

IN view of the success of the Free Registry for the Unemployed at Egham, as described by its founder, Mr. Nathaniel L. Cohen, in the columns of the *Times* of February 9th, an influential Central Committee, including the Earl of Jersey and the Right Honourable Edward Stanhope, M.P., has been formed to organise and assist in the formation of similar registries in other parts of the country. All interested in the scheme (which appears, for country districts, an eminently useful and practical one) are invited to send for particulars to the Honorary Secretaries at 8, New Square, Lincoln's Inn, W.C.

#### AQUA VITÆ.

THE inhalation of oxygen has been largely tried in phthisis and other affections with but temporary and doubtful benefit. Lately, a method is stated to have been discovered by a firm of chemists in Paris, by means of which oxygen can be rapidly and cheaply prepared; and it is now proposed to introduce a drink, consisting of distilled water charged with oxygen gas under pressure, similar to soda or seltzer water, for which, from its theoretically recuperative powers, the name of aqua vitæ is deemed suitable. There is something seducing in the idea of thus imbibing the *aëra vitæ*, any lack of supidity in which can presumably be readily corrected by the admixture of suitable quantities of one or other of the alcoholic beverages at our command.

It would be interesting to know the results, beneficial or otherwise, of such imbibitions; but for them to have any value as observations, it will be necessary for the individuals who are willing to sacrifice themselves on the altar of scientific experience, to state whether they mixed anything with their allowance of "oxygen water," and, if so, how much, and how often.

#### MATERNAL IMPRESSIONS.

IN reference to Mr. Garraway's letter on the above theme in the *JOURNAL* of January 30th, Mr. T. Graham, of Hillprod Road, writes that, about fourteen years ago, on examining the reception prisoners at Holloway Gaol, a boy, about 13 years old, came before him with the fore, middle, and ring fingers of his right hand closely webbed together. His finger-nails were extremely long and narrow, each terminating in a very sharp point, like a rat's claw. It appeared that his mother, when pregnant, had been frightened by a rat, and in her terror wrung her hands violently together, no doubt using the right fingers the more forcibly.

A lady had exerted herself greatly, when pregnant, in endeavouring to get an idiot-child admitted into Earlswood Asylum. The mother of the child showed it to the charitable lady. The result was the birth, if not decidedly of an idiot, certainly of an imbecile offspring, with an imperfectly developed head, and, though now eleven years of age, still unsusceptible of any but the most rudimentary education. Mr. Graham does not see how we can well ignore the facts as above recorded. He thinks, with Mr. Garraway, that a woman's surroundings, during her pregnancy, should be free from everything that is repulsive.

#### INJURY OF THE ELBOW-JOINT IN CHILDREN.

SIR,—Will you permit me to make a few observations on a paper of Mr. J. Hutchinson, junior, which appeared in the *BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL* of January 2nd? The subject of the paper was Dislocation of the Radius in Children, and followed one by me relating to the same subject, and which appeared in the *JOURNAL* of December 5th, 1885.

Mr. Hutchinson claims priority of publication, in that he published a paper on the subject in the *Annals of Surgery*, in August. I fully explained the dislocation, I believe for the first time, in the *BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL* in 1882, and had been collecting notes of cases for two years previously. The paper which you published on December 5th was written in 1883 for the annual meeting of the East Anglian Branch of the Association. Owing to the abundance of material the paper was not read, but the President forwarded it to you. More than four years' residence in hospitals as house-surgeon gave me unusual advantages in investigating injuries of this kind. I still believe my own method of reduction to be the correct one, and that the displacement has a tendency to recur, or rather to occur again, in the same subject, is undoubted. The *post mortem* experiments of Mr. Hutchinson are most interesting, and quite confirm my own opinions.—I am, sir, faithfully yours,

Umballa, Punjab.

SIDNEY H. LINTHMAN, Medical Staff.

#### PREGNANCY AND SMALL-POX.

SIR,—In vol. i, page 470, *et seq.*, of *Obstetric Medicine and Surgery*, by Drs. Robert and Fancourt Barnes, the history of small-pox associated with pregnancy is fully discussed, also the statistics relating to ninety-five cases occurring in women at different periods of gestation, all of whom came under my personal observation.—Faithfully yours,

WM. GAYTON, M.D.

Haverstock Hill, N.W.

#### THE BINAURAL STETHOSCOPE IN THE DETECTION OF CARDIAC MURMURS.

SIR,—Some months ago, I had a similar experience to that of Dr. Suckling in auscultating the chest in a case of mitral murmur, and can confirm his observation in the fact that the binaural stethoscope does not conduct the sounds of the heart with the exactness that could be desired. As a rule, I always practise immediate auscultation in examining the heart. The wooden stethoscope may enable one to localise with more exactness pericardial friction-sound than with the ear to the chest.—I am, etc.,

JOHN BROWN, L.R.C.P.Lond.

Bacup.

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#### BOOKS, ETC., RECEIVED.

- Elements of *Materia Medica and Pharmacology*. By Alfred W. Garrod. London: H. K. Lewis. 1886.  
On the Fetus in Utero, as Inoculating the Maternal with the Peculiarities of the Paternal Organism. By Alex. Harvey, M.A., M.D. London: H. K. Lewis. 1886.  
On Diseases of the Lungs and Pleura, Including Consumption. By R. Douglas Powell, M.D. Third Edition. London: H. K. Lewis. 1886.

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