

the case of the poor man. At the discretion of the magistrate, or other judicial authority, the person is given over into the charge of those friends who undertake to be responsible for his proper care and treatment. "Two" medical certificates are forthwith obtained in this case. An order is made by one of the friends for his reception into a private asylum, or to one of the public asylums, and he is removed there as an ordinary private patient, eligible for discharge on his recovery, at any time this may occur.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

West Malling, Kent, March 17th, 1884. JAMES ADAM, M.D.

RECURRENCE OF MEASLES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The prevalence of measles at the present time induces me to send you the following particulars as showing at what an early period the disease may recur.

On December 10th S. H.—, aged nine years, was suffering from headache and feverishness; on December 14th he had all the characteristic symptoms of measles. He made a good recovery, and on January 18th he went to stay at his father's country house in Sussex. On February 5th he returned home much benefited by the change. He was put to sleep in the same room which he had occupied during his illness. This room had been thoroughly cleansed, ventilated, and disinfected by the daily use of terebene during his absence. All the necessary precautions had been taken with the various articles of clothing and bedding which he had used in his first attack. On February 24th, nineteen days after his return home, and seventy-six days after the commencement of his first attack, he began to complain of not feeling well. On the following day he had catarrhal symptoms, and on the next day (February 27th) he began to cough. On the 28th he had a slight papular eruption about the forehead and cheeks, which by the 29th had assumed the characteristic appearance of measles, with the suffused eyes, coryza, and bronchial catarrh attendant upon it. This second attack has been less severe than the first. During the first illness neither his brothers nor his sisters were attacked, but now his little sister, aged eleven years, has developed measles with very marked severity. To-day she is thickly covered with the rash.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

S. H. BYAM.

Westbourne-place, Eaton-square, W., March 11th, 1884.

HEALTH AND EDUCATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—When I proposed to the council of the health department of the Social Science Congress at Huddersfield that the question of the alleged over-pressure in our schools should form one of the subjects for discussion, I did not anticipate that the country would so soon be aroused to its very great importance. The rapid ripening of public opinion is due to the initiation of the Social Science Association, and affords another instance of the value of this Society in bringing to the front great social problems and in helping on reforms. The time has now come for action and for some practical suggestions as to the best method of remedying the defects in our present educational codes and methods. I believe we may take it for granted, first, that over-pressure does exist, pressing both on pupils and teachers; and, secondly, that the Education Acts should be altered, especially in relation to grants and the method of obtaining them. The following are a few points which, in my opinion, have not been sufficiently considered in the valuable papers which have been published on the subject.

1. The school age in the Elementary Education Act is fixed at five years. Is this too early an age? Is anything gained by commencing so soon? The working classes have to send their children to school at five years of age, otherwise the school-board officer interferes. This compulsory attendance is not enforced in other classes of society. Is this fair? Should it not be enforced? In discussing this question we must bear in mind that it is often an advantage to mothers to have their children taken care of a certain number of hours during the day. It gives them time to attend to household work.

2. If five is too early an age, what should be the age?

Seven appears to be the favourite age at which a large number of those who are outside the Education Acts commence the education of their children. There cannot be a doubt that at seven years the brain is stronger and more capable of receiving impressions. Those who begin at seven acquire more quickly and outstrip very soon children who have commenced at five. This is the experience of a large number of parents to whom I have spoken on the subject.

3. The regulation of school hours. Are the hours too long, or what should be the hours?

I might mention several other questions which ought to receive attention whilst the subject of health and education is under consideration. Should the proposed Society of Medical Officers attached to Schools be formed, from the combined experience of these officers great good would result, and many of the health questions affecting education would receive full discussion. I trust that by-and-by medical officers will be attached to all our School Boards. The sanitary aspects of the Education Acts will then be still better looked after. The aim of medical men is not to impede education, as some of our opponents imagine. Our sole desire is to place it on a proper footing, so as to secure not immediate but remote advantages—to protect the weak, to conserve the strong, so that in the future the advantages gained from a system of education carried on under sanitary regulations will be all the more lasting and beneficial to the classes interested and to their country.—Yours truly,

Halifax, March 8th, 1884.

T. M. DOLAN, M.D., &c.

BIRMINGHAM.

(From our own Correspondent.)

PAGE v. HARRISON.

THE above case, recently tried before Mr. Justice Hawkins, was one in which a medical practitioner of Solihull, near Birmingham, sued an accountant for slander. The case presented features which made it regrettable that it should have come into a court of law, and that the privacy of domestic relations should be held up to the public gaze. A verdict was given for the plaintiff, the damages being £150. Certain costs, however, were disallowed. It seems that, if a verdict were recorded on this side at all, the damages very inadequately represented the grievance complained of, and will be more than absorbed in the expensive litigation the suit entailed. It is necessary for society to have protection, but it is also essential that the practice of the profession should be guarded against careless aspersions or observations thrown broadcast across the path of the practitioner. In this instance we have an illustration of the trouble and difficulties involved in appeals to the law, and the scant satisfaction from a pecuniary point of view that even success involves.

THE QUEEN'S HOSPITAL.

The annual meeting of the governors of this institution was held on the 10th inst. The report showed a condition of activity, in so far that there were nearly 2000 more cases treated than in the previous year; the aggregate being—in-patients 1812, out-patients 18,172, or nearly 20,000. The financial state of the hospital, unfortunately, is not so flourishing, doubtless owing to the general depression in trade, which affects more or less most charitable institutions throughout the country. The accounts showed an excess of expenditure over income for the year of above £1394, bringing the deficiency at the present time up to over £2943. It is a noteworthy fact that of the year's income, £1600 was derived from the working classes—namely, in the form of Hospital Saturday collections and registration fees, the latter amounting to £676. It is an open question how far a hospital must be considered as free which imposes a protection duty in the way of registration fees, though this is perhaps a less objectionable mode of raising money than that recently adopted at a large metropolitan hospital; at any rate, it yields a substantial amount towards the working expenses, and could hardly be dispensed with in the present state of the funds.

THE CHARGES AGAINST BIRMINGHAM PARISH MEDICAL OFFICERS.

The official inquiry into the allegations against district medical officers of the parish of Birmingham, with regard to