MEDICAL CORONERS.

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SIR,—I have read with interest a correspondence which has recently appeared in the JOURNAL, having reference to the course adopted by the medical coroner for Central Middlesex in the matter of the payment of medical witnesses in his court. I have no desire to express any opinion upon that particular dispute, but, referring to it, I do desire, with your permission, to express the opinion I have long entertained, that the members of the profession are scarcely to be credited with at least worldly wisdom in advocating the election of medical coroners. May I offer my only personal experience in this matter?

my own personal experience in this matter?

I happen to practise on the borders of two counties. In the one, the coroner is a solicitor; in the other, a medical man. In every case involving the slightest doubt, the legal coroner calls medical evidence, and generally orders a post mortem examination to be made; whereas, unless there is a very strong and generally expressed reason to suspect foul play, the medical coroner decides the doubt himself, pressed reason to suspect tout piay, the medical cofoner decloes the adoption himself, and appears to entertain the strongest possible objection to summon a medical witness. Accordingly, it is a very rare occurrence for any of the medical men practising in his district to obtain a fee for evidence at an inquest. So much for the selfish view of the question. Then as to the conduct of the inquiry. The evidence in the legal coroner's court is carefully taken, and the proceedings are evidence in the legal coroner's court is carefully taken, and the proceedings are conducted with regularity, thoroughness, and despatch, while the medical witness is treated with deference and respect, which are not always accorded him in his medical brother's court, although I can make no personal complaint on this score. In the medical coroner's court, on the other hand, the commonest elements of the laws of evidence appear to be unknown, or, at all events, are disregarded; the inquiry is conducted in the most perfunctory manner, and the summing up is usually according to the following formula: "Gentlemen, there is no doubt in my mind that this case is one of death from natural causes for one of accidental death, where no cone is to blome but the descreted birreaff or the one mystel hand that mind that this case is one of death from natural causes (or one of accidental death, where no one is to blame but the deceased himself, as the case may be), and that, I presume, will be the verdict of you all." I could instance several cases where there has been grave suspicion as to the cause of death, and where a post mortem examination of the body or medical evidence would have cleared up all doubt, but where neither has been ordered.

Now, I have reason to believe that my experience is also that of others practising in different parts of the country; and, therefore, in the interest of the profession (for in a county or borough, where dozens of medical men may practise, only one can hold the office of coroner), and in the interest of the State, I hold, and always have held, that the profession is mistaken in advocating the appointment of a medical man to the office of coroner.

For obvious reasons (for our medical coroner is in many respects a good fellow), I somewhat unwillingly sign myself,

M.D.—The pamphlet should, we think, be laid before the authorities of the University of Glasgow, who could, no doubt, move the Medical Council to act in the matter. The police authorities might also be induced to take action, under Lord

matter. The police authorities might also be made.

Campbell's Act.

IR,—As a late resident in the Leeds Infirmary, I can corroborate what Mr. Blair, the manager, says in your last issue as to the efficiency of the warming, provided the fire is properly kept up; but the case of this hospital is not one which bears on the general question of steam versus water. Some few years ago, two powerful steam-boilers were erected for the purpose of supplying the cooking apparatus, and a steam-engine belonging to the laundry. It was then found convenient to use the steam for warming purposes. This is virtually "waste steam", which it is generally allowed can be economically used, as the extra fuel required is hardly worth mention, and skilled attendance is at hand. To stoke a steam-boiler well and economically, requires an amount of skill very different from that which suffices tor an ordinary hot water boiler. As an instance of a large hospital efficiently warmed with hot water, I may mention St. Thomas's.—I am, etc.,

Leeds, April 8th, 1882.

THE ATTRACTION TO EDINBURGH.

SIR,—I will endeavour to give "Civis Acad. Edinensis" the explanation he desires. The facility with which a Scotch university degree can be obtained naturally induces the Scotchman to work for it in preference to any minor qualification. So duces the Scotchman to work for it in preference to any minor qualification. So notorious is this, that a very large number of English students either enter on or finish their studies in Edinburgh. If we in the south would, with the same facility obtain a degree, the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons might have to close their doors, and possibly those in Edinburgh would have to do the same. The reason why so many, after having obtained the M.R.C.S.Eng., run up to Edinburgh to take the L.R.C.P., is because no chemistry or botany is there required. If the London College of Physicians abandoned chemistry as a subject, very few, if any, of those bolding a surgical qualification, would then go north. I have studied of those holding a surgical qualification, would then go north. I have studied chemistry, Greek, and Hindustani; but I must confess my inability to pass an examination in the two former subjects, whereas I have done so in the last, and have found it to be of the utmost practical utility to me; and I am glad that the tendency of our day is to overthrow the theoretical for what is really practical.—I remain, yours truly, AT

A. O. H. W., AND OTHER CORRESPONDENTS.—The attention of our correspondents is once more directed to the standing notice which appears every week, requesting that notices of changes of address and other matters of business should be forwarded to the Manager at the office, and not to the Editor, who has nothing whatever to do with advertisements, changes of address, or any such matters; and he cannot be responsible for their being carried out.

CORRUGATED PAPER SPLINTS.

Sir,—I have had so many inquiries concerning the corrugated paper splint material which I described in your columns a few weeks back, that I shall be much obliged if you will allow me to state that the full name and address of the maker is George Smyth and Sons, 47A, Arlington Street, Islington, N.; who will answer all inquiries concerning it.— Faithfully yours,

4, Sackville Street, W., April 4th, 1882.

"MEDICUS" should address the Queen's Secretary, Windsor, on the subject.

INFANTILE PARALYSIS.

INFANTILE PARALYSIS.

IR,—I have a patient, a young girl fourteen years of age, who has had no use in her left arm or right leg for the last ten years, the result of infantile paralysis; and I shall feel much obliged if any of your subscribers can give me any advice as to what maker I can best apply to for a machine—tricycle or otherwise—to be easily worked by the right arm and left leg, so as to enable her to get about better from place to place, as at present she is entirely dependent upon the use of a crutch, and cannot go far without fatigue.—Faithfully yours,

ERNEST G. FRANCIS, L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S.

Kronstadt, Orange Free State, South Africa, March 7th, 1382.

OWING to want of space, and to unavoidable delay in preparing the illustrations, we have been reluctantly compelled to defer till next week the promised complete account of the American acrobat, Warren, who possesses a voluntary power of dislocating some of his joints.

A SELF-ACTING REPORTING MACHINE

A SELF-ACTING REPORTING MACHINE.

IRON gives an account of an instrument, invented by Herr A. Gentilli, of Vienna, and named by him the glossograph—consisting of an ingenious combination of delicate levers and blades which, placed upon the tongue and lips and under the nostrils of the speaker, are vibrated by the movements of the former and the breath flowing from the latter. The vibration is transmitted to pencils, which transcribe the several signs, produced by the action of the tongue and lips and the breath from several signs, produced by the action of the tongue and lips and the breath from the nostrils, upon a strip of paper moved by a mechanical arrangement. As in shorthand, a special system of writing, which may fitly be termed glossography, is produced, based upon the principle of syllabic construction and combination of consonants. It is said to be especially suitable for those languages the orthography of which differs least from the phonetic record of the apparatus. The instrument is self-acting in the fullest sense. Moreover, its application involves as little fatige to the speaker as severe attention on the part of the person transcribing. In reporting proceedings in Parliament or courts of law, it is not necessary that the speaker should use the apparatus himself. Anybody may articulate it by repeating in a low voice the words of a speaker, which is sufficient for recording the signs.

Guy's Hospital Biannual Festival of 1882 will take place this year at Willis's Rooms on Thursday, May 18th, when Mr. Edward Cock has consented to preside.

## COMMUNICATIONS, LETTERS, etc., have been received from:-

Dr. Lush, Weymouth; Mr. A. Teevan, London; Mr. Lawson Tait, Birmingham; Mr. E. Owen, London; Mr. W. J. Mackie, Turvey; Dr. Tripe, London; Mr. A. R. Barnes, Hastings; Mr. A. J. Routh, London; Mr. S. Snell, Sheffield; Mr. J. Farquharson, Stockton-on-Tees; Dr. O. Sturges, London; Dr. Lloyd, London; Mr. Knott, Dublin; Dr. Brett, Watford; Dr. Jacob, Leeds; Dr. A. J. H. Crespi, Wimborne; Mr. T. Partridge, Stroud; Dr. G. W. Potter, London; Dr. Fairlie Clarke, Southborough; A Surgeon-General; Dr. Keen, Philadelphia; Our Glasgow Correspondent; Mr. Vincent Jackson, Wolverhampton; Dr. Sheen, Cardiff: Dr. Shuttleworth, Brighton; Mr. Parker, London; Dr. C. S. Clouston, Gunnersbury; Our Dublin Correspondent; Dr. Hobson, Croydon; Mr. Francis, Kronstadt, South Africa; Dr. Goodhart, London; Mr. R. H. J. Scott, London; Mr. John Furley, London; Mr. Howse, London; Dr. J. A. Campbell, Carlisle; Mr. F. St. George Mivart, London; Mr. E. H. Hardwicke, Solihull; Mr. J. H. Williams, Bootle; Dr. Schuster, Aix-la-Chapelle; Dr. R. Cross, Scarborough; Mr. O. Bowen, Liverpool; Dr. Wallace, London; Mr. Southam, Manchester; Dr. Ferguson, Peebles; Mr. H. Bracey, Birmingham; Mr. E. A. Cook, Richmond; Mr. T. M. Stone, London; Mr. W. Wilson, Carlisle; Mr. S. Quennell, London; Mr. W. H. Jebb, London; Mr. T. S. Hutchinson, Newington, Sittingbourne; Dr. W. Sneddon, Beith; Mr. B. J. Bateman, Birmingham; Mr. A. W. M. Robson, Leeds; Mr. T. Laffan, Cashel; Dr. C. Parsons, Dover; Dr. Hickinbotham, Birmingham; Dr. Saundby, Birmingham; Dr. Morgan, Pontypridd; Dr. Fletcher Beach, Darenth; Mr. J. E. Barlow, Liverpool; Dr. Richard Ryder, Nailsworth; Dr. H. Lionel Smith, Uttoxeter; Dr. Mahomed, London; Dr. J. Barclay, Leicester; Mr. Harrison, Elgin; etc.

## BOOKS, ETC., RECEIVED.

Transactions of the International Medical Congress. By Sir W. Mac Cormac. London: J. W. Kolckmann. 1881.

he Science and Art of Midwifery. By W. T. Lusk, A. M., M.D. London: H. K. Lewis. 1881.

The National Temperance League's Annual. London: National Temperance Depôt.

Diseases and Injuries of the Eye. By J. R. Wolfe, M.D. London: J. and A. Churchill. 1882.

The Water-Supply of England and Wales. By C. E. De Rance. London: E. Stanford. 1882

The Student's Handbook of the Practice of Medicine. By H. A. Husband, M.B. Edinburgh: E. and S. Livingstone. 1882. The Hair in Health and Disease. By Dr. J. Pincus of Berlin. London: Chatto

and Windus. 1882. Clinical Surgery. By Dr. T. Billroth. London: New Sydenham Society. 1881.

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