

sixty-one beds and four cots, and when the new block is completed the number of beds will be ninety-five at least.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

WALTER W. SINCLAIR

Senior House Surgeon.

Birmingham and Midland Eye Hospital, Aug. 19th, 1894.

## IRELAND AS A FIELD FOR TOURISTS.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—Adopting the hackneyed phrase, "Justice to Ireland," allow me to ask if you will be so good as to give space in your valued journal for some notes on other routes to Ireland and through that island besides that you have named in THE LANCET of Aug. 4th, 1894. The Stranraer route that you mentioned to the north of Ireland is a speedy and convenient one for Scotland, but for Great Britain generally the Holyhead to Kingstown or to Dublin routes offer the great advantages of admirable rail connexions with all parts of England and Wales, coupled with an unsurpassed sea service. Passengers can obtain return or tourist tickets from the English, Scotch, and Welsh railway stations at moderate rates.

When parties travel together the rates are greatly reduced. Tourist tickets as well as hotel coupons can be supplied also by Messrs. Cook and Son, Grafton-street, Dublin, with full information about the various tours and places of interest in Ireland. Two or more days can be very well spent in Dublin, and having seen its various attractions—which, in the opinion of a "good judge" (Halliburton), the "Sam Slick" of a past generation, are many—the scenery of Howth, the county of Wicklow, &c. will also well repay the visitor.

The museums of Dublin contain many unique and valuable works of ancient, Celtic, and other origin. The old cathedrals and churches are very interesting. The vaults of St. Michan's Church have the remarkable property of preserving the bodies of those placed there; it occurs to me that property may be owing to the presence of carbonic acid combined with a dry soil. Certain it is, as I am informed by Professor Tichborne, that if by chance damp gets access to any of the vaults the bodies in those at once decay. The recently applied use of carbonic acid in trade has led me to think that possibly this may be the agent to which the St. Michan's vaults owe their singular properties. It is to be hoped that Professor Tichborne will direct his attention to the elucidation of this matter. To many of your readers who, at this season, are more intent on a tour in "the open" than to exploring museums, libraries of very rare old books, or cathedrals and tombs of the undecayed dead, I would address a few further remarks. There is no country within a much longer distance of England where there is so much variety of race, of scenery, of scope for sport on land, river, lake, or the ocean itself as the West of Ireland. There is a useful modern guide published by the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland, which gives in a small space the requisite information for a tour in "Connemara and the West of Ireland." Particulars in full of the various routes to the west of Ireland and the south-west, with new lines of rail, car, and steamer communication, embracing the rivers Shannon, Lee, and Blackwater, celebrated by Spencer, Mr. and Mrs. Hall, Prout, Thackeray, and many other writers of ancient and modern times that are familiar to most persons are given in the tourist programme published by Messrs. Browne and Nolan for the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland. Members of the medical profession who have a large experience of Continental tours agree that there many drawbacks exist, especially of a dietetic and sanitary nature, which the tourist in Ireland does not encounter.

The wonderful cliffs of Achill, represented so ably by D. Adams, as seen in this year's exhibition in Burlington House, and its unrivalled strands, so well described in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of Dec. 7th, 1878, with new routes through the wonderful scenery of West Kerry, are now easily accessible by the newly opened routes of railway from Westport to Newport in Mayo, and from Killorglin to Cahirciveen and Valentia in Kerry.

The archaeologist who may have leisure to examine the seven churches in the romantic Vale of Glendalough and the ice markings of Glenmalur in Wicklow, and the ruins of Mellifont, Monasterboice, &c. in Louth and Meath, the palace, fort, prison, cathedral, and round tower of the Rock of Cashel, with numerous Druidical remains and other ruins throughout Ireland, will be amply repaid for his trouble.

I trust that, when the watery influences of the present time of year so commonly ascribed to St. Swithin shall have passed away, many may be induced to visit Ireland in the fine weather which so commonly sets in about the end of August, when, too, the Dublin Show will be held.<sup>1</sup> The cooler climate of Ireland, with remarkably little variation of temperature in general, has attractions which are fully appreciated by our Transatlantic cousins. This summer the (Fahrenheit) thermometer in the shade in Dublin has scarcely reached 75° or fallen below 44° on the coldest night. Your kind insertion of these disjointed notes will oblige others as well as,

Yours faithfully,

C. F. MOORE, M.D.

Aug. 20th, 1894.

## "SOME COMMON SOURCES OF ERROR IN TESTING FOR SUGAR IN URINE."

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—If Dr. Pavy had carefully read my last letter to you he surely would not have made the statement that I "simply reassert" the absence of sugar from normal urine on the strength of my son's failure to find any reducing agent after the separation of uric acid and kreatinine by his mercuric chloride process. Every competent reader of my letter must see that if the statements of Dr. Pavy and Mr. Allen are "unrefuted," they are, at any rate, shown to be inconsistent with the results of carefully conducted experiments—experiments suggested by and confirmatory of my son's accurate observations, but performed, as I have clearly stated, by myself; such experiments, too, as will, without doubt, be repeated with like results by others. Urinary analysis has been much advanced since Dr. Pavy maintained that three-fourths of the reducing action of normal urine upon cupric oxide were due to sugar therein contained.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Savile-row, Aug. 20th, 1894.

GEORGE JOHNSON.

## THE PROVISIONS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACT.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—On June 3rd I was called to attend James Raybould at his house at Pensnett, near Dudley. He was suffering from what I suspected would turn out to be small-pox. On the 4th the disease declared itself to be such, and I duly notified it to the medical officer of health of the rural sanitary authority, the Stourbridge Board of Guardians. The patient was living in a semi-detached house with three rooms downstairs and two upstairs. There was only his wife living in the house with their child of three or four years of age. The child was taken away at once, and the wife's mother, who lived near and was in the habit of coming to the house to help with the housework, was stopped from coming. The patient's wife had already had small-pox, and a nurse was sent to the house to nurse the patient; she was revaccinated first. The doors of the house were kept locked, and no one was permitted to go in or out. On the 8th the sanitary inspector went to the house and said he had come to take Mr. Raybould to the infectious hospital, which is situated at Wordsley, next to the workhouse. They refused to let him go, and Mrs. Raybould has been prosecuted by the authority for obstructing the officer in the execution of the magistrate's order with which he was armed under Section 124 of the Public Health Act, 1875. No application had been made to remove Mr. Raybould before the order was obtained, as his wife had told the sanitary officer that they were not willing for him to be removed. Now, before this order can be granted by a magistrate a certificate must be given by a legally qualified medical practitioner to the effect that the patient is without proper lodging or accommodation. The form of certificate is published by Knight and Co. and is in general use by sanitary authorities throughout the country. The form recites that there should be a personal examination of the patient and his surroundings. In this case the certificate was given by the medical officer of health, who never saw the patient and never went to the house. On this certificate the order was granted and the attempt made to remove him. You will see by the enclosed cutting from the *Birmingham Daily Post* of Aug. 21st an account of the adjourned hearing of the summons. It was attempted to question the validity of the magistrate's order on the ground that it was obtained by an inaccurate medical certificate; but it was held by the magistrates

<sup>1</sup> Commencing Aug. 28th.