

THE KING has granted authority to Dr. Alexander Granville, C.M.G., C.B.E., late President of the Quarantine Board of Egypt, to wear the insignia of the Second Class of the Order of Ismail conferred upon him by the King of Egypt in recognition of valuable services rendered.

A CONFERENCE on mental welfare will be held, under the auspices of the Central Association for Mental Welfare, in the Central Hall, Westminster, on May 20th and 21st, under the presidency of Sir Leslie Scott, K.C., M.P. On the first day papers will be read by Mrs. Hugh Pinsent, Commissioner of the Board of Control, and Mr. J. Sandeman Allen, chairman of the West Lancashire Association for Mental Welfare, on the proper care of defectives outside institutions. In the afternoon papers on borderland cases will be read by Professor G. M. Robertson and Dr. W. R. Kemlo Watson. Under the presidency of Dr. H. B. Brackenbury the training of teachers for special schools will be discussed on the morning of the second day, when papers will be contributed by Miss M. M. Allan, Mr. G. B. Dodds, and Miss M. N. Russell. In the afternoon Dr. A. F. Tredgold and Dr. F. C. Shrubbsall will open a discussion on encephalitis lethargica and its after-effects. It is stated that the Minister of Health will be prepared to consider applications from local authorities, under the Mental Deficiency Act, 1913, whose accounts are subject to Government audit, and from boards of guardians, for sanction for the reasonable expenditure of two delegates. It is announced that a full report of the conference will be published at the cost of 3s. 6d., post free. A public lecture on moral imbeciles will be given by Dr. A. F. Tredgold, on May 20th, at Bessborough House, 1a, Lupus Street, S.W.1, at 5.45 p.m. Tickets for the conference and further information may be obtained from the honorary secretary, Central Association for Mental Welfare, 24, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1.

A MEETING of the Society of Superintendents of Tuberculosis Institutions will be held at 122, Harley Street, on Monday, April 26th, at 3 p.m., when papers will be read by Dr. F. R. Walters, on some needs and indications for treatment in pulmonary tuberculosis; by Dr. F. A. Lucas Hammond, on phthisical psychosis; and Dr. S. Roodhouse Gloyne, on the pathology of pleural adhesions in tuberculosis.

DR. C. VER HEYDEN DE LANCEY, L.M.S.S.A. and L.D.S.R.C.S.Edin., who is a British subject, has been appointed oral and dental surgeon to the King and Queen of Italy, the Royal Household, and the Prince of Hesse.

## Letters, Notes, and Answers.

All communications in regard to editorial business should be addressed to **The EDITOR, British Medical Journal, British Medical Association House, Tavistock Square, W.C.1.**

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## LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

### THE PROCEDURE OF THE GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL.

"HINDUSTAN," a British practitioner in India, writes: It seems to me that the present criticism of the General Medical Council in the public press at home is not due to any lack of appreciation by the public of the need of such a body to prevent the growth of abuses which would inevitably arise were the Council non-existent, but it is one of our national characteristics to regard

with suspicion the decisions of tribunals empowered to pronounce summary judgements without appeal, and for this reason those of a professional tribunal like the General Medical Council, which can to all intents and purposes determine without appeal the career of a professional colleague, are particularly suspect. I have been in the habit for many years of reading the proceedings of the General Medical Council, as reported in the **BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL**, and am convinced that the decisions of the Council are almost invariably both just and tempered with mercy. Nevertheless, I am in agreement with those who resent the practical absence of appeal from the judgements of the Council. The General Medical Council being under the Privy Council, any practitioner struck off the *Register* has, it would appear, the right of appeal to the Privy Council itself. This being so, I would suggest that it should be arranged that in future such appeals should be referred for consideration by the Privy Council to its Judicial Committee, that very illustrious body which is the highest court of judicature in the Empire. Were this done public opinion would be reassured and much irrelevant criticism of the Council from time to time in the public press obviated.

### "NATURE STUDIES IN OBSTETRICS."

DR. CHARLES J. HILL AITKEN (Kilnhurst, near Rotherham) writes: In your leading article of May 16th, 1925, "Medical education: two lay views," you quoted from Mr. Flexner—Students "enter the hospital schools and with rare exceptions soon settle down to clinical study at a level much below the level of their physiological training." Perhaps graduates approach their work in the same way. In obstetrics we apply forceps, clear out placentas after miscarriage, etc., forgetting that, as someone has said, the uterus is a very efficient organ and well able to do its own work. The following nature studies in obstetrics show what the uterus can do: (1) The second of twins not being born I was sent for. I advised delay, and two days later the second child was born without any complications. (2) A patient miscarried. The afterbirth was retained. I saw no indication for hurry, so we waited. Four days later the uterus contracted energetically and expelled a healthy placenta and membranes. The patient certainly lost some blood, but was up and about a week later. I was informed by the neighbour in attendance that on one occasion she had waited a week for the afterbirth. (3) Fourteen days after an incomplete miscarriage a patient sent for me because she had a foul-smelling discharge. Her temperature was 105°. Hesitating to take on myself the responsibility of leaving this case to the uterus, I arranged for the removal of the patient to hospital. While waiting for a conveyance labour pains set in and a putrid mass (placenta and membranes) was deposited on the bed. A year later there was a full-time normal birth. (4) A multipara fell in labour on the seventh month. Following a great discharge of liquor amnii the uterus rested. The presentation was hand and cord. I judged I was in for turning; however, I decided to await uterine action before interfering. Ten hours later the uterus resumed its work and in four pains delivered foetus and afterbirth "in a mass." There was no haemorrhage.

### TRIPLETS.

DR. FUKUSHIMA (Rangoon) sends us a note of a case of triplets which occurred recently in her nursing home. A Madras Hindu lady of about 39 years of age (seventh pregnancy) was delivered of a male child on February 21st, 1926, at 7.5 p.m. with head presenting; at 8.10 p.m. she was delivered of a female child, also head presenting; and at 8.30 p.m. another female child was delivered with breech presenting. She suffered from no pains after the delivery of the first child. The respective weights of the infants were 5 lb. 3 oz., 5 lb., and 5 lb. The male child had a separate sac with its cord, and the females were in one sac with separate cords originating from one placenta. All three children look alike and well developed. An early diagnosis of more than one foetus was made from the physical signs.

### ANTIMONYALL CUPPS.

DR. GEORGINA F. MALDEN (Ayr) writes: In connexion with Sir St. Clair Thomson's article on antimonyall cupps I think the following quotation may be of interest: In *Patronage*, a novel by Maria Edgeworth, published in 1813, occurs: "Mr. Panton seemed to be much struck with the account of bottles made of antimonial glass, which continue, for years, to impregnate successive quantities of liquor with the same antimonial virtues." The account is one of medical anecdotes told by a young physician to an elderly hypochondriac. Apparently antimonial glass then existed, or was believed to do so.

### MEDICAL GOLF.

THE final of the Medical Golfing Society's knock-out tournament will be played between Mr. Joseph Cuning, who defeated Squadron Leader A. J. Brawn, and Dr. E. Ravensworth Hart, who defeated Dr. D. S. Gordon.

### VACANCIES.

NOTIFICATIONS of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 46, 47, 50, and 51 of our advertisement columns, and advertisements as to partnerships, assistantships, and locumtenencies at pages 48 and 49.

A short summary of vacant posts notified in the advertisement columns appears in the *Supplement* at page 160.