

success or failure of the operation. These circumstances have convinced the commissioners of the imperative necessity of some legislative remedy for the woful state of things described, and they make the obvious suggestion to extend the Compulsory Vaccination Act, now in force in England, to the sister kingdom, as they are persuaded "that infinite benefit would result from the enactment of any system of compulsory vaccination." As regards the cholera, it is shown that the last outbreak in Ireland was, comparatively speaking, remarkably mild, and the mortality surprisingly low. Some cases are adduced, giving strong support to the "contagion" theory of the origin of the disease. The results of the arrangements made to meet the epidemic were most satisfactory, and were mainly attributable to the commissioners having been enabled to bring into speedy operation the whole dispensary organisation immediately on an outbreak in any locality. The expediency of extending to Ireland the amended sanitary laws, passed for England in 1855, is urged on the attention of the Government. As an *addendum* to this report may be briefly noticed that of the Dublin Hospital Commissioners, dated the 4th of December, 1855. Their recommendations chiefly refer to matters of detail, but they again urge the expediency of appointing a permanent commission to supervise the conduct of these hospitals. The total income of the Dublin hospitals in five years ended March 31st, 1855, amounted to £32,763, the expenditure to £27,771, and the total number of patients admitted to 16,381.

**FREE TRADE IN MEDICINE.** The *Edinburgh Monthly Journal* for this month says: "It is one unfortunate result of the recent wranglings about medical polities, that a feeling has, in some quarters, been engendered, that the State should not, in any way, interfere with medicine, and that the public should be allowed to select their medical advisers just as at present they select their gardeners, their bakers, and their brewers. This idea is founded on a misconception of the theory of free trade, on which it professes to be based. Any scheme of medical legislation that did not leave the subject entirely at liberty to choose his physician, should have no support from us; and we simply ask for the practitioners of medicine the same facilities for intelligent selection that the public seems determined to have for regulating their purchases of the drugs and other substances prescribed by these very physicians. For example, champagne, brandy, and arrow-root, are all well-known articles of exotic produce; but it is well known that we have indigenous imitations of the three, and it is open to the public to have the home or the foreign compound exactly as suits their taste; but if a person is willing to pay for champagne, he should be protected from being cheated into the purchase of treacleised whisky; and if he desiderates arrow-root, is it fair that potato-starch should be palmed upon him? In like manner, if the British subject chooses to believe that his ailments may be cured by homœopathic globules of nothing, by wet towels, by sand-paper applied to the spine, or by meditative perusal of such volumes as the *Silent Friend*, by all means let him do so. This is a free country, and assuredly we have no desire to restrict its freedom. But as there is a class of the community, who rightly or wrongly are seriously of opinion that the scientific study of the human frame, in health and disease, gives a man superior qualifications for treating the 'ills that flesh is heir to,' it is but reasonable that this class should have the means of discriminating such qualified persons from the herd of self-dubbed doctors and apothecaries, who, assuming the conventional title, float into practice by the aid of a reputation which belongs to others and not to them. In cases of mal-practice, both authorised and unauthorised practitioners should be amenable to the law; and, in America, where medicine, like religion, is allowed to take its own course, the courts have their whips for the unskillful diplomats who ought to know better, and their scorpions for the quack who cannot know right from wrong. Rather than that our present anomalies should longer degrade medicine, we would prefer the American system of non-interference; but it is because we think that there is room for a modified legal system of medical order, that we would have the subject pressed on the legislature, even although nothing should be accomplished by the committee presently sitting."

**HEALTH OF MR. BRIGHT, M.P.** Many readers of a paragraph which first appeared in the *Globe*, and has since gone the round of the papers, may feel unnecessary anxiety respecting Mr. Bright's health. We have much pleasure, therefore, in stating that the hon. member for Manchester left Ben Rhydning on Wednesday last, quite free from the complaint—con-

gestion of the brain—under which he has suffered during the last few months, and in general good health. But, by way of precaution, he is, by Dr. Macleod's advice, about to take a pedestrian tour through the Highlands of Scotland during the present month, and afterwards to spend about the same length of time in Switzerland. His medical adviser has no doubt of the hon. gentleman's returning to England as able as ever to discharge his arduous duties. (*Leeds Mercury*, May 3rd.)

**STRANGE DISCOVERY AT LANCASTER.** Messrs. Willan and Cleminson, of Market Street, Lancaster, are about converting the house immediately behind their shop into a warehouse. On Friday afternoon, May 2nd, as a joiner was removing a portion of wooden flooring on the ground storey, he struck against something immediately under the boards, which he at first supposed to be a box. On taking it up, however, he discovered that it was the portion of a skull, which he had broken in pieces. On examining the spot more particularly, a second lower jaw was found, with some skull bones. A broken knife, the blade of which was thickly coated with what appeared to be blood, and a cloth, upon which there were evident blood stains, was also picked up, and over all it seemed there had been placed a layer of lime. It is evident that these remains are the telltale of some deed of violence which is now beyond all reach of investigation. The premises in question, we understand, formed part of a public house known, 200 years ago, as the White Lion. (*Lancaster Guardian*.)

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

LETTERS and other COMMUNICATIONS for the JOURNAL should be directed to the private address of the Editor, 39, Curzon Street, May Fair.

To CONTRIBUTORS. The Editor would feel glad if Members of the Association and others, would cooperate with him in establishing as a rule, that in future no paper for publication shall exceed two pages of the Journal in length. If the writers of long communications knew as well as the Editor does, that lengthy papers always deter the reader from commencing them, this great evil would never arise. Brevity is the soul of medical writing—still more than of wit.

Members should remember that corrections for the current week's JOURNAL should not arrive later than Wednesday.

Communications have been received from:—DR. TUNSTALL; MR. AUGUSTIN PRICHARD; MR. JOHN HATTON; MR. JOHN WINDSOR; MR. JOHN WALSH; DR. HODKIN; MR. CHARLES SMITH; DR. RADFORD; DR. DUNCAN; DR. KIDD; MR. GRIFFIN; THE MEDICAL OFFICERS OF THE BRIDGEWATER UNION; MR. JOHN KENT SPENDER; MR. JOHN COOK; MR. S. H. SWAYNE; DR. SLOANE; DR. F. J. BROWN; MR. R. W. COE; THE HON. SECRETARIES OF THE NORTH LONDON MEDICAL SOCIETY; MR. R. J. WOODHOUSE; FLAT JUSTITIA; MR. STONE; MR. THOS. BROWNBILL; MR. JOSEPH TEALE; MR. MARK OLIVER (Lathom); MR. EDWARD BARKER; MR. JOHN LYNCH; and MR. JOHN SMITH GAUNT.

#### BOOKS RECEIVED.

[\* An Asterisk is prefixed to the names of Members of the Association.]

1. A Handbook of Organic Chemistry, for the Use of Students. Fourth Edition, corrected and much extended. pp. 627. London: Walton and Maberly. 1856.
2. Essays on State Medicine. By Henry Wyldbore Rumsey. pp. 421. London: John Churchill. 1856.
3. The Discoveries and Improvements in Veterinary Science. By Joseph Major. pp. 56. London: G. Nichols. 1856.
4. Painless Tooth Extraction by Congealition. By J. Richard Quinton. Fourth Edition, enlarged. pp. 51. London: R. Theobald. 1856.
5. Sixteenth Annual Report of the Crichton Royal Institution for Lunatics, Dumfries. pp. 42. 1855.
6. On Some of the Vices of the Poor-Law Medical Relief System. By \*Daniel Noble, M.D. Pamphlet. pp. 11. Manchester: 1856.
7. The Nature of Cholera, as a Guide to Treatment. By William Sedgwick. pp. 182. London: Walton and Maberly. 1856.
8. An Oration delivered before the Hunterian Society, February 13th, 1856. By Thomas Callaway. Pamphlet. pp. 24. London: 1856.

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