

## NOTES, LETTERS, ETC.

## THE BARTLETT CASE.

MR. ALFRED LEACH (41, Charlwood Street, S.W.) writes:—Please accept my thanks for allowing me, last week, to clear myself of the imputations of Mr. Justice Willi, commented upon in your leading article of the previous week.

"M.D., F.R.C.P." writing, last week (p. 858), deals, in a very able manner, with the main features of the Bartlett case. He finds grounds for believing in the platonic relations stated by Mrs. Bartlett to have subsisted between her and her husband; he accepts, as true, Mr. Dyson's statement that the gushing thanks of the deceased were tendered in return for an acknowledgment that he (Dyson) loved his, the deceased's, wife; and he is emphatic in expressing a belief in the absence of adulterous relations having existed between the two persons who stood together in the dock at the Old Bailey. To all of this, I cordially subscribe, and beg to congratulate "M.D., F.R.C.P." upon the clearness of his judgment, and his ability in sifting evidence. I arrived at the same conclusions as himself, but then I had the assistance of far more ample opportunities. I must, however, respectfully, but firmly, differ from his opinion that the deceased was so degraded a creature as he suggests, and "an inveterate masturbator." In the lack of direct evidence in support of so grave and odious an accusation, I think it an unfair one to lay against my late eccentric patient; believing it to be an erroneous one, and at direct variance with disclosed facts, and with others that, for my part, will remain undisclosed, I feel moved, by a sense of deep commiseration, to enter this earnest and solemn protest against a cruel slur cast upon the memory of a dead man. The lips that could indignantly refute it are sealed for ever; many of the facts that would confute it are bound over to perpetual silence, and my ineptitude in the use of words furnishes but a weak denial to the accusation, and must fail to convince—to such even as read—how strongly my opinion sets against it.

In another part of his letter, "M.D., F.R.C.P." hints (and rather broadly, too) at the likelihood of the deceased's wife having connived at suicide. This hint, if put into straightforward language, would be a well defined accusation of criminality, and, if unfounded, might rebound upon the accuser, under the law of libel, as a "criminal accusation." It was evidently written in haste, and I am sure the writer of it will thank me if I merely add to his own very reasonable argument against it these two suggestive remarks. Had the wife intended death, or any injury whatever, to result from the use of her chloroform, she would have taken the precaution to obtain it, through her agent, from more remote sources; or, in fact, she would have probably asked her husband to write for some himself. Again, had she connived at *felon de se*, she would have left the bottle in bed with, or near to, the corpse, in order to render the theory of suicide at once obvious.

Far from denying the right of discussing these matters in the strictly medical papers, I think, with the writer I have had the honour to refer to, that it is highly desirable, in the public interest, that the medico-legal points, in a novel case, should be seriously and dispassionately worked out and thought over; but I am of opinion that each commentator should, in approaching so delicate a subject, guard himself against the danger of writing with anonymous haste, and protect himself from pitfalls by the ever present sense of weighty responsibility that the appending of a signature affords. I hope "M.D., F.R.C.P." will recognise in what spirit, and with what motive, I have replied to his letter. In him, I recognise great ability and acumen in psychological matters; and it will be obvious to all that he can be generously liberal in his estimate of character, for he discovers in one of the actors in this drama religiousness and a conscientiousness that have escaped the notice of most other onlookers.

## CUCAINE AND SEA-SICKNESS.

DR. JOSEPH COATS (Glasgow) writes:—There have been several communications in your paper as to the virtues of cocaine in sea-sickness. As I am rather liable to that complaint, and contemplated taking a voyage from Leith to Hamburg, I resolved to give this remedy a trial. I read in the JOURNAL of February 27th, 1886, that Mr. Sunner had caused lozenges, each containing one-twelfth of a grain of cocaine hydrochlorate, to be made, with four of which, taken at intervals, he was able "to defy sea-sickness." I procured a box of lozenges called "Tabella cocaine hydrochloratis," and each stamped "cocaine 1/12 grm." which, I presume, are the identical ones of Mr. Sunner. I thought that half a crown was a small sum to pay for an indefinite amount of relief from sea-sickness. Well, my wife and I began on the lozenges while on the deck of the steamer in Leith docks, about an hour before leaving, and we rejoiced in the prospect of an enjoyable voyage. The lozenges were undoubtedly active, as they produced a distinct numbing sensation in the fauces, but I should not call them highly palatable. We persevered with the lozenges, at intervals of about two or three hours, or in some cases shorter, till—till we became sick. It was not very stormy, but just a moderate toss, much as you always have in the North Sea, but, before my wife got downstairs to her berth, and after only five or six hours of the sea, she succumbed, and she inconsequently blamed the lozenges for having brought on the illness. In seven hours from leaving port, she had taken four lozenges. I persevered with the lozenges, and was able to continue them till next day, when I, also, was knocked over, after taking ten or twelve. We had an opportunity of making the control-experiment on the return voyage, when we did not resort to the lozenges. It is remarkable that our experience without the remedy was an almost exact repetition of that with it. My wife again succumbed on the first night out, and I held on till the next day, the weather, in both cases, being somewhat similar. I am sure that the cocaine had no effect whatever in warding off sea-sickness, and my wife asserts that it hastened it in her case, by the rather nauseating taste of the lozenges.

## REMOVAL OF FOREIGN BODIES FROM THE EAR.

DR. J. ERKINE (Glasgow) writes:—Neither Mr. Hutchinson nor Dr. Gramshaw insists on a careful preliminary examination of the meatus, under good illumination, in order to ascertain (1) whether a foreign body is present; (2) of what the foreign body consists; (3) the position it occupies with relation to the walls of the meatus; and (4) the presence or absence of swelling. The use of Mr. Hutchinson's wire-loop, the syringe, or any other instrument, should only be resorted to after these important facts have been ascertained. The nature of the case will indicate which instrument should be employed. Nothing ought to be done without continuous and steady illumination of the meatus, by means of a speculum and head mirror. I think it is a dangerous and ineffectual method to grope in the dark, even with such a harmless and simple instrument as Mr. Hutchinson's, "tu nung it about," as he says, "until it is believed to have got behind the foreign body." I have had occasion to use Wilde's snare, for this purpose, with success, but I always took care to illuminate the meatus, and

guide the loop of wire between the foreign body and the wall of the canal, wherever there chanced to be a chink or opening. While syringing is employed, the stream should be directed towards such an opening, so that the returning current may expel the foreign body. Both of these methods can only be adopted when the foreign body is not firmly jammed in the meatus, and does not occupy its entire lumen.

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## BOOKS, ETC., RECEIVED.

What is Consumption? By G. W. Hambleton, L.K.Q.C.P.I. London: J. and A. Churchill. 1886.

Notes on Analytical Chemistry, for Students of Medicine. By Albert J. Bernays, Ph.D., F.C.S., F.I.C. Second Edition. London: J. and A. Churchill. 1886.

Year-Book of the Scientific and Learned Societies of Great Britain and Ireland. Compiled from Official Sources. Third Annual Issue. London: Charles Griffin and Co. 1886.

Proceedings of the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Montreal, 1883-4-5. Published by the Society, Montreal. 1886.

Materia Medica and Therapeutics: an Introduction to the Rational Treatment of Disease. By J. Michell Bruce, M.D. Third Edition. London: Cassell and Co. 1886.

Twelfth Annual Report of the State Board of Health of Michigan for the Fiscal Year ending September 30th, 1884. Lansing, Michigan: W. S. George and Co. 1885.

On the Rationnal Alimentation of the Labouring Classes. By Captain M. P. Wolff, F.S.S. London: W. H. Allen. 1886.

Von Ziemssen's Handbook of General Therapeutics, Vol. v, General Orthopaedics, Gymnastics, and Massage. By Professor Busch; Hydrotherapeutics, by Dr. Winternitz. London: Smith, Elder, and Co. 1886.

The Naturalist's Diary: A Day-book of Meteorology, Phenology, and Rur Biology. By Charles Roberts, F.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. London: Swan Sonnenschein and Co. 1886.

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