

Dr. Billing's opinion of fever, still it must be a fever *sui generis*, which is not indigenous to this country, and therefore must be imported. All the poisons of the blood, as small pox, measles, scarlatina, and even plague, syphilis, and rabies, ultimately disease certain organs of the body. The poison may at the onset be in the blood; but it only remains there for a limited period. The same may be asserted of the poison producing the different variety of fevers which shortly affects some portion of the nervous system. But if the poison is in the blood, and remains there, affecting no other organ or tissue of the body, it is perfectly and completely different from any other disease yet known, and very strange indeed must be the assembly of exciting causes of filth, putridity, malaria, which produce it epidemically!

The fact is, Mr. Grainger has never thought for himself upon the subject; but he asserts that it is non-contagious, because other people (perhaps the boards of health) have said the same. It is absurd to suppose that its habitat is the blood; for if it follow the law of other contagious, or even epidemic diseases, other tissues and organs of the body would soon be involved, and that almost contemporaneously. Whatsoever, and how many of these, remain to be discovered? But I am persuaded they will be at no distant period.

Jan. 1848.

MEDICUS.

USE OF COLLODION IN TREATMENT OF BED-SORES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Not having seen the medical periodicals for this year, I am not aware whether any one has thought of treating patients threatened with bed-sores with collodion—a remedy, I think, first brought under the notice of the profession by Mr. Erasmus Wilson. I have been so gratified by the benefit derived from a sheathing of the solution (or of rag dipped in it) applied over parts excoriated and sores already formed, that I hasten to direct attention to this application of a truly valuable adjuvant. It is especially useful in a lunatic asylum, where are to be found patients more than usually filthy, restless, and uncontrollable, and so not only more liable to excoriations and bed-sores, but also more apt to rub off or pull off every application employed.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
HENRY MUIRHEAD.

Glasgow Royal Asylum for Lunatics, January 20, 1849.

DR. EDWARDS CRISP AND THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In the pamphlet just issued by Dr. Crisp, that gentleman states that after having undergone a stringent examination at the College of Surgeons he was finally rejected, while, according to Dr. Paris, one of his examiners, he was *not* rejected. "You are *not* rejected," says that worthy functionary, "for your [want of proficiency in] Latin; [you are *not* rejected] for your want of practical experience." If, therefore, Dr. Crisp was *not* rejected, was he not admitted?

The president of the College of Physicians exhibits a lamentable want of knowledge of the English language, for in the few words he addressed to Dr. Crisp he contrived to apply a plural and a singular verb to the same noun of multitude. "We [the board] have given;" [it] "the board thinks that you have not [allowed] us [the board] to think."

Your correspondent, "Scrutator," in this week's number, appears to have had this precious paragraph in his eye, for he asks why "the worthy president of the College of Physicians has only plain M.D. tacked to his name?" implying that he thinks some other abbreviations necessary.

My object in now addressing you is to ask you what, in your "practical knowledge" and "practical experience," you think is the meaning of Dr. Paris's address? Was Dr. Crisp admitted or was he "rejected"? Did he "emanate as a physician from the College," or was he sent back to fructificate?

Yours, &c.,
T. A. R.

Hatton-garden, January 20, 1849.

MEDICAL FEES AT INSURANCE OFFICES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

Prudential Mutual Assurance, Investment, and Loan Association, 17th January, 1849.

SIR,—Having read, in the last number of your excellent journal, an able article on Life Assurance, in which is a list

of those offices remunerating their medical referees, I am instructed, by the directors of the "Prudential Mutual Assurance Association," to call your attention to the fact of this Association having started with the determination of remunerating every duly-qualified medical gentleman for his report. They have come to this conclusion, from the feeling, that as the information respecting the eligibility of the life proposed is given to the directors, so it is but consistent it should be rewarded by them.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
J. SHILLINGLAW, Secretary.

P.S.—In making up the advertisement for your journal last week, the clause referring to the subject was unfortunately omitted.

WE have also received a circular from the "Church of England Assurance Institution," in which our attention is directed to the following passage:—

"It being one of the regulations of this Institution that every member of the medical profession, when applied to for information relative to the state of his patient's health, shall be remunerated for his opinion by the Company, I beg leave to inform you that the usual fee will be paid, on your account, to any person duly authorized by you to receive it."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Observing your notice of those life offices which pay medical referees for that responsible duty which devolve upon them—viz., that of reporting immediately upon the risk and eligibility of lives at any period of age, their claims to hereditary disease, their claims to sudden death, measuring their *vitalis vis* through future epidemics, measuring the spare margin of their powers (which lie latent) compared with the wear and tear of life, mental or bodily. Such questions as these, omitting the skill of detecting all organic diseases in their incipient stage, demand great care, study, and attention on the part of medical men who report upon such matters. You mention those offices which remunerate medical referees for undertaking such responsible duties. I beg the liberty of informing you that the "Britannia" was the first company, and for many years the only company, that adopted the following wholesome rule—"Medical attendants in all cases remunerated for their reports;" and as a proof of their success under such a system, I have only to point to the present position of that life office. The spirited conduct of its founder, Mr. Morrison, deserves well of the medical profession, and it occurs to others as well as to myself, that such an act of justice and liberality should, in some way, be acknowledged to that gentleman for so attacking and breaking through the illiberal system of old wealthy life offices demanding such knowledge from the medical profession without any remuneration—such knowledge solely having put them in possession of their accumulated wealth! This opposition, so selfish and unjust, although now tottering, still requires a united and decided effort on the part of the medical profession to raze it to the ground.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Milton-street, Dorset-square, Jan. 1849. JOHN HUTCHINSON, M.D.

[The preceding communication from one of the medical officers of a life assurance society, (the "Britannia,") which takes rank with some of the longest established, may be considered a sufficient answer to the letter of Mr. Keate, already commented on. The work proceeds bravely. The medical profession has but to persist in its fidelity to itself, and this the greatest of abuses, must be completely overthrown.]

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I was rather startled at reading in THE LANCET of today a letter signed "Frederick Lawrance," stating that the office with which he is connected (although only established in 1848) was one of the first which had adopted the just principle of remunerating medical gentlemen when referred to by parties proposing assurances for certificates descriptive of their health.

At the establishment of the Commercial and General Life Assurance Association, No. 112, Cheapside, of which I am a director, Mr. Lawrance, who was then the secretary, knows very well that this office, at my recommendation, immediately adopted the principle of paying medical referees, and it was, in fact, upon this principle being admitted and adopted that I consented to join the direction. The system was earnestly