

Poore's methods a trial. When carried out with strict attention to detail their results seem to be admirable.

JOURNALS AND MAGAZINES.

The Practitioner.—The April number of this journal is not so well provided with good original articles as is usually the case. It contains, however, some careful records of interesting and instructive cases. Dr. S. Vere Pearson gives a thoughtful consideration of the differential points in diagnosis between croupous and catarrhal pneumonia in infants—conditions in which the prognosis is so dissimilar that accurate diagnosis is of the very highest importance. Mr. D. J. Armour in a review of recent surgery of the nervous system goes thoroughly into the question of the surgical measures for the cure of epilepsy and gives Sir Victor Horsley's valuable and concisely formulated views on the subject. Mr. Malcolm A. Morris, the late editor of the *Practitioner*, writes upon the light treatment of lupus and other skin diseases and amongst other articles are contributions from Dr. John Philips and Dr. Nathan Raw.

South African Medical Record. March, 1903. Price 1s.—We have received the first monthly number of this journal which is devoted to the interests of the medical profession in South Africa. Mr. S. W. F. Richardson contributes some remarks upon the Surgical Treatment of Appendicitis; Dr. G. A. Casalis deals with the subject of Curettage; Dr. W. E. Smith writes some notes on the Symptoms and Diagnosis of Iritis; and Dr. E. Sinclair Stevenson has a paper on Some Obscure Cases in Abdominal Surgery. Having regard to the non-success of some previous ventures in medical journalism in South Africa the editor is to be congratulated on his courage in starting a new journal. We hope his efforts will be rewarded with success.

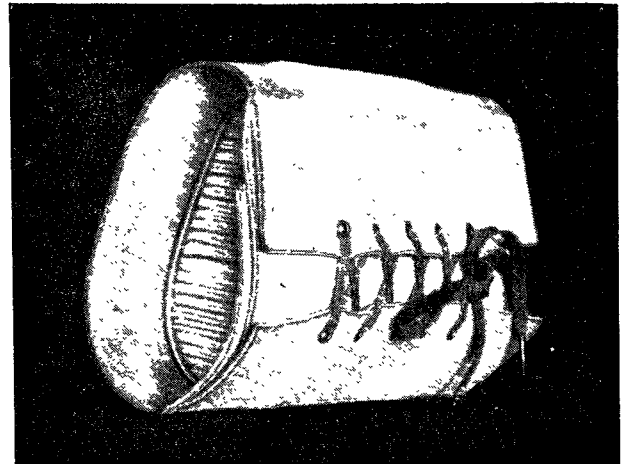
Flora et Sylva. No. 1. Edited by W. ROBINSON. London: 17, Fumival-street, Holborn. Price 2s. 6d. net.—This is the first number of a new monthly review "for lovers of landscape, tree or flower," and the editor is one well qualified for his work, for he is the author of that admirable book, "The English Flower Garden." The review is beautifully printed on paper which appears to be hand-made and most probably is so. The type is a well-cut "old-face" (in connexion with which the printers need reminding that the character "b" is another form of the more usual "h" and should not be confused with the character "l," as has been done), while the illustrations are admirable. Some of them are coloured and are notable instances of colour printing, others are actually woodcuts, and two which are relegated to a kind of appendix are process blocks. Everyone who loves a garden and is fortunate enough to possess one should read this new review in which we are glad to see a paragraph in praise of woodlands.

New Inventions.

A MODIFICATION OF ALLIS'S ETHER INHALER.

I BEG to recommend to the notice of the readers of THE LANCET a very useful modification in the form of Allis's ether inhaler, made by Mr. Robert Henry Lavender, one of the secretarial staff of the Liverpool Royal Infirmary, and daily used throughout the surgical department of that institution. Hitherto the cage-like frame upon which is wound in and out a long strip of flannel or stockinette bandage to hold the anæsthetic liquid, has been covered up in a large rubber tube slipped over it but not easily moved off and on. To facilitate cleaning and the easy frequent removal of the rubber cover Mr. Lavender has had the latter constructed, not as a closed tube, but in the form of a sheet to lace on. The ends of the sheet overlap so as to be air-tight and are bound on

the frame by lacing a couple of flaps attached to their outer side and provided with eyelets. The frame itself was many years ago improved by my colleague, Mr. F. T. Paul, who had it strongly made of wires attached at each end to an oval metal ring perforated with holes, into which the wires fit



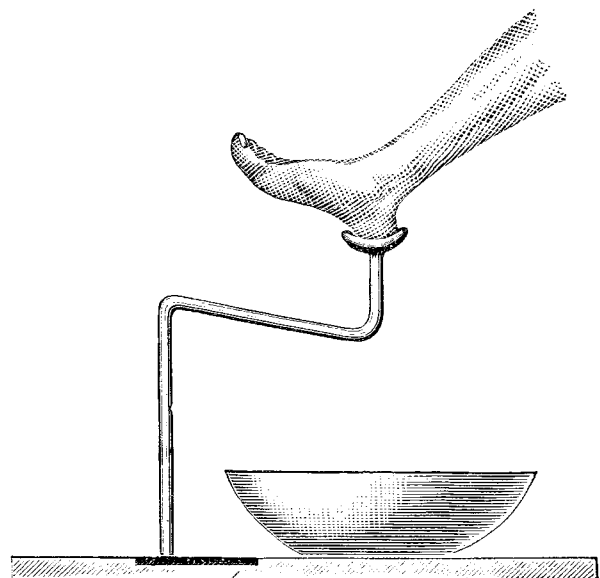
and are soldered in position. Thus made the frame can resist more than any pressure likely to be put upon it, and is a great improvement upon the form flimsily constructed of a mere sheet of metal perforated in slits and bent to the required form, but not rigid enough for the purpose.

The inhaler is made for us by Messrs. Ewing and Co., Pembroke-place, Liverpool (adjacent to the hospital), and the accompanying illustration explains its details.

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Professor of Surgery, University College, and Surgeon
to the Royal Infirmary, Liverpool.

IMPROVED LEG SUPPORT.

Apropos of the "Improved Leg Support" described by Dr. W. A. Carline in THE LANCET of April 4th, p. 974, perhaps the readers of THE LANCET may be interested in an apparatus devised by me for a similar purpose and now used in the out-patient department of Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital, Dublin. It consists simply of a light round iron bar bent in the manner shown in the illustration. One end bears a rest for the heel, the other being fixed to an oblong wooden base. This



foot rest has the advantage that in cleansing the limb or applying lotion any superfluous fluid runs down to the most dependent point of the curve under which a receiver is placed. In practice it is found much more convenient than the old pattern, where the heel is supported right above the central pillar, along which fluid is liable to escape to the floor. Every part of the supported limb is accessible for dressing, bandaging, &c.

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THE LANCET.

LONDON: SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 1903.

The Fourteenth International Congress of Medicine.

THE proceedings of the Fourteenth International Congress of Medicine, which are under the patronage of his Royal and youthful Majesty KING ALFONSO of Spain, were inaugurated on Thursday last, April 23rd, and will, it is hoped, prove successful in every way. As we have before now said, we do not regard medical or other scientific congresses as holding out much prospect of advancement to our knowledge. The day is to some extent gone by when it is of the first importance that medical men should meet face to face to compare their views or to communicate their researches in respect of disease. A voluminous and, on the whole, a responsible and well-informed medical press in every country provides a medium for the dissemination of professional knowledge and this being the case no medical man is for the future likely to withhold from his brethren any valuable discovery in order that he may make an imposing pronouncement to them at an International Medical Congress. The official programme of the Madrid Congress has not yet reached us, the dilatoriness of the officials of the Congress in the matter, to which we have referred recently, being this week made the subject of comment by our special correspondent at Madrid who, however, acquits them of blame in the trying circumstances. We understand that the promised proceedings do not include any papers which record startling therapeutic or pathological advancement. This was the case at Moscow on the occasion of the twelfth International Medical Congress, where valuable contributions to medical and surgical knowledge were read in many sections but where no marked innovation of theory or practice was recorded. If, however, those of our countrymen who attend the International Medical Congress at Madrid do not come away with any new learning—and many will find attendance at a crowded congress in a foreign capital far from conducive to their learning anything at all in the nature of scientific facts—they cannot help acquiring much valuable knowledge of life in general and the *vita medica* in particular by their visit to Madrid. The sights, the customs, the social observances, and the methods of living, no less than the hospitals, the libraries, and the courteous personalities of their hosts, will all serve to stimulate new sensations, to arouse new ideas, and to provide food for pleasant reflection afterwards. The visitors will acquire standards of comparison which will reduce in our countrymen the predisposition to dogmatise with which as a nation we are reproached. This alone will be a gain of inestimable benefit to members of a profession where so much depends upon the capacity of an observer to take an all-round view of a situation. Our special correspondent's

letters do not foreshadow any great scientific reputation for the Congress in Madrid. The arrangements of organisation were not ready when the day of the opening of the Congress arrived, but had more punctuality been observed the city could not have been transformed into an ideal centre for a meeting of persons of all nations and languages, for it is a national capital, not a cosmopolitan business centre. The limitations of Madrid, however, have their advantages. In London, Paris, or New York a man of any civilised nation can find persons, probably persons of his own nationality, able to minister to the wants peculiar to his nation. Therefore he does not live the life of London, Paris, or New York, but rather his own national life with certain economic or climatic modifications. In Madrid it is only open to do as Madrid does, and a first-hand acquaintance with a foreign city is thus thrust upon the traveller, unless he proposes to sojourn at one of a small group of hotels where the prices appear to have been driven up to extortion pitch by the reprehensible and unpatriotic methods of speculators. This makes for the expansion of view that is so healthy for all who are absorbed in the practice of medicine, and for this reason alone the British visitors to the Congress at Madrid cannot help benefiting by their experiences.

The Increase of Cancer and Cancer Research.

EVER since the KING publicly expressed his desire that the deplorable increase of cancer prevailing throughout his dominions should receive the earnest notice of the medical profession with a view, if possible, to the discovery of means for its prevention, the subject has engaged a large share of public attention. This is as it should be, for in such matters as the prevention of widespread diseases the medical profession expects the coöperation of the laity; but we notice with regret that since the issue of a report on the prevalence of cancer by the Registrar-General of Ireland the English daily press has been literally inundated with correspondence dealing with the causes and cure of cancer and proving nothing but the ignorance or the indiscretion of the writers. The publication of such letters at the present time can only hinder the due consideration of a problem the solution of which we desire, on behalf of suffering thousands, to see accomplished at the earliest practicable date.

Whatever may be the true explanation of the fact, the national records of England contain abundant evidence that in recent years the deaths attributed, rightly or wrongly, to malignant disease have rapidly increased both absolutely and in relation to population. It is a disquieting fact that as time goes on cancer contributes a larger and larger share to the total mortality and this is particularly the case as regards persons who have passed the meridian of life. From the report of the Registrar-General of England for 1900, which is the latest issued up to the present time, we gather that among women who have attained their forty-fifth year of age, as well as among men ten years older, cancer exacts a yearly death-toll vastly heavier than that which is levied by that other national scourge, pulmonary tuberculosis. It would therefore appear from statistics that thousands of those whom medical science has in these more