called to get me to give my opinion on Wine of Cardui. I told him I knew nothing about the concoction from *personal* experience, as I never had a patient whom I knew to take it, but that I accepted the criticisms of THE JOURNAL of the American Medical Association. He said he was interviewing the physicians all over the country asking them for the very worst opinion they have of Wine of Cardui. He said that in some parts of Alabama and Tennessee the doctors prescribed 'The Woman's Tonic.' Whereupon I asked him if he would have a physician to attend a sick member of his family who would prescribe Wine of Cardui and he said: 'If I lived in the back-woods, remote from good ethical doctors I'd have to consult them or none.' He further said only country doctors prescribe Wine of Cardui. He said he was looking after the legal part of the Chattanooga Medicine Company's business, appearing to want to leave the impression that he was a lawyer, but upon my putting the question direct he admitted that he is not a lawyer. I did not instruct him to not quote me in the opinion I gave, but feel sure he will not."

It would be interesting to learn whether the J. G. Cairns who is alleged to be interviewing physicians in the interest of the Chattanooga Medicine Company is the Rev. J. G. Cairns, who, according to Chattanooga newspapers, was arraigned last November before a trial committee of the Holston Methodist Conference on charges of "lying," "dishonesty" and "irregularities in the administration of the Alton Park church building fund." J. G. Cairns, the minister, was exonerated of these charges at the same time and by the same conference that extended a "whitewash" to John A. Patten, and the Wine of Cardui business. After his exoneration, J. G. Cairns was made associate pastor of Mr. Patten's church, the First Methodist Church of Chattanooga. Our readers will remember that the former pastor of this church, the Rev. C. H. Myers, did not sympathize with the methods by which Mr. Patten made his money or with the influence this money exercises in the church. Mr. Myers was removed from his pastorate at the same conference that exonerated Cairns and Patten. As recently as February 1, the Rev. J. G. Cairns has come to the open defense of John A. Patten in a letter to the Chattanooga Times, a paper that appears to be the mouth-piece of Patten and his interests. Mr. Cairns rebuked a local politician—unnamed—for opposing Mr. Patten who, according to Cairns, had granted to the politician "favors, political and financial." It might be a matter of interest to Methodism to determine whether J. G. Cairns of the First Methodist Church of Chattanooga is on the pay roll of the Chattanooga Medicine Company. If the Rev. J. G. Cairns is the same person as the J. G. Cairns referred to by our correspondent then the nice problem presents itself: Can the position of associate pastor to the First Methodist Church of Chattanooga be adequately filled by a man who is traveling around the country in behalf of the Chattanooga Medicine Company and Wine of Cardui?

Harper's Weekly for Feb. 27, 1915, has another article on Wine of Cardui referring specifically to Mr. Patten's suit. In commenting on the attempts of the Chattanooga Medicine Company to get physicians to testify to the value of Wine of Cardui, Harper's says that the methods of the concern, while shrewd and "slick," fail to take into account the honesty of physicians. It believes that while some few doctors may be willing to barter their professional reputations for a mess of pottage, the great majority will not be. Harper's correctly appraises the medical profession.

LOUISIANA STATE BOARD ACTS

Apropos of what is published above is the following, which appeared in the *New Orleans Item*, Feb. 18, 1915.

HEALTH BOARD HITS AT WINE OF CARDUI

Backs Dowling In Holding It Pernicious; War on Others

Branding Wine of Cardui as being "among the most fraudulent" of "nostrums pernicious and baneful in effect" the State Board of Health Thursday afternoon endorsed by resolution the campaign of Dr. Oscar Dowling, president of the board, against it and other patent medicines.

"These nostrums are pernicious and baneful in effect," says the resolution in part. "The enormous profits accruing from the sale of so-called medicines are derived largely from the income of the very poor and the unfortunate. Among the most fraudulent of these preparations is Wine of Cardui,

manufactured and sold by the Chattanooga Medicine Company, Chattanooga, Tennessee, and St. Louis, Missouri, as proved by analysis in the laboratory of the state board of health, the ingredients of this nostrum being alcohol and vegetable materials practically therapeutically inert.

"Therefore be it resolved: That the State Board of Health unanimously approves and supports the campaign against harmful patent and proprietary nostrums now being prosecuted by Dr. Oscar Dowling, the executive officer of this board.

"That he is authorized to push the campaign to the full extent of the law with the hope of destroying the baneful influence of the owners and manufacturers of the many noxious articles now offered to the public.

"That the exhibit placed on the Louisiana state board of health exhibit car which illustrates the fraudulent claims of Wine of Cardui and other patent preparations, has our full approval and commendation.

"That the suit by the Chattanooga Medicine Company, Chattanooga, Tennessee, brought against the president of the Louisiana State Board of Health as an individual, should have been filed against the president and executive officer of the State Board of Health and in the prosecution of this suit the Louisiana State Board of Health will give Oscar Dowling, its president and executive officer, cordial support and assistance to the limit of its power and resources.

"That we welcome the opportunity to assist in this suit, the outcome of which we are confident will be a death blow to the popular use of Wine of Cardui and all other fraudulent patent nostrums."

Correspondence

Cabot, Bernard Shaw, and the Medical Profession

To the Editor:—In the February number of *McClure's Magazine*, I am quoted in an article by R. H. Schauffler as backing Bernard Shaw's charges against the medical profession, except his attitude on animal experimentation. Shaw's attack is summarized in his own words, including the following sentence: "Most doctors have no honor and no conscience." Other sentences in Shaw's habitual exaggerative style follow, and my approval of them all is assumed. The facts of the matter are as follows:

In the *Survey*, June 3, 1911, I wrote, at the request of that magazine, a review of Shaw's play entitled, "The Doctor's Dilemma," and said that as regards "Mr. Shaw's principal theses and in the main, I find myself heartily in agreement with him." I did not suppose that any one would take Shaw seriously enough as to suppose that a ridiculous calumny, such as the statement that "most doctors have no honor and no conscience" would be regarded as a significant or an important remark. It should go without saying that I have no sympathy with such a statement, as I believe the medical profession to be as honorable and conscientious a body of men as any in the country. In the article on which Mr. Schauffler's misstatement of my position is founded, I summed up what in my opinion were the main offences of our profession, offences which we all recognize and deplore. I specified such shortcomings as these: that we do not tell patients with sufficient vigor the truth about their habits and their own responsibility for disease; that we sometimes foster cases of imaginary illness; that we sometimes perform unnecessary operations; that fee splitting and other abuses are widespread. No one, I suppose, will doubt these facts and no one will have much doubt that they will continue as long as the doctors of the country are as miserably poor as at present. So long as the economic status of the doctor is what it is, we cannot look for much improvement in that direction.

This was Shaw's belief about the whole matter and it is mine. It is not a question of blaming anybody but of getting something done. That "something" is raising of the stand-

ards of examining boards for the license to practice medicine. This is what the medical profession can do, of itself, and do immediately. It cannot, of itself, carry out the other greatly needed reform which I believe is coming through the more intelligent activity of hospital trustees, namely, the payment of hospital physicians for full time work and the selection of these physicians by methods that exclude favoritism and the methods of the close corporation.

I should add that I understand perfectly Mr. Schauffler's unintentional mistake in the statement of my position. He is a man for whom I have the greatest admiration, and I am sure he would not willingly misrepresent any one.

RICHARD C. CABOT, M.D., Boston.

Queries and Minor Notes

ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS and queries on postal cards will not be noticed. Every letter must contain the writer's name and address, but these will be omitted, on request.

DENATURED ALCOHOL FOR EXTERNAL USE

To the Editor:—In THE JOURNAL, Jan. 2, 1915, p. 72, it is stated that the external use of any alcohol containing wood spirits is unsafe.

When denatured alcohol first came out, we very cautiously began the use of it for external use, in place of grain alcohol. After a very extended experience covering the use of at least ten barrels, we are justified in stating that it takes the place of grain alcohol in all rubbings and for wet dressings for wounds. We have never seen the slightest trace of poisoning following its use, and we now never use grain alcohol for either of these purposes. We certainly think that the idea that denatured alcohol is poisonous for external use is erroneous and is not based on facts of its use.

F. E. CLOUGH, M.D., Lead, S. Dak.

ANSWER:—The caution against the use of denatured alcohol has been made by THE JOURNAL on the ground that while bad results may occur only in a very small number of cases, it is better to employ a perfectly safe preparation. It is probable that this statement should have been made with some qualification.

Although clinical reports indicate decided danger to the digestive apparatus, nervous system, eyesight, etc., from intoxication due to the use of methyl alcohol (especially of deodorized methyl alcohol) for such external uses as massage of the skin, yet in all probability the employment of "denatured" (methylated) alcohol is, for these external uses, harmless. It is not at all likely that sufficient methyl alcohol is absorbed into the system by occasional rubbings with denatured alcohol (which, like the British and German mixtures, contains about 10 per cent. of crude methyl alcohol) to produce untoward effects. However, wet dressings of wounds with denatured alcohol offer a better chance of minor intoxications than rubbings.

ETHYLHYDROCUPREIN

To the Editor:—Please discuss the chemistry and pharmacology of ethylhydrocuprein.

T. E. FULLER, M.D., Texarkana, Texas.

ANSWER:—Ethylhydrocuprein hydrochlorid is a chlorid of ethylhydrocuprein, a derivative of the base cuprein derived from the bark of China Cuprea. Ethylhydrocuprein is closely related to quinine, differing from the latter in that it contains an ethoxy group instead of a methoxy group, and contains two more atoms of hydrogen, which convert an ethenyl group into an ethyl group. Thus quinine has the formula $C_{20}H_{24}O_2N_2$ and ethylhydrocuprein the formula $C_{22}H_{28}O_2N_2$.

Cuprein is said to have an action very similar to that of quinine, but much weaker. The introduction of the ethoxy and ethyl groups, forming ethylhydrocuprein, make the action more pronounced, so that it is asserted that its action as an antimalarial agent is greater than that of quinine. For ethylhydrocuprein it is claimed, especially, that it has a specific action on pneumococcus infection by which it produces a curative effect in doses that are not injurious to the organism. R. Levy (*Berl. klin. Wchnschr.*, Dec. 30, 1912), after a number of experiments, concludes that it is possible to check and permanently cure an infection with *Streptococcus mucosus* after it has reached its full development, while the untreated control mice succumb to the bacteriemia in a typical

manner. G. Izar and R. Nicosia (*Berl. klin. Wchnschr.*, March 9, 1914) report successful results in obstinate cases of malaria in which the use of quinine had been unsuccessful.

This preparation is exploited as a proprietary under the name Optochin, and is controlled by U. S. patent. Although the statements made in the literature are favorable to the preparation, they do not appear to have been confirmed.

OPIUM

To the Editor:—Dr. Macht's interesting chapter on the History of Opium (*THE JOURNAL*, Feb. 6, 1915, p. 477) recalled to my mind the rimed couplets given below. These were found written on a fly leaf of Wood and Bache's United States Dispensatory (Ed. 2, 1834) and are in the handwriting of my grandfather, Daniel R. Bailey, who graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1837. They were probably in common use among the students of that day and may have been published before.

OPIUM

This grand specific eases pain,
Produces sweat when dry the skin,
In doses small the frame excites
And puts to flight those sleepless nights.
When painful cough excites the breast
'Twill pain allay and cough arrest;
If morbid products need restrain,
We'd give it then in half a grain;
But if hard pain we would assuage,
Or calm the maniac in his rage,
We'd deal it then with liberal hand,
One grain to three the case demands;
But if we wish immediate rest,
We must procure the pure and best;
That species which from Smyrna comes
Is far the best of Thebaic gums;
'Tis large and soft, of grayish brown,
And covered with a leafy down.
The tincture, powder or the pill
Most indications will fulfil;
For weakly nurslings at the breast
The elixir proves to be the best;
But if phlogosis rage within
And burning heat affect the skin,
The salts of morphia, it is plain,
Would less excite the heart and brain.

CLIFFORD B. FARR, M.D., Philadelphia.

LITERATURE ON ELECTRIC SHOCKS

To the Editor:—Please inform me if there is any recent literature or publication on the subject of electric shocks.

W. F. PLUMLEY, M.D., Rochester, N. Y.

ANSWER:—In THE JOURNAL, March 15, 1913, p. 851, there was published a list of references on this subject. The following articles are subsequent to this list:

- Brocx, D.: Fatal Electric Accidents, *Nederlandsch Tijdschr. v. Geneesk.*, 1914, lvi, No. 5.
First Aid to Those Overcome by Mine Gases, Electric Shock, etc., *Miscellany, THE JOURNAL*, Nov. 14, 1914, p. 1784.
Groler: Treatment of Heartstroke, Sunstroke and Electric Injuries, *Deutsch. med. Wchnschr.*, Jan. 1, 1914; abstr., *THE JOURNAL*, Feb. 14, 1914, p. 578.
Stewart, P.: Case of Hysterical Monoplegia Following Electric Shock, *Brit. Med. Jour.*, Dec. 20, 1913.
Report of Committees on Resuscitation from Electric Shock and Resuscitation from Mine Gases, Proceedings of the Conference of the American Medical Association on Medical Legislation, abstr., *THE JOURNAL*, Feb. 28, 1914, p. 724.
Stewart, P.: Case of Hysterical Monoplegia Following Electric Shock, *Brit. Med. Jour.*, March 7, 1914.
Witthaus, R. A., and Becker, T. C.: Medical Jurisprudence, Forensic Medicine and Toxicology, Vol. 2, New York, William Wood & Co., \$6.
Work of Commission on Electric Shock, Current Comment, *THE JOURNAL*, Nov. 1, 1913, p. 1637.
Jellinek, S.: Electric Accidents, *Wien. klin. Wchnschr.*, Oct. 30, 1913.
Fisch, C. F.: Electric Accidents, *Wien. klin. Wchnschr.*, Sept. 4, 1913; abstr., *THE JOURNAL*, Oct. 11, 1913, p. 1417.

CORONER'S DUTY IN ALASKA

- To the Editor:*—1. What constitutes a coroner's case in Alaska?
2. Must each district have a coroner's physician, and is there any provision made for one?
3. Can a person be buried without a physician's death certificate or burial permit?
H. E. AURINGER, M.D., Flat, Alaska.

ANSWER:—1. In Alaska a coroner can be appointed either by the President of the United States or by the judge of the Alaska district court. In the case of any sudden death or