

THE OPIUM TRAFFIC.

SIR,—I have read with much interest the letter of Dr. Murrell on the above subject, in the *BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL*, vol. i, 1881, pp. 827-28. Dr. Murrell would, perhaps, like to read a series of valuable and well digested articles, which appeared by the classic pen of Dr. Moore, of the Bombay Medical Service, in some recent issues of your Indian contemporary, the *Indian Medical Gazette*. I would commend Dr. Moore's observations to the notice of our brethren; he has had unparalleled opportunities of observation in Rajputana, an opium-producing province in which, I believe, a large percentage of the population are more or less opium-eaters. It is a firm conviction, in the minds of the people inhabiting malarious districts in India, that *papaver gonuiferum* possesses both antiperiodic and prophylactic virtues. It is also, I believe, a point noticed by medical superintendents of Indian prisons, that convicts, after admission into prisons, when the drug had been stopped, suffer from the various effects of malaria; when outside, they and their families, and the rest of the free population, have been comparatively exempt.

I have no intention of attempting to handle a subject of such magnitude; but I may say that I incline to the view that the evil effects of the habitual use—not abuse—of opium has been much overrated; and I sincerely hope that, in the interests of hygiene and therapy, not to speak of the social and commercial aspects of the question, the subject will receive the attention at the hands of our medical brethren which it merits. And I venture to entertain the hope that Dr. Moore, an authority entitled to our respect, will favour the profession by a further expression of his views on this momentous question.—I am, etc.,

JOHN C. LUCAS.

TREATMENT OF ECZEMA PALMARUM.

SIR,—I should be glad if some member would give me a few hints as to the treatment of an obstinate case of eczema palmarum that I have under my care. The patient is a female aged 50. The disease has existed about twelve months, but only badly for about half that time. She attributes it to having got poisoned while pulling weeds. The palms of both hands are cracked and fissured all over, sometimes discharging, and sometimes covered with thick white scales. I have tried most of the ordinary applications for such cases, and a great many others, but without any lasting benefit.—I remain, etc.,

F. T. G.

THE BRUSSELS DEGREE AND MEDICAL TITLES.

SIR,—Will you kindly give me your opinion, Has a M.D. Brussels and L.R.C.P. Lond., etc., a right to style himself Dr.? and is it both right and proper for his *confères*, in writing, to address him as Dr. So-and-so, or So-and-so, M.D., and not So-and-so, Esq., Surgeon? I am sorry to trouble you with so simple a question; but if you will be so kind as to insert both it and the answer in your next Notices to Correspondents, I shall esteem it a favour.—Yours faithfully,

M.D. BRUSSELS, MEM. B.M.A.

. To address a graduate of the University of Brussels otherwise than as Dr. would be foolish and unmannerly.

EDUCATION OF BOYS.

SIR,—The opinion held on the above subject by "M.D." was held and strongly advocated by the late Dr. Waddy, who was for many years governor of Wesley College, Sheffield. He had a large shop fitted up in the College with carpenters' benches, tools of all kinds, turning lathes for wood and metal, and two blacksmiths' forges. Competent workmen were engaged to instruct the lads, who greatly enjoyed the class. The governor, or one of the masters, was always present, and the work done was of most creditable description. Three prizes were given; one to the best carpenter, one for wood-turning, and one for working in metal. I have seen many well finished desks and work-boxes made by the boys, whose work was exhibited on prize-day (provided it was all their own work). I well remember admiring a working model of a steam-engine most beautifully finished, the work of a boy sixteen years of age, who now holds a lucrative post in one of our colonies. I believe the system is still carried on, but it is several years since I visited the school. I know that several members of medical association were educated there. The present governor is the Reverend W. H. Dallinger, F.R.S., a man well known in scientific circles.—I am, etc.,

E. M. CAMPBELL.

SIR,—Your correspondent "M.D." will find, at the Uppingham School, a realisation of his views on the subject of physical education, where there is a completely fitted up carpenters' shop, with a skilled instructor to teach the boys, if they so desire it, the trade of a carpenter.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

Dunblane, Perthshire, N.B., July 26th, 1881. ROBERT J. BANNING, M.D.

INQUESTS EXTRAORDINARY.

The following is from the *Hampshire Independent* of July 23rd. "*Death of an Illegitimate Child*.—An inquest was held on Wednesday morning, at the Crown and Sceptre, Bevois Valley, before the borough coroner, Mr. William Coxwell, concerning the death of the illegitimate male child of Eliza Oakley, of 8, King's Terrace, Bevois Valley. From the evidence it appeared the child was born on Thursday, the mother being attended by Clara Leyman, from the Nurse's Institute. The child was puny and weakly, scarcely surviving its birth, and it died in convulsions on Sunday; the grandmother, Sarah Oakley, previously sending for Dr. Hobley, who, however, could not come. The nurse, Clara Leyman, having given it as her opinion that death was due to natural causes, a verdict was returned accordingly."

FLESHY SUBSTANCE DISCHARGED FROM UTERUS.

SIR,—Some years ago I attended a multipara; after the extraction of the placenta, I went downstairs (having felt the uterus well contracted through the abdominal walls). I had not been long out of the room when the nurse hastily summoned me to stop what she called "a great loss." I found my patient gasping, lips white, bed flooded, etc. I at once cleared out the uterus; and by grasping it from the outside with one hand, while the other was within, it soon contracted again; and presently I left, believing all to be well. During the next two days, I was frequently sent for to stop a slow hæmorrhage; I gave ergot and opium, but without doing any good. I then determined upon exploring the uterus, to learn if it were empty—(remember I had completely emptied it to arrest the first alarming hæmorrhage)—for I felt certain that something was acting as a foreign body. I introduced my hand, and extracted a so. d. liver-coloured, pear-shaped "fleshy substance"; it was, indeed, an exact cast of the uterine cavity. As I knew that the uterus was empty two days before I extracted this "fleshy substance", I readily reached the conclusion that it was pure fibrine, out of which all the serum had been pressed by the muscular efforts of the uterus to expel it. This will, I think, explain Dr. Cleveland's case, which he appears disposed to regard as something very abnormal, because it offered a very fancied resemblance to the uterus.—Yours sincerely,

D. CLIFSON WRAY, M.D., M.R.C.S.

Osbert House, Skegness, Lincolnshire.

CAUTION: ARSENICAL POISON.

SIR,—A packet of "pocket gum", sold in small squares, and intended as a substitute for solution of gum Arabic, is coated with an arsenical green paper, which yields a large amount of that poisonous substance. As the gum could be covered with a harmless coloured paper, it is difficult to ascribe the use of the arsenical green paper to anything but gross ignorance of its dangerous properties.—I am, etc.,

W. FRAZER, F.R.C.S.I., Exam. Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland.
20, Harcourt Street, Dublin.

SIR,—Can you or any of your readers inform me where I can find an account of an Indian drug named "*Psoralea caryilifolia*", said to be useful in baldness? how it is used? and where to be obtained? and if it is very expensive?—Faithfully yours,

N. A.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF HOTELS.

SIR,—The letter of "A Provincial Associate" in your issue of July 16th, referring to the necessity of sanitary inspection and reform of hotels in the United Kingdom, should be followed up. As a rule, hotels are in a most unsanitary condition. In Dublin, the proprietors of the two leading hotels have recently placed them in the hands of the principal sanitary engineers in Dublin, and having remodelled them they procured from the firm sanitary certificates endorsed by the chief medical officer of health for Dublin, which certificates they display in their halls. I have had copies taken, which I enclose for publication, as I recommend the same precaution should be taken by every hotel in the kingdom.—Yours, etc.,

AN IRISH ASSOCIATE.

MR. W. BERRY.—Duly received, and shall have early insertion.

BEER FOR SCHOOLBOYS.

SIR,—I have just received the annual report of the Royal Medical Benevolent College, and I wish to draw the attention of the governors and subscribers, to an item in the report, which I consider not only unnecessary, but one which is a grave reflection upon the Council. I allude to the sum of £242 5s. for beer. I understand that each pupil is allowed beer twice a day. I leave it to your readers to say whether beer is a proper thing for children or not. In my humble opinion, it is not only not necessary, but positively injurious; and, for one, could not send my children to a school, where they run the chance of laying the foundation of an after life of intemperance. In the face of the great medical declaration, and the sifting which the subject has lately gone through in the *JOURNAL* and other medical papers, I am grieved to see that, at a college founded for the sons of medical men, and managed by medical men, beer should cost twice as much as milk. Hoping my letter may stir up such a discussion as will lead to the withdrawal from the diet of our children, that which we ourselves have refused to be charged with, at our own annual banquet.—I remain, sir, yours obediently,

A GOVERNOR.

MR. J. B. FOOT (Newcastle).—Much obliged, but hardly of sufficient medical interest.

IRREGULAR PRACTICE IN THE COLONIES.

SIR,—Mauritius is not the only colony where unqualified and unregistered persons are permitted by the authorities to practise medicine. I have recently visited a British colony—Guiana—where there is a local government medical service, and a rather extensive one too, and there are men practising medicine who are unregistered practitioners; and I do not think I make a mistake in saying that some of them hold public appointments. The laws affecting the medical profession are surely intended to protect its members; but, as administered, it would appear that its orthodox members are the only ones subject to the "pains and penalties". The unlicensed individual openly violates the law, and is again protected by it.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

A MEMBER B. M. A.

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