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THE EDINBURGH COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND ITS LICENTIATES.  
SIR,—I have read your correspondent's letter in the JOURNAL of Saturday, August 26th, with not a little astonishment. His arguments and the premises on which he bases them are poor. I am sorry for his logic; his conclusions are by no means supported. Why he should have gone out of his way to depreciate the title of L.R.C.P.Ed., I cannot understand, since he himself holds that diploma, and no doubt held it before he attained the higher title of M.D. The premises he sets forth by no means show that because the College has addressed the wrapper of the list "Esq., L.R.C.P.Ed.," the College should by so doing consider it "as a gentleman, but official, hint that its licence does not confer the higher title," as he chooses to call it. The fact is that gentlemen holding the higher diploma are often addressed as "Esq., M.D., etc."

I would refer your correspondent to Chambers's *Dictionary*, and also Webster's, from each of which he will find Doctor applies to "a physician" and "one who practises medicine".—Yours faithfully,

H. CLARENCE WILLIAMS, M.R.C.P.Ed.

Fallowfield, Manchester, August 28th, 1882.

SIR,—Your correspondent (Mr. B., etc.) having called attention to the style in which the Edinburgh College of Physicians has addressed its licentiates forwarding to them a copy of its recent "List of Fellows, Members, and Licentiates," I may be permitted to state that, during the period when I was only a licentiate, I was always addressed —, Esq., L.R.C.P.Ed. Within the last two years, however, I have become a member of the College, and I observe that this year I am addressed with the prefix Dr. I conclude, therefore, that the College wishes its Fellows and Members (but not its licentiates) to take this much disputed title.—Yours faithfully,

M.R.C.P.Ed.

#### THE MUSHROOM SEASON.

THE season for mushrooms has arrived, but if the truth were generally known, the *Morning Post* thinks there would be no necessity for a "season" in the matter. "There are many other fungi, every whit as palatable as the common mushroom, which are ready for the market in other months. Of these, however, the cookery book feigns absolute ignorance, and our only hope lies in the annually increasing interest displayed by scientific epicures towards the hitherto most undeservedly despised tribe of fungi. The mushroom, it is true, is a fungus; as are also the morel, the champignon, and the truffle. But the favour accorded to these four species only aggravates the contempt with which we treat many of their congeners. There are at least sixteen edible British species of the genus *agaricus*, of which the gorgeous *agaricus Caesaris* has been declared to be at once the best and the most beautiful. The mushroom is only one of these, and therefore inferior to his highly coloured cousin with the Roman patronymic; and yet, for some reason, the mushroom has been singled out in England for notice and appreciation, while such is the mystery of fashion, the inhabitants of Italy and Hungary avoid it as poisonous. They, however, eat several species which in England, for the trivial reason that they will not part readily with their skins, are stigmatised as neither more nor less than venomous toadstools. Perhaps the fact that ancient writers have dubbed the toad himself as a malefactor who 'sittes on his stoele, lording it' has something to do with the ignorant prejudice against so many esculent and excellent fungi. 'Were not ten righteous men enough to save the Cities of the Plain, and shall we utterly condemn a tribe of plants of which a single genus contains sixteen good and wholesome vegetables? It is sheer ingratitude to persist in including the whole unlucky order—'unlucky as Fungos in the play', as Pope has it—in such wholesale condemnation. Dr. Badham enumerates no fewer than thirty species of toadstools which are natives of Britain, and were eaten by himself and friends. In the matter of fungi, the Japanese have already shown the way, for they export as much as 1,200,000 fr. worth of indigenous species for the Chinese market annually. Their method of cultivation, too, seems simple enough. A few logs with shallow transverse trenches cut in the wood are soaked in water, and carried into some shady place among the trees. The rest is left to Nature and the fungus, until at harvest-time the Japanese owner comes round and collects his crop. This arrangement suffices for five years, and does not seem to present any insuperable difficulties in inception or execution."

CRANIA (Hythe).—Send the skulls to Professor Flower, the Conservator of the Hunterian Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons. The collection was enriched by the Barnard Davis Museum.

#### M. NAQUET ON INNOCUOUS HAIR-DYES.

THE *Figaro* has, we read, learnt to its cost that M. Naquet, the well known French deputy who carried through the Chamber the Bill for legalising divorce, is not to be laughed at with impunity. The *Figaro* thought that it would annoy M. Naquet very much by inquiring, with an air of assumed candour, whether he had anything in common with the M. Naquet who had invented a wonderful hair-dye. M. Naquet has written a letter to the editor of the *Figaro*, saying that he is only too pleased to gratify his curiosity, and to inform him that the dye in question has been invented by him. M. Naquet, whose researches in chemistry have given him a well deserved reputation, states that, having many years ago noticed that most of the hair-dyes sold as innocuous were violent poisons containing lead, copper, and cyanide of potassium, and that a member of the Paris Council of Health had reported that many maladies were due to the use of these washes, he determined to see whether he could not discover some preparation which would be at once harmless and effective. M. Naquet maliciously adds that, though a Minister of the late Emperor had met with his death from using one of these dyes, he, staunch Republican as he was, had never gone so far as to wish any personal harm to his political opponents, and the fatal occurrence in question stimulated him, therefore, in his researches. He eventually composed a wash made of bis-muth and hyposulphate of soda, which has the effect of colouring the hair and beard without exposing the person using it to any danger. M. Naquet took out a patent for it; but being unwilling to sell the dye himself, and not having the leisure to transfer it to anyone else, allowed the patent to expire; and it is now, M. Naquet concludes, at the disposal of any enterprising person who likes to give it a trial.

#### RELATIVE POWER OF ANTISEPTICS.

THE *Revue Scientifique* (February 4th) contains an abstract of experiments made by M. de la Croix to ascertain the relative value of various substances in preventing the development or evolution of the micro-organisms of putrefaction. He placed finely divided boiled or raw meat in water, and ascertained the maximum and

minimum quantities of each substance that were effective. The figures in the following table indicate the number of grammes of water in which one gramme of the substance mentioned prevented the development of micro-organisms; *a* denotes the maximum dose in which development is not arrested; *b*, the minimum dose in which development is arrested.

Substance Employed.	<i>a</i> .	<i>b</i> .	Substance Employed.	<i>a</i> .	<i>b</i> .
Alcohol .....	30..	1.77	Ethereal oil of mustard ..	5734..	40
Chloroform .....	134..	1	Sulphurous acid .....	7534..	72
Soda bichlorate .....	107..	14	Alum acetate .....	7535..	478
Eucalyptol .....	308..	14	Salicylic acid .....	7677..	343
Phenol .....	1002..	10	Mercury bichloride .....	8358..	2525
Thymol .....	2229..	20	Lime hypochlorite .....	13092..	109
Potash permanganate.....	3041..	35	Sulphuric acid .....	16782..	135
Picric acid .....	3041..	100	Iodine .....	20020..	410
Borated soda salicylate ..	3377..	30	Bromine .....	20875..	493
Benzoic acid .....	4020..	50	Chlorine .....	34509..	431

This indicates that chlorine, the hypochlorites, and perchloride of mercury are very effective, while alcohol is comparatively impotent.

#### STEAM TRICYCLES.

SIR,—Respecting steam tricycles, can Mr. Hugh Rees imagine and picture to himself the effect of an explosion? We are looking forward to quadricycles, the motor power for which shall be electricity, cheaper even than any oil. Such a machine exists in Paris; but much improvement is still necessary, I read.—Yours obediently,

SAM'L W. SMITH.

Pershore, August 26th, 1882.

SIR,—Many practitioners have doubtless read with interest, as I have done, the letter by Mr. Rees on Steam Tricycles. If, as he states, a machine has been invented suitable for practitioners, and its adoption is only prevented by the Road Locomotives Act, surely it is of sufficient importance for the Association to try to obtain an alteration in the Act. No greater blessing could be bestowed upon country practitioners than a machine ready at any time to take them any distance. An agitation was recently quickly raised against the proposed increase of the carriage tax, but this would be but a trifling matter in comparison to the probable saving in expense by the use of a steam tricycle.—Yours faithfully,

H. T.

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

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#### BOOKS, ETC., RECEIVED.

Catechism of Modern Elementary Chemistry. By E. W. von Volckxson, F.C.S. London: Kegan Paul and Co. 1882.  
Eastbourne as a Summer Residence and Winter Resort. By George Moseley, F.R.C.S. London: J. and A. Churchill. Eastbourne: Wm. Leach and T. S. Gowland. 1882.

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