœa*. He exhibited a register in which every experiment, as performed by Mr. Baxter of the Botanic Garden, was detailed. From this register it would be seen that the shortest period for which any of the seeds had retained their vitality was eight years, and the longest forty-three years. Grouping the plants according to their natural orders, the following selected will give some idea of the plants whose seeds retain their vitality longest: Gramineæ, 8 years; Liliaceæ, 10 years; Conifere, 12 years; Tiliaceæ, 27 years; Malvaceæ, 27 years; Leguminosæ, 43 years; Rhamnaceæ, 21 years; Boraginaceæ, 8 years; Convolvulaceæ, 14 years; Compositæ, 8 years; Myrtaceæ, 18 years; Umbellifere, 8 years; Crucifere, 8 years.

Dr. LANKESTER drew attention to the physiological interest of the Report just read. It would appear that the seeds which retained their vitality longest were those which had least albumen surrounding their embryos, as the Leguminosæ, whilst those which had large quantities of albumen, as the Graminaceæ, lost their vitality soonest.

Dr. STEELE stated, that he had planted many seeds obtained from Egyptian mummies, but always failed to obtain any indications of their vitality.

Mr. MOORE, of the Dublin Botanic Garden, related an instance in which he had succeeded in producing a new species of leguminous plant from seeds obtained by Mr. John Ball from a vase discovered in an Egyptian tomb. He also stated, that he had picked from out of the wood of a decayed elm, at least fifty years old, seeds of laburnum, many of which had germinated when planted, and produced young trees. He had once grown a crop of young barberry trees by planting a quantity of barberry jam, which proved that the process of preparing the jam did not injure the seed. Many seeds grew the better for being placed in boiling water before they were set.

Dr. DAUBENY stated, that seeds did not retain their vitality

whilst entirely excluded from the air; that, in order to keep them well, they should be wrapped up in brown paper, or some other porous material.

Mr. ARCHER stated, that the seeds sent from China in airtight vessels always failed to germinate. Some seeds kept much better than others.

Mr. OGILBY stated, that some seeds germinated the better for being kept.

Mr. NEVINS and Mr. MOORE both confirmed this statement, and said, that gardeners were in the habit of keeping cucumber and melon seeds in their pockets in order to ensure their more efficient germination.

#### ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE LIVING ELECTRIC FISHES AS MEDICAL SHOCK-MACHINES.

BY PROFESSOR G. WILSON.

The author stated that, in prosecuting researches into the early history of the electric machine, he did not at first contemplate going further back than the seventeenth century, or commencing with any earlier instrument than Otto Guericke's sulphur globe, of 1670. His attention, however, had been incidentally directed to the employment of the living torpedo as a remedial agent by the ancient Greek and Roman physicians, and he now felt satisfied that a living electric fish was alike the earliest and the most familiar electric instrument employed by mankind. In proof of the antiquity of the practice, he adduced the testimony of Galen, Dioscorides, Scribonius, and Asclepiades, whose works proved that the shock of the torpedo had been used as a remedy in paralytic and neuralgic affections before the Christian era. A still higher antiquity had been conjecturally claimed for the electric Silurus, or *Malapterurus* of the Nile, on the supposition that its Arabic name, *raad*, signifies thunder-fish, and implies a very ancient recognition of the identity in nature of the shock-giving power and the lightning force; but the best Arabic scholars have pointed out that the words for thunder (*raad*) and for the electric fish (*ra'ad*) are different, and that the latter signifies the "causer of trembling" or "convulser"; so that there are no grounds for imputing to the ancient Egyptians, or even to the Arabs, the identification of Silurus-power with the electric force. In proof of the generality of the practice of employing the living zoo-electric machine at the present day, the author referred to the remedial application of the torpedo by the Abyssinians, to that of the gymnotus by the South American Indians, and to that of the recently discovered electric fish (*Malapterurus Beninensis*) by the dwellers on the Old Calabar River, which flows into the Bight of Benin. The native Calabar women are in the practice of keeping one or more of the fishes in a basin of water, and bathing their children in it daily, with a view to strengthen them by the shocks which they receive. These shocks are certainly powerful, for living specimens of the Calabar fish are at present in Edinburgh, and a single one gives a shock to the hand reaching to the elbow or even to the shoulder. The usages referred to appear to have prevailed among the nations following them from time immemorial, so that they furnish proof of the antiquity as well as of the generality of the practice under notice. The author concluded by directing the attention of naturalists to the probability of additional kinds of electrical fish being discovered, and to the importance of ascertaining what the views of the natives familiar with them are in reference to the source of their power and to their therapeutic employment.

Sir J. RICHARDSON stated, that there were not fewer than eleven genera of fishes known that had the power of giving electric shocks. There was one peculiarity in all these fishes, and that was the absence of scales. In every one of them an apparatus had been discovered, which consisted of a series of galvanic cells put in action by a powerful system of nerves. He read extracts from a letter from Dr. Baikie, now engaged in exploring the Niger, in which that gentleman stated that he had met with an electric fish in Fernando Po, and which Sir J. Richardson believed was identical with the *Malapterurus*, which had been described by Dr. Wilson, from the coast of Old Calabar. The natives called this fish the Tremble fish.

#### ON BRITISH NAKED-EYED MEDUSÆ, WITH NOTICES OF SEVEN UNDESCRIBED FORMS. BY MR. JOSEPH R. GREEN.

The author commenced by alluding to the progress which had been made in the study of the Naked-eyed Medusæ since the publication of Professor E. Forbes's monograph; the researches of Agassiz, Leuckardt, and Gegenbaur being more especially dwelt on. He next gave a list of the *Acalephæ*, which he had hitherto observed on the Dublin coast, in all amounting

Whichever it be, the case appears to me to prove fecundity in the men rather than in the women of Russia generally; and this will perhaps strike also such of your readers as can turn to Appendix 20 of my father's *Synopsis of Difficult Parturition*, so long a text-book in all the Schools of Medicine. Here they will find not only the case of the Russian peasant, but an account of a Frenchman, whose wife seven times, and servant once, brought him three children at a birth; besides some other curiosities of plural births.

I am, etc.,  
S. WM. J. MERRIMAN.

3, Charles Street, Westbourne Terrace, Sept. 8, 1857.

#### THE SCOTTISH LUNACY BOARD.

SIR,—I observe that two erroneous statements, originally published in an obscure and intemperate Edinburgh newspaper, regarding Dr. James Cox, one of the paid Commissioners of the new Scottish Lunacy Board, have been copied as facts into professional journals, and made the theme of very unfair comment. It is stated that Dr. Cox does not owe his appointment to merit, but to his having been "family physician to the Duke of Argyll", and to his wife being "the relative of a cabinet minister". I have known Dr. Cox and his family intimately for twenty years, and I can positively assert that he never was family physician to the Duke of Argyll, and that his wife is not related to a cabinet minister. Had it been otherwise, there would have been no reason why a physician of Dr. Cox's high acquirements, learning, and experience, should not have been appointed to the new board; but, as a lover of truth, I think it right to point out the groundlessness of the inventions of a discontented northern clique. Dr. Cox, I observe by the newspapers, is at present abroad, making a tour of the continental asylums.

The insertion of this letter will oblige yours, etc.,

VERITAS.

London, September 16th, 1857.

## Medical News.

### BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS, AND APPOINTMENTS.

In these lists, an asterisk is prefixed to the names of Members of the Association.

#### BIRTHS.

- ASHLEY. On September 1st, at 8, Boyne Terrace, Kensington Park, the wife of W. H. Ashley, M.D., of a son.  
GROWSE. On September 12th, at Brentwood, the wife of \*Robert Growse, M.D., prematurely, of twins, who survived their birth only a few hours.  
HARDEY. On September 9th, at 2, Earl Street, Blackfriars, the wife of Key Hardey, Esq., Surgeon, of a daughter.  
HAVILAND. On September 6th, the wife of \*Alfred Haviland, Esq., Surgeon, Bridgewater, of a daughter.  
MAY. On September 8th, at 16, Mount Place, London Hospital, the wife of Emanuel May, Esq., Surgeon, of a son.  
MILLER. On September 11th, at 1, Somers Place, Hyde Park, the wife of Robert Miller, M.D., of a son.  
OTWAY. On September 15th, at 7, Canterbury Row, Newington, the wife of C. W. C. Otway, Esq., Surgeon, of a son.  
ROSE. On September 15th, at Hampstead, the wife of Henry Cooper Rose, M.D., of a son, stillborn.

#### MARRIAGES.

- CROSSE—TAYLOR. \*CROSSE, Thomas William, Esq., Surgeon, Norwich, to Mary Jane, eldest daughter of Adam Taylor, jun., Esq., of Norwich, on September 10th.  
HILL—DRURY. HILL, Alfred Octavius, Esq., to Elizabeth Alice, daughter of the late J. Drury, M.D., of St. Petersburg, at St. Petersburg, on September 3rd.  
KELSON—CUMMING. KELSON, Henry, Esq., of Poplar, to Emily Jane, daughter of William S. Cumming, Esq., Surgeon, at Limehouse, on September 10th.  
WILLIAMS—M'DOUGALL. WILLIAMS, J. T., Esq., Madras Medical Service, to Flora, daughter of Thomas M'Dougall, Esq., of Eskmills, Penicuik, at Edinburgh, on September 8th.

#### DEATHS.

- BATEMAN, George, M.D., formerly of Great Yarmouth, at Leamington, aged 69, on September 13th.  
LONSDALE, Edward Francis, Esq., Surgeon to the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital, suddenly, from the rupture of a blood-vessel, aged 46, on September 11th.  
NORTON. On September 16th, at Walpole Lodge, Strawberry Hill, Maria, youngest daughter of the late Matthew Norton, Esq., Surgeon, of Gloucester Place, Marylebone.  
ROOKE. On July 15th, at Malabar Hill, Bombay, Agnes Isabel, wife of Dr. Rooke, Surgeon-General.

#### APPOINTMENTS.

- \*BROWNE, W. A. F., M.D., Superintendent of the Crichton Institution at Dumfries, appointed one of the Paid Commissioners of Lunacy in Scotland under the new Lunacy Act.  
COXE, James, M.D., of Edinburgh, appointed one of the Paid Commissioners of Lunacy in Scotland.  
\*STEELE, Arthur B., Esq., appointed Honorary Surgeon-Accoucher to the Liverpool Ladies' Charity, in the room of G. B. Denton, Esq., resigned.

#### PASS LISTS.

APOTHECARIES' HALL. Members admitted on Thursday, September 10th, 1857:—

FENNELL, Sydney, Cradly, Worcestershire  
HYDE, William Edward, Ledbury, Herefordshire  
SHARPIN, Edward, Bedford

### HEALTH OF LONDON:—WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 12TH, 1857.

[From the Registrar-General's Report.]

THE present return indicates an improved condition of the public health. The deaths registered in London in the week that ended on Saturday (September 12th), were 1023; during seven previous weeks they rose in three instances above 1200, and the lowest weekly number was 1084. If the average rate of mortality, derived from deaths by all causes (except the cholera of two epidemic seasons), as they occurred in corresponding weeks of the ten years 1847-56, had prevailed last week, the number of deaths would have been greater by 128 than that which is actually returned.

Diarrhoea continues to decline; and last week the decrease was more decided than it has recently been. The deaths from this disease, which in the two previous weeks were 198 and 181, have fallen to 144. During the last fortnight, the mean weekly temperature was about 60·5°, being less by 5° and 6° than it had been in the latter half of August, and less by 8° than it had been in the great heat of July. Of the 144 deaths from diarrhoea, 115 occurred to children; and of nine deaths from cholera or "choleraic diarrhoea", all occurred to very young children, except one. Eight deaths are referred to dysentery, and these also, with one exception, occurred to young persons. The deaths from scarlatina rose to 44; and of these, 11 occurred in the west districts, and 9 in the central. Of 39 from typhus and common fever, none occurred in the central districts. Small-pox was fatal in only two cases. One person died of intemperance; one from want of food; one from grief; and one from a wound received in dissection; a lascar (in the *Dreadnought* ship) from scurvy. The deaths of five nonagenarians are included in the returns: viz., two women who died at the age of 90 years, two widows at the age of 91, and a spinster who died in Bow at the age of 97 years.

Last week the births of 813 boys and 762 girls, in all 1575 children, were registered in London. In the ten corresponding weeks of the years 1847-56, the average number was 1443.

At the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, the mean height of the barometer in the week was 29·542 in. The greatest barometric pressure was 29·76 in., on Monday. The mean temperature of the week was 60·5°, which is 2·9° above the average of the same week in 43 years (as determined by Mr. Glaisher). The thermometer was at its highest point in the shade on Sunday, when it was 75·7°; it fell to its lowest point on the day following, when it was 51·4°. The thermometric range of the week was therefore 24·3°. The mean daily range was 16°. The mean dew-point temperature was 56·4°; and the difference between this and the mean air temperature was 4·1°. The

wind had on every day, or on part of every day, a south-westerly point. Rain fell to the depth of 2.24 in., nearly all of which fell on Tuesday and Friday. On Friday, the amount was 1.16 in. Rain fell almost incessantly from ten o'clock on the evening of Thursday till three o'clock in the afternoon of Friday.

**SALARIES OF THE POOR-LAW MEDICAL OFFICERS AT KENMARE, IN IRELAND.** We regret to understand that the Commissioners have ratified the decision of the Kenmare guardians, and cut down the salary of two of the physicians—reducing that of Dr. McCarthy by £20, and that of Dr. Taylor by £10. They allow the salary of Dr. Maybury to remain as it was. We regard this act of the Commissioners with no possible respect. On the contrary, we consider their conduct rather shabby. That they decided wisely in not touching the salary of one of the three, it is unnecessary for us to state. But why cut down the other two? Why victimise Dr. McCarthy, by sweeping away with one stroke of the pen, no less than one-fifth of his income? Is this done as a means of marking the respect which the Commissioners entertain to those who dare to speak out like men? Perhaps it is intended as a graceful recognition of some allusions made by Dr. McCarthy in his speech to the respectable salaries of their high mightinesses themselves! We put it to those gentlemen, how should they like this docking process applied to their own incomes? Public reasons might be pleaded in favour of cutting *them* down in one-fifth of the large amount which they now receive—at a time, too, when the pauperism of the country has been miraculously diminished. Same case same rule, Mr. Chief Commissioner. You say the doctor has less to do, now that the number in the workhouse hospital is less than it was two years since; and that therefore the pay of a third-rate mechanic is quite adequate to reward the services of an expensively educated and accomplished gentleman. For argument sake, we grant this proposition, made by the Guardians, and sanctioned by the Commissioners. But if it be good for the doctor it is equally so for the commissioner. Your duties, gentlemen, must be diminished at least two-thirds of what they were before; for your own returns of this year prove that the numbers have come down more than three-fourths of those in the workhouses of Ireland some four years since. By all means, then, let the Irish members insist upon a proportionate cutting down of the monster salaries of these official despots. This may be done with a free conscience, because £500 a year off the salary of a commissioner would have no effect upon his position in life, and would in no way cripple his resources; whereas the one-fifth of the salary of a physician in a poor district, is a serious curtailment of his means of living in a condition, not to say of comparative comfort, but of common decency. Now, £20 a year enables the country physician to dress himself as respectably as may be required, and even to keep a shilling in his pocket for a poor fellow-creature; but this twenty pounds deducted from his salary, he must cling for another year to the rusty coat, and the seedy hat, and the patched boots—or, gentleman as he is, he must descend to the slavery and the degradation of debt. We promise the Commissioners that the policy which they sanction, and which they themselves cannot but feel to be shabby in the extreme, will recoil on their own heads, and that ere very long. But in the meantime the profession have their duty to perform; for it cannot be supposed that they will stand by, and tamely acquiesce in this persistent attack upon the dignity and independence of their body. If they remain passive spectators of this docking process, the result will be that some guardians will at length come to consider that a labourer's pay is all-sufficient remuneration for their services; and commissioners will be found to ratify that estimate of their usefulness. We cannot shut from our mind the belief, that if Dr. McCarthy had been silent, and not spoken out as he has done, he would be better off in respect to the recent affair than he now is. But it is fortunate that there are men who will speak out at every personal risk; and when such men speak in behalf of a public body, that public body has a right to stand by and identify itself with its organ and its advocate. In this case, Dr. McCarthy has been the advocate of the Dispensary Doctors of Ireland, if not of the profession at large; and we should not be surprised if those whose cause he so eloquently pleaded adopted some means of letting the public understand how keenly they appreciate his courage and his services. (*Cork Examiner, and Dublin Medical Press.*)

**TESTIMONIAL TO DR. MCCARTHY.** At a numerous meeting of the Committee of the County and City of Cork Medical

Protective Association, held on September 5th, Philip N. Walsh, M.D., of Middleton, in the chair, the following resolutions, proposed by Dr. Richard Corbet, and seconded by Dr. Lloyd, were unanimously adopted:—That, as a body of medical men, associated to uphold the honour and interests of our common profession, we feel it a pleasurable duty to mark our high admiration of the noble and independent stand made by Dr. McCarthy before the Kenmare Board of Guardians, against the gross injustice, done not only to himself and confrere, by reducing their salaries, but also in behalf of the Poor-law Medical Officers of Ireland, to whom is meted out a wretched stipend for arduous duties. That the faithfully eloquent, argumentative, and impressive address, which so earnestly and graphically pictured as well the slavery as the miserable pay of our brethren occupied in the medical charities, demands more than a passing encomium from the profession at large, and that we feel bound, not merely to accord our thanks, but, if possible, to present such a substantial testimonial to Dr. McCarthy, which, we trust, will be worthy his acceptance. That such a testimonial will evidence to the "Powers that be," who ought to have thrown their shield over a hard-working and zealous public officer, more especially when now in declining years and health, that there exists in the medical profession a feeling which will ever lead its members to mark their sense of an act of injustice, paltry in the extreme, and equally unworthy those who originated, as those by whom it was sanctioned. That a subscription be at once entered on, and that the amount from each member of the profession be five shillings. That Charles Hewitt, Esq., M.D., Patrick's-hill, Cork, be requested to act as treasurer. (Signed) P. N. Walsh, *Chairman*. Charles Armstrong, *Hon. Sec.*

**VENTILATION BY STEAM-JET.** The *Leeds Mercury* gives the following account of the application:—"The application is at present in operation in a pumping shaft, 120 yards in depth, the ventilation of which had been stopped by the water rising at the bottom of the pit during the time some alterations were being made in the pumps. The water having stopped the air-courses, the pit, to within a few yards of the top, became full of the gas known to miners as black or choke damp, which appears to have been discharged freely from some old workings, and thus it was rendered an impossibility for the workmen to descend until the removal of the gas had been effected, and a constant current of pure air produced in the pit. Mr. Pierce has succeeded in maintaining so perfect a ventilation of the above-mentioned pit, simply by allowing a small jet of steam to issue into the atmosphere at a few feet from the top of the pipes through which the water is forced up when the pumps are at work, and the pit can be worked with perfect safety. The workmen were enabled to descend thirty minutes after the steam had been turned into the pipes. The principle is exceedingly simple. The jet of steam issuing from the top of the pipes produces in them a partial vacuum, which draws the foul air up these pipes, and thence out of the pit, with very great velocity. The cost of applying the steam jet in the above manner is very trifling; and this method of ventilation will, doubtless, be found a very safe and useful one in many instances, particularly in sinking deep shafts. In addition to other advantages, wood or any other kind of pipes may be used. It requires little or no attention, no machinery to get out of repair, produces a powerful current of air, and can be regulated at pleasure. As the steam is discharged into the atmosphere above the top of the pit, it does not interfere with the men working in the shaft." (*Dublin Medical Press.*)

**FORGED DIPLOMAS.** William Stuart Farquharson, who was recently detected as a pretended priest, and the author of a forgery on the Bucks and Oxon Bank, at Banbury, has just been sentenced, at the Oxford assizes, to twelve years penal servitude, having pleaded guilty to the forgery. The prisoner had run a long and successful career as a forger, principally of foreign medical degrees, for each of which he obtained, with great facility and rapidity, the sum of £40; this sum included an Inaugural Dissertation on any subject, which the intended recipient was supposed to defend before the heads of the university. The prisoner Farquharson was formerly in the 2nd Somerset Militia, but had to resign in consequence of the colonel discovering some of his disreputable antecedents; subsequently, however, he contrived to get into the Lincoln and the Elthorne regiments, obtaining his outfits by forged acceptances. He was the author of *The Pleasures of Home*, a goodly octavo; and he may, in fact, be looked upon as a very clever knave. (*Dublin Medical Press.*)

**PREPARATION OF INK.** Dr. Bley recommends the following method of preparing ink:—A decoction is made with a pound and a quarter of nut-galls, and as much hot water as will give five pounds of liquid after straining. Then four ounces of indigo powder is mixed with half a pound of sulphuric acid. The mixture left for twenty-four hours, then dissolved in five pounds of water and eight ounces of powdered chalk, and eight ounces of iron filings added. A part of the acid is neutralised by the chalk, and a part by the iron filings, forming sulphate of iron. The solution thus obtained, mixed with the decoction of nut-galls, gives ten pounds of ink, which does not deposit sediment or turn mouldy, and flows readily from the pen. (*Dublin Medical Press*.)

**CENTRAL AFRICA.** An official despatch has been received at the Foreign-office from Her Majesty's Consul at Tripoli, throwing some doubt on the reported death of Dr. Vogel. The courier who had been despatched in April last for the frontier of Wadai, to obtain, if possible, some tidings of the fate of this scientific traveller, having returned to Murzúk, brings with him also a letter from the Sheikh of Borgu. From the report of some people composing a small caravan that had reached Borgu from Wadai, it appears that Dr. Vogel, after having successively visited several places, had reached Andra, whence he was summoned to Wara, the capital of Wadai, by the Sultan, by whom he had been some time detained, but was supposed to be preparing for his departure to Darfur. Upon the receipt of this report the Sultan of Borgu, who had zealously interested himself in the matter, at once sent off two couriers to Wadai, both of whom had returned with reports corroborating the story of the caravan people. Respecting the death of the gallant Maguire, no doubt appears, unfortunately, to be entertained; and the favourable report of the existence of poor Vogel is still so much a matter of uncertainty that, should no positive tidings of his fate be received by the large caravan, which was daily expected at Murzúk, other couriers will be immediately hastened off to obtain, if possible, written evidence of his fate. To the friends of Dr. Vogel it will be a great consolation to know that Lord Clarendon is thus making every effort to ascertain his fate, and should he be held in captivity, to devise means for his redemption.

**DECAY OF GUTTA PERCHA.** From the reports of Mr. E. Highton on the state of the underground wires of the British Electric Telegraph Company, published in the *Journal of the Society of Arts*, it appears that wherever the wires had passed near the roots of oak trees they had failed, whilst in other parts, only a few yards distant, they were perfectly sound. On examining the soil, a whitish looking plant was detected, resembling the spawn of the mushroom, or some other fungus; the plant had spread over and around the wooden trough, covering it with a whiteness resembling whitewash, and wherever it had touched the gutta percha wires the gutta percha was rotten; a yellowish-green fungus, of which this plant was supposed to be spawn, was found growing luxuriantly under the oak, but not under any other tree. The plant possesses a powerful odour at once detected on breaking the soil. The presence of the plant and the decay of the wires were found coincident; the absence of the plant and a most perfect state of the wires coincident also. It was found that the wires in one locality passing under two oak trees were not injured; in this case no fruit of the fungus could be found in the soil, although plentiful under other oak trees in the neighbourhood. With reference to the decay of gutta percha in iron tubes, it was found at Winslow that the wires through the entire lengths of the iron pipings were in a state of decay, whilst the wires in the wooden boxing were found perfect. The decay in this case appears to be produced by a cause entirely different from that under the oak trees.

**AN EXTRAORDINARY AFFAIR.** A reward has been offered under the following circumstances:—On Tuesday, the 1st inst., a small box, covered with brown paper, and directed to Mr. Bennett, surgeon, the Square, Wilton, was delivered to Mrs. Ware, the Wilton carrier, near the Shoulder of Mutton Inn, Salisbury, by a boy about 14 years of age, dressed in a short jacket, trousers, and cap. If the boy who delivered the box to Mrs. Ware will come forward and prove the same, and give information as to the party who entrusted it to his care, he is offered a reward of £5, together with all reasonable travelling expenses; and a further sum of £10 is offered to him or any other person who shall lead to the conviction of the offender—the box having contained a machine so constructed as to explode on the raising of the lid, and intended to destroy Mr. Bennett's life. (*Hampshire Telegraph*.)

**EXTRAORDINARY INQUEST.** The following almost incredible statement appears in the last number of the *Drogheda Conservative*:—"On the 27th ult., the body of a female infant was found, by the police at Kells, concealed in the soil of a privy, at the back of the house of Mr. Richard Close, medical practitioner, accoucheur, proprietor of a medical establishment, etc. They reported the circumstance at once to a local magistrate. Witnesses were instantly summoned, and a most respectable medical man, Dr. Pentland, all of whom agreed that Rose Meredyth, a servant in the establishment, was the mother of said infant, and that it was dead born, and had not come to maturity. After a short consultation between the magistrate and the police, having summed up, they came to the following conclusion:—"We find that Rose Meredyth, mother of the infant, is not only not guilty, but perfectly free from any blame whatever; and we further add, that she was justified in burying her offspring, dead born, even in a privy, dung heap, or sink, or where it suited her convenience." Mr. H. Martin, coroner of the county, having got private information, lost no time in ascertaining the facts, when he was called on to interfere, and at once issued his precept and warrant to disinter the body, preparatory to holding a legal inquisition. He summoned fifteen respectable jurors on Thursday, the 3rd instant, fourteen of whom attended, and were sworn; and after a most minute and particular inquiry, without the slightest hesitation, the jury returned a verdict, that the body of the said infant was found concealed in a privy, in the town of Kells, and that Rose Meredyth is the mother thereof; and, finally, that she concealed the birth of the same. In the interim between the former and latter inquest, Rose Meredyth was allowed to escape, when the coroner had no alternative but to issue his warrant for her apprehension."

**LOCUSTS.** Two or three specimens have been procured in Dublin and in the north of Ireland. Mr. Sweeny of Portobello, while passing over Carlisle Bridge, September 13th, was attracted by a crowd pursuing a locust of much larger dimensions than one previously found in the College Park. Mr. Sweeny captured it after much exertion, and presented it to Trinity College Museum.

**THE OPHTHALMIC CONGRESS.** First-Class Staff Surgeon Frederick Roberts has been selected by the Director-General of the Army Medical Department, and the Minister for War, to represent the medical officers of the British army at the congress of the Ophthalmic Society about to meet at Brussels.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

### POSTAGE OF MANUSCRIPT AND PRINTED MATTER.

Any amount of manuscript or printed matter, singly or together, provided it contains nothing in the form of a letter, is transmitted through the post, in packets open at the ends, at the following rates: not exceeding 4 ounces, one penny; above 4 and not exceeding 8 ounces, twopence; above 8 ounces and not exceeding 1 pound, fourpence; for every additional half-pound or under, twopence.

**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.

**ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENTS** should always enclose their names to the Editor; not for publication, but in token of good faith. No attention can be paid to communications not thus authenticated.

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

**NOTICE.**—Dr. WYNTER will feel obliged if the Associates will address all Post Office Orders in payment of Subscriptions, to the Publisher, Mr. THOMAS JOHN HONEYMAN, 37, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W. C., "Bloomsbury Branch"; and he would also feel obliged by their sending all communications respecting the non-receipt of the Journal, to the same address; as both these matters are out of the province of the Editor.

Communications have been received from:—Dr. COOKWORTHY; Dr. T. HERBERT BAKER; Mr. G. W. HASTINGS; Mr. JAMES CRAIG; Dr. S. PALMER; Mr. J. A. LOCKING; Mr. J. V. SOLOMON; Dr. ALEXANDER WOOD; VERITAS; Mr. T. HOLMES; Mr. FREDERICK PRITCHARD; Dr. J. L. W. THUDICHUM; Mr. BENJAMIN DULLEY; and Mr. A. B. STEELE.

### BOOKS RECEIVED.

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

1. Phrenology made Practical and Popularly explained. By Frederick Bridges. London: Sampson Low, Son, & Co. 1857. pp. 185.