chosen is between the breasts the area of absorption of inflammatory products has its drainage area doubled. Both sets of axillary glands now receive the irritating products of inflammation instead of its being concentrated on the one axilla, as it is when the vaccination is performed in the usual place. There seemed to me, therefore, much less likelihood of glandular swelling.

Summing up, then, I may say that all my surmises in my own case proved correct. Although the case was a severe one, both locally and constitutionally, I had the perfectly free use of my arms all the time and not the slightest inconvenience in any way regarding this most important point. I had no axillary glandular pain or swelling, which I should undoubtedly have had had I been revaccinated in the usual place. I had not a single bump or jar, which few people, I think, can say who have been revaccinated with any great effect on the outer surface of the arm.

Two more points may be incidentally mentioned. The position chosen is above the place one is naturally inclined to rest against the writing-desk when dealing with professional correspondence, and, lastly, one may turn over in one's sleep from one side to the other without any vague feelings of misgiving that one will have to pay dearly for one's hoped-for increased comfort.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

T. WILSON PARRY, M.A., M.B. Cantab., &c.

Youlgreave, April 12th, 1902.

THE PLUMBERS' REGISTRATION BILL.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—The valuable special article in THE LANCET of March 29th last, page 901, as to the passing through the House of Lords of the Plumbers' Registration Bill and the probable opposition it may receive from those who think that if the plumber is rendered responsible to his fellow man for the reliability of his work it will be impossible for the oppositionists to undertake plumbers' work in the future puts the whole facts very clearly. I sincerely trust that it may be read and digested by every Member of the House of Commons, and should be glad if it were possible that every Member could be likewise informed of the fact that until the plumber is made *responsible by registration it is hopeless to expect that reliable sanitary work can ever be thoroughly* carried out, notwithstanding by-laws, rules, regulations, patents, fads and fancies, past, present, and future. In connexion with registration the present system of training plumbers must be improved. At present it is most unsatisfactory as a whole, the so-called technical teaching being very hollow in its afterwards practical results, and the course so persistently followed by the Worshipful Company of Plumbers should be supported and followed. The Bill has the hearty support of all good master and operative plumbers who are anxious to be placed in a true and reliable position and that position to be known, their motto being that of the Worshipful Company of their craft.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Ebury-street, S.W., April 7th, 1902.

D. T. BOSTEL, Sen.

A CASE OF NUTMEG POISONING.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Mr. Robert A. Pitter reports an interesting case of poisoning by nutmeg in THE LANCET of April 12th, p. 1035, and asks for information as to other cases. He will find abstract reports of several cases in "Forensic Medicine and Toxicology," by Dr. J. Dixon Mann, published by Messrs. Charles Griffin and Co. Limited, price 21s.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

ANTONY ROCHE, M.R.C.P. Irel.,

Professor of Medical Jurisprudence, Catholic University.

Dublin, April 12th, 1902.

THE NOTIFICATION OF PHTHISIS.—The Knutsford, Middlewich, Winsford, and Biddulph Urban and the Bucklow Rural Districts have practically adopted the voluntary notification of phthisis at the usual fee per case. But the results are not promising. In the whole combined district but six cases have been notified and the majority of these were near to death at the time when the information was received. Certainly, as Mr. T. W. H. Garstang, the medical officer of health of the districts, observes, notification has not been received favourably in this locality.

THE MEDICAL CONGRESS OF AUSTRALASIA.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT IN AUSTRALIA.)

THE sixth session of the Intercolonial Medical Congress of Australasia was held at Hobart from Feb. 17th to 22nd. The first business was to elect a President owing to the sad death of Mr. R. S. Bright who had been appointed to that position at the last session in Brisbane. The Executive Committee had selected the Hon. G. H. Butler, M.L.C., for the honour, and after the report of the committee had been read the selection of Mr. BUTLER was confirmed by the Congress and he took the presidential chair. A vote of condolence with Mrs. Bright was unanimously passed in silence, all the members upstanding.

In the evening the Congress was formally opened by His Excellency Sir H. HAVELOCK, Governor of Tasmania, who also offered a hearty welcome to Tasmania to the visitors from other States, as did the Premier of Tasmania and the Mayor of Hobart. The PRESIDENT, owing to the shortness of time at his disposal, omitted the usual lengthy address but shortly welcomed the members and then referred in feeling terms to the deaths of Mr. Bright, Sir James Agnew, M.D. (a vice-patron), Mr. J. G. Johnson (one of the sectional secretaries), Dr. E. W. Way of Adelaide (a vice-president), and the Australian members of the Army Medical Corps who had died in South Africa. Mention was made of the work of the Congress, especially the discussion on Cancer, which it was hoped would arouse general interest on the subject and give a basis for further investigation, but the President cautioned members not to be hasty in arriving at any definite conclusions. Other subjects on which it was hoped that some expression of opinion might be given were the Responsibilities of the States Governments to provide Sanatoriums for the Open-air Treatment of Consumption; a Uniform System of Compulsory Vaccination; Quarantine Regulations; and the Training of Medical Students and Practitioners in Medical Ethics. It was advised that an Ethical Section should be formed in the Congress, as suggested by the Western Australian Branch of the British Medical Association. The Congress would also have to consider the advisability of changing its name and of appointing a permanent executive committee with representatives in each State. With regard to these suggestions, on the final day of meeting it was decided that the name should be changed to "The Australasian Medical Congress," but no alteration was made in the constitution. The Congress also adopted the following motions which were brought up by the Public Health Section:—

That vaccination should be uniformly enforced in all the States with the view to an early alteration of the existing quarantine arrangements and that the Federal and State Parliaments be requested to institute the necessary legislation to give effect to this resolution.

That in the opinion of this section, in consequence of the prevalence of water-borne diseases in campaigns, instruction in hygiene, including the sterilisation of drinking-water, should form part of the field training of the soldiers; as far as practicable the drinking-water supplied to the soldiers should be sterilised before issue.

That in the opinion of this Congress steps should be taken by the States of the Commonwealth and New Zealand to unify the Public Health Acts throughout Australasia.

That the term "pestis minor" should not be applied to non-plague cases.

A motion regarding sanatoriums for tuberculosis was proposed but was not carried, difference of opinion existing as to what should be done, especially as to whether sanatoriums should be established and controlled by Government.

It is impossible to give a detailed account of all the work done in the various sections. In Medicine the President of the section, Dr. JAMES JAMIESON (Melbourne), gave a very interesting and thoughtful address, chiefly on the significance of the term "cure" in medicine. He traced the history of medicine to a considerable extent from the days of superstitious belief in the infallibility of drugs through the period of scepticism, to the modern and scientific methods of guiding the natural process and influencing and controlling it, as by producing immunity and by serum- and organo-therapy. He observed that nothing was more dangerous and more unscientific than to use powerful drugs for the relief of symptoms: "causal conditions must be discovered and the causes removed or there could be no cure." This was illustrated by the treatment of pyrexia which might be part of nature's curative effort. After a somewhat grimly humorous tilt at surgery and its advances.