found that we obtain a greater reproduction of new bone when the haversian canals are well opened up by roughening the bone with the chisel, it necessarily follows that we shall secure greater circumferential reproduction if no part of the transplant is covered by an impervious membrane.

I would suggest that there may be a small sequestrum thrown off from the transplant in Dr. Wetherill's case, which happened in a case of ours two years ago in which there was a slight latent infection. The sequestrum constituted about one-fourth of the original graft, the other three-fourths having healed in and reproduced a considerable amount of bone.

W. L. BROWN, M.D., El Paso, Tex.

Evidences of Arsenical Poisoning

To the Editor:—In an editorial on this subject in *THE JOURNAL*, May 31, 1913, p. 1710, it is stated that "by no ordinary measures, such as those to which criminals would be likely to resort, could arsenic be introduced into the body after death and be carried by the ordinary processes of diffusion to a point [the brain] so remote from the central portions of the body."

This is so at variance with established facts that I wish to direct your attention to the matter in the interest of medical jurisprudence.

It is true, as the editorial points out, that formerly the belief was entertained that if arsenic is found in the brain of a cadaver, the poison must have been introduced into the body before death. During the past thirty years, however, many experiments on the dead bodies of man and of the lower animals have abundantly established the fact that this view is entirely untenable. The record of these experiments is found in easily accessible literature.

Vaughan in 1883 took up the subject and became the pioneer investigator. With an ordinary syringe, he injected arsenic into a cadaver by the mouth and the rectum. The body was put aside for twenty-five days; then the brain was removed and submitted to chemical analysis; in a little more than a thousand grams of it he found 3.63 mg. of arsenic, calculated as the trioxid. In 1888 Witthaus continued the investigation. He first used three cadavers, and into two of them he injected arsenic through the mouth; in the third the arsenic was injected into the stomach and abdominal cavity. Fourteen days later the brains of all three were examined and arsenic was found in every one. In one case the vertex and the base were tested separately, and it was discovered that there was quite as much arsenic in the one part as in the other—showing the rapidity and completeness of the diffusion. In a fourth case Witthaus injected the arsenic directly into the stomach and at the end of five days he separated from the brain 8.28 mg. of arsenic calculated as the trioxid.

In the majority of the foregoing experiments only easily obtainable apparatus was used and the arsenic was injected into that part of the body (the mouth) to which a criminal could have ready access. It will also be seen that the amount of arsenic found in the brain after post-mortem injection was greater than that found by Ekeley (1.2 mg., calculated as As_2O_3 , in 1,000 gm. of the brain) in the case reported by him (and referred to in the editorial), in which the arsenic was taken before death.

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The Insanitary Labor Camp

To the Editor:—In *THE JOURNAL*, May 10, 1913, p. 1464, is an editorial on this subject. While I concur for the most part in the deductions drawn, one statement is so obviously based on incomplete information that, in justice to our own and several other Western states, I call attention to it. The sentence is the following: "Because these camps are controlled by no laws, and because they are not supervised by any state department, they are a grave menace to the health of the laborers occupying them and the inhabitants of distant as well as adjacent towns."

Reports on industrial camps have been made to the Conference of State and Provincial Boards of Health for each of the past four years. The last report, made by myself and Dr. T. D. Tuttle of Montana, has not yet been published, but is practically ready for distribution. This report contains a digest of the laws and regulations controlling industrial camps, as nearly as we could determine them last year. So far as I know, practically all the western provinces of Canada and the states of Montana, Idaho, Utah, Louisiana and Washington have done something, at any rate, in attempting to control these camps through their state boards of health. Certain other states, notably Kansas and California, have made some investigations. Therefore it can scarcely be said that these camps are not supervised by any state department.

On page 628 of the *Public Health Reports* of March 28 will be found a copy of our rules and regulations relating to camps. I believe, although I have not the exact date at hand, that the rules of the Louisiana board have been in effect for several years. The Washington State Board of Health rules have been in effect since 1910. On page 35 of our last biennial report will be found a brief account of the work of this board on industrial camps, and also in the report of the sanitary inspector, page 112, is a more detailed reference to some camps inspected. In all, this department has investigated something over 500 industrial camps in the last three years and has had exceptionally good success in carrying out sanitary improvements. The investigations are far from what they should be because of lack of funds and field force, but we feel that in no other line of work have we accomplished greater results with the limited funds at our command. This subject is covered more fully in our last conference of state health officials' report, which will soon come from the press.

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[COMMENT.—It is shown by our correspondent that several states are exercising supervision over the sanitation of labor camps. The facts on which our editorial was based were drawn chiefly from conditions existing in New York. The second sentence, of course, should have read: "Because in many states these camps are not controlled by any laws and are not supervised by any state department . . ." The danger to health from labor camps is evidently becoming widely recognized.—Ed.]

Suggestion for a Committee to Pass on New Medical Books

To the Editor:—May I suggest for the consideration of the American Medical Association at its coming meeting the desirability of appointing a committee for the purpose of passing on the intrinsic merits of medical publications placed on the market?

Publishing houses are financially interested in their output, and reviews are too often written hastily and sometimes perhaps with a personal bias; while no single reviewer associated with any periodical can be expected to possess such encyclopedic knowledge as is necessary in a field so varied and extensive. For these reasons thousands of physicians, and especially those far removed from publishing centers, are quite unable to decide what books may be most worthy of their attention.

An advisory or reviewing committee (like the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry) of capable physicians, appointed by the Association because of their technical and practical knowledge of the various specialties and whose members may reside in different sections of the country, could without invidious distinction classify books in such way as to enable purchasers to make a more satisfactory selection than is now possible.

Many of our fraternity cannot afford to purchase largely, and it is often a great disappointment to discover, when too late, that a poor investment has resulted from an insufficient knowledge of, or extravagant claims made for, a much needed work.