

CORRESPONDENTS are particularly requested by the Editor to observe that communications relating to advertisements, changes of address, and other business matters, should be addressed to the Manager, at the Journal Office, 161A, Strand, London, and not to the Editor.

THE DURATION OF HUMAN LIFE.

SIR,—In your issue of May 27th, Dr. Rabagliati seems to adopt a curious method of adding vulgar fractions. Taking his figures, I should deal with them thus:

$$\frac{70}{9} + \frac{190}{3} = \frac{70}{9} + \frac{570}{9} = \frac{640}{9} = 71\frac{1}{9}$$

$$\frac{61}{0} + \frac{111}{6} = \frac{305}{3} + \frac{2799}{3} = \frac{3104}{3} = 66\frac{44}{3}$$

I deal only with the arithmetical side of the question, and leave others to draw conclusions.—I am, etc.,
Hovingham, York, June 7th, 1882. THOMAS M. WATT.

J. L. H.—The next meeting of the International Medical Congress will be held at Copenhagen in 1884.

CHEAP MEDICAL BOOKS.

SIR,—Will you allow us to say that the sixth edition of Sir Henry Thompson's lectures is published at an even cheaper price than appears from your note last week? We issued it at half-a-crown, not three shillings and sixpence. The price is given not only in the advertisements, but also on the cover of the book itself.—We are, sir, your obedient servants,
11, New Burlington Street, W., June 12th, 1882. J. AND A. CHURCHILL.

TRIPLETS.

SIR,—Noticing the letter of Mr. Aldrich in this week's JOURNAL concerning a triple birth, I may mention as a coincidence, or as a matter of interest, that I have lately attended, in this neighbourhood, two cases of triplets within about one hundred yards of each other, occurring in the space of a fortnight, viz., on April 26th and May 9th. The children were all male, and all born alive. In each case, the first two had a common placenta, which came away after their birth, followed in a few minutes by the third child, surrounded by the membranes and having a separate placenta. The first three died, being premature, in a few days, also one of the last ones; but the remaining two still live, and are doing well. I may add that the mother in each case made a good and rapid recovery.—Faithfully yours,

ROBERT E. CLITHEROW, M.R.C.S.

Lancaster House, Peckham Rye, S.E., June 10th, 1882.

SIR,—In reply to the query of "Old Subscriber," I beg to inform him that patients are admitted into the Central London Ophthalmic Hospital, Grays Inn Road, upon payment of 7s. a week.—Faithfully yours,
23, Finsbury Circus, E.C. GEO. ABBOTT.

PUERPERAL INSANITY VERSUS INDUCED ABORTION.

SIR,—In answer to Dr. Hess's letter in the JOURNAL of May 27th, I would beg to make the following remarks. It is, I think, certain that every attack of acute mania, whether puerperal or not, weakens the nervous centres, or rather accustoms them to an abnormal state, and so renders the patient, after each successive attack, more liable to like mental affections, and ultimately, if the unhealthy state be too often induced, to permanent deterioration of the mind. The repeated appearance of insanity during the puerperal state merely points to a predisposition to insanity, as does its onset in the course of any other diseased or reduced state of the general system where it is not attributable to hyperprexia. If these points be admitted, and it be recognised that insanity tends to shorten life and rob it of all pleasure, equally at least with bodily disease, it is, I presume, clearly justifiable to procure early abortion, in order to escape the almost certain consequences of labour at full term, viz., insanity, ending frequently in death from suicide or exhaustion, and at other times (though more rarely) reducing the miserable patient to that state, perhaps worse than death—hopeless dementia.

It may be argued that abortion does not entirely rid the patient of the risk of insanity; but we find mental aberration so seldom following miscarriage that, for practical purposes, we may regard abortion in the early months of pregnancy almost as a preventive of that form of insanity known as puerperal. The legacy of suffering and misery the offspring of such women too often inherit must also weigh in the scale in favour of the induction of labour at an early period.—I am, etc.,
S. A. K. STRAHAN, M.D.

DR. HARRIS.—The provincial members of the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons are just as constant in their attendance at Lincoln's Inn Fields as the metropolitan members. They are, taking them in seniority, Dr. G. M. Humphry of Cambridge, Mr. Alfred Baker of Birmingham, Mr. Edward Lund of Manchester, and Mr. William Cadge of Norwich.

DEATH CERTIFICATES AND CLUB CERTIFICATES.

SIR,—It has always appeared to me to be one of those legal injustices borne by medical men that, while they are bound by law to give a free certificate of death for the registrar, he, by simply giving a duplicate of that certificate, becomes entitled to a fee from the person so demanding his certificate if the dead person has been a member of a burial club or other life-assurance society. That is, the medical man gives that information gratuitously to the registrar, without which this latter could not act, he being entitled to a fee for so acting, besides, of course, his fee of registration from the Government, local or other. Would it not be well if some action be taken to remove this injustice in the Medical Act Amendment Bill about to be brought before Parliament? It betokened, in my opinion, some laxity somewhere, that, when the last Amendment Act was passed, this gratuitous injustice was allowed to pass unremoved or inserted. The remedy is easy—make it legal that a certificate from the medical man similar to the one he gives for the registrar should be recognised by all insurance offices and clubs.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,
MEDICAL PRACTITIONER.

ARREST OF DEVELOPMENT.

SIR,—Last week a patient of mine, aged 40, was safely delivered by my assistant, Mr. Allen, of a female child, very strong and healthy, but on the right side there was not the least indication of a leg. The most careful examination could not detect an attempt at the formation of a thigh. On the same side, there was a stump of humerus about an inch long, and looking as if it had been amputated by the circular method. The mother stated that, three months before her confinement, she had fallen downstairs; and that, at the time she believed herself to be six weeks' pregnant, she unfortunately was in a train whose engine ran off the metals, and frightened her very much. Could this latter have been the cause of the arrest of development? or what was?—I am, etc.,
Wansford, June 10th, 1882. FERGUS M. BROWN, L.R.C.P.Ed.

THE JUNIOR EDITOR.

THE editor of an American medical journal announces the birth of a son in the following terms: "E. M. Bruce arrived at 4 o'clock A.M., May 2nd, 1882, and will in due time divide with his father the editorial duties of the *Medical Herald*."

COMMUNICATIONS, LETTERS, etc., have been received from:—

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BOOKS, ETC., RECEIVED.

The Student's Guide to Materia Medica and Therapeutics in accordance with the British Pharmacopoeia. By John C. Thorowgood, M.D., F.R.C.P. London: J. and A. Churchill. 1882.

Ovarian and Uterine Tumours: their Pathology and Treatment. By T. Spencer Wells, F.R.C.S. London: J. and A. Churchill. 1882.

The Arsenical Springs at La Bourboule, Auvergne. By G. H. Brandt, M.D. London: H. K. Lewis. 1882.

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