

THE INFECTIOUS DISEASES (NOTIFICATION) EXTENSION ACT: THE EXEMPTION OF HUDDERSFIELD.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I note in THE LANCET of Oct. 28th an annotation upon the Infectious Diseases (Notification) Extension Act in which you state that the County Borough of Huddersfield is the only place exempt from the provisions of this Act. You appear somewhat to deplore this exemption, with which I quite agree in so far as it makes the whole of the large towns not upon the same basis. The further reason you allege that you think the Huddersfield Act is less efficient I cannot endorse, and shall be pleased to hear from you in what points you think our local Act is less efficient than this general Act will prove to be, for it was distinctly upon the grounds of greater efficiency among other things that my council claimed this exemption.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Health Office, Huddersfield, Oct. 31st, 1899.

E. G. ANNIS.

* * * Our comment as to the less efficient character of the Act in question as compared with the general Act had reference to the limitation in Section 64 of the Huddersfield Act to the effect that "only one such certificate need be given within an interval of 30 days in respect of the same disease occurring in the same building." Such a limited provision obviously renders the system of notification less efficient than the corresponding one of the general Act which requires all cases of infectious disease to be notified. Sanitary authorities should possess an accurate record year by year of all cases of infectious diseases in their district, and not merely a record of such cases in the same building—whether a tenemented one or not—as happen to have from two to thirty days' priority over the remainder.—ED. L.

THE DENTAL PROFESSION AND THE NATIONAL TELEPHONE COMPANY.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Some weeks ago I called the attention of the National Telephone Company to their apparent injustice towards the dental as compared with the medical profession in not letting the members of the former have the use of the telephone on the same terms as those of the latter. Since then the board has had the matter under consideration and I am now pleased to inform my *confrères* that I had a letter from the district manager stating that the company will be pleased to make the same concessions to the dental that they have made to the medical profession—i.e., £10 per annum for the use of the telephone.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Edgware-road, W., Oct. 28th, 1899.

HENRY C. CARTER.

INTRA-PERITONEAL HÆMATOCELE: THE OLDER AND NEWER STATISTICS CONTRASTED.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I should like to express my acknowledgments for the kind and appreciative review of my recent book on "Extra-uterine Pregnancy" which occurs in THE LANCET of Oct. 28th. The only adverse criticism is a very fair one and one, too, which I will bear in mind and carefully consider in any future writing on the subject. At the same time I should like to point out that the reason adduced by the reviewer for considering that I take too serious a view of intra-peritoneal hæmatocele (the result of extra-uterine pregnancy) is one which hardly justifies any very different conclusion to my own.

The reason advanced by the reviewer is that many cases of intra-peritoneal hæmatocele were diagnosed in the past in which recovery followed without operation. Many of the older surgeons and gynecologists were undoubtedly quite as careful observers as ourselves, but they had not our present advantages, and there can be no doubt, I think, that over and over again hæmatocele was diagnosed when no hæmatocele existed and that cases were supposed to be

due to this affection when they were in reality suffering from other diseases. I would instance particularly that a sudden attack of salpingitis, the tumour of which slowly disappeared after rest in bed, was considered throughout as a blood effusion which underwent gradual absorption.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

JOHN W. TAYLOR.

Newhall-street, Birmingham, Oct. 31st, 1899.

THE WORKING OF THE NEW VACCINATION ACT.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—The new Vaccination Act has now been in force nearly a year and it is quite possible to form an idea of its working. I propose to deal only with the question of its action as regards public vaccinators. I find the methods of working and of remuneration both unsatisfactory. For a fee of 1s. one has to write and post a notice and to call to offer vaccination. The payment is bad enough, but this hawking about of public vaccination by men supposed to belong to a learned profession is worse. The profession ought to denounce, and public vaccinators to refuse to submit to, this unprofessional canvassing.

It can easily be ascertained what children require vaccinating by the public vaccinator and a list should be sent to him of those cases in which his services are required. I consider this point essential to the retention of office and that it ought to be at once insisted on. I hope for the powerful aid of the medical press in this matter and I believe that if it be properly and forcibly brought to the notice of the Government the grievance, which affects not only public vaccinators but all general practitioners, will be remedied.

With regard to remuneration I complain chiefly of the system of payment by results. In arm-to-arm vaccination the failures were comparatively few. The fee now depends on the reliability of the calf lymph supplied. It is manifestly unfair that an operation should be done for nothing because inefficient lymph is supplied by the Local Government Board. This matter is of some importance, but it is insignificant in comparison with the ethical point on which I have striven to insist above. It is on that point mainly I ask for your valuable assistance in an effort to wipe out a stain of reproach which will accompany the office of public vaccinator as long as the present undesirable state of things continues.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Oct. 31st, 1899.

A PUBLIC VACCINATOR.

CHARING CROSS HOSPITAL.—The annual dinner of the past and present students of Charing Cross Hospital Medical School was held at the Hotel Cecil on Oct. 31st, when Dr. Frederick Osmund Stedman, a former student at the school, occupied the chair. In proposing the toast of the "Staff of the Hospital and School" the chairman referred to the advances he had noted since he had left the institution for work in Hong-Kong. It was obvious on all sides that the policy of the staff was a progressive one. In acknowledging the toast Mr. J. H. Morgan referred to the *esprit de corps* which prevailed amongst Charing Cross men. He congratulated them upon the institution of the Huxley Lecture and on securing the services of so great a pathologist as Virchow to open the session last year. He dwelt with pride upon the equipment of the school and especially upon the improvements in the museum which were largely due to Dr. W. Hunter. It had recently been decided to have an ophthalmic surgical department and they hoped soon to institute arrangements for the study of mental diseases. He felt it a satisfactory testimony to the efficacy of the school that amongst the new men joining some were the sons of old students. Mr. H. F. Waterhouse proposed the toast of "Past and Present Students" and stated that several of the old students were serving as surgeons in the present war. Dr. W. C. Bosanquet replied for past students and Mr. Eric Bailey for present students. The toast of "The Chairman" was proposed by Mr. Stanley Boyd. The first song on the list was "Tommy Atkins," which was sung by Dr. F. W. Mott, and this suggested a collection being made for the widows and families of the soldiers engaged in the Transvaal war. Ultimately it was announced that the collection had amounted to £20, which it was proposed should be sent to the *Daily Telegraph* shilling fund.