

a reduction of 25 per cent. to the medical men going to and coming from the Eleventh International Medical Congress, on Steamer Werra, which is to sail from New York on August 5 and September 9, and on steamer Fulda, on August 19. Both these steamers sail to Genoa. The same reduction will be made for the return trips in October and November, on the same steamers, and for the Company's Saturday (off Bremen, Sunday off Southampton), steamers.

The Hamburg-American Packet Co., 37 Broadway, N. Y., 125 La Salle Street, Chicago, offers a reduction of 25 per cent., both out and return, for all its steamers during the year 1893.

The Compagnie Générale Transatlantique, 3 Bowling Green, N. Y., offers the rates which are allowed French officers, that is, \$63.50 for an \$80 accommodation and \$91.50 for a \$120 accommodation.

Five other lines decline to make any satisfactory arrangements.

THE RUSH MONUMENT.—Members of the American Medical Association who have not already subscribed to this National medical undertaking, are urgently requested to come to the meeting at Milwaukee, in June, prepared to pay their contributions to the treasurer, Dr. DeWitt C. Patterson, of the District of Columbia, or to forward the amount before the meeting to his address, 919 I Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. The medical profession is again reminded of the peculiar fitness of Benjamin Rush to represent, not only the general practitioner, but the civil and military surgeon, the sanitarian, alienist, and medical philanthropist. The projected monument will be not merely a memorial of the distinguished individual whose name it will bear, "the greatest physician this country has ever produced," but will be symbolical of medicine in all its aspects and in all its relations to the community and the Nation.

ARE ASYLUM PHYSICIANS PARTY PENSIONERS?—The notion that public officers are the pensioners of a party, not the servants of the whole people, seems to die hard. The prospect appears to be that the officers of all the hospitals for the insane of the State of Illinois will be turned out to make room for members of the political party which, after an outing of thirty-five years, has once more gained the upper hand. It is true that the present Governor, in his canvass, made charges of extravagance and mismanagement against those institutions, but we presume that no one will seriously maintain that a lack of confidence in their management is the only, or even the principal reason for so sweeping a change. It is also true that, so far as one wrong can justify another, the course of the republican party, during the long period of its dominance in the State, has afforded an excuse for such a course. Only republicans have been appointed on the board of trustees, and we understand that the officers of the hospitals have been regularly assessed a portion of their salaries for the campaign funds. It is not long since the superintendent of the hospital at Anna was driven out of office with little or no pretense or concealment of the fact that the ground of his dismissal was his luke warmth in partisanship, and, from all that we can learn, his successor has not erred in that direction, although his attainments as an alienist have not, we believe, even yet, earned him any very wide celebrity.

We do not suppose that if a member of Governor Altgeld's family were to become insane, and he were looking for a suitable private hospital, it would ever occur to him to enquire into the physician's views on the tariff. We have

no doubt that the multitudes of those who will applaud his action in this matter, or take it as a matter of course, employ, by choice, physicians of a different political faith from their own in their families, and would laugh at the idea that a man's political views have anything to do with his professional competency. It is the view that the salaries of these officers are not, primarily, the reasonable compensation for honest and faithful discharge of their duties, but the reward of activity in an entirely different field, that allows people to view with approval or indifference such changes, entirely without regard to the merits either of those who are turned out or those who are put in.

The pernicious effect of such a policy is so plain that we should feel as if we were insulting the intelligence of our readers by arguing the question. Men whose aspirations are for professional eminence and usefulness will hesitate about accepting positions in which such qualities count for nothing. Even if competent men are secured, they are sure in a State in which parties are pretty evenly balanced, under such a system, to be turned out before they have acquired the experience that will enable them to do their best work. The inevitable tendency, under such conditions, is to the filling of the offices by men whose only object is to make money out of them, and who, knowing that the time is short, will "make hay while the sun shines."

We have no doubt that, in time, the mischief of treating the funds provided for the relief of the unfortunate as plunder will become so plain that it will be no longer possible in a government like ours. But we fear that a good many object lessons will be needed first, and in the meantime the insane must suffer. We shall be as much surprised as gratified if the medical profession of Illinois, without distinction of party, shall denounce the iniquity as it deserves. In the meantime, we believe it is the right and the duty of the American Medico-Psychological Association to scan critically the qualifications of the men who profit by the misfortunes of its honored members, should they apply for admission.—Editorial, *American Journal of Insanity*, April, 1893.

DOMESTIC CORRESPONDENCE.

Citric Acid the Important Constituent of Cancerin.

To the Editor of the JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION:

Sir:—In your able review of Adamkiewicz' recent monograph on cancer I am pleased to note an apparent confirmation of views advanced by me more than ten years ago. In a communication to an Eastern medical journal I reported two operations upon malignant tumors of the face, in which metastases and recurrence were apparently prevented by local hypodermatic injections of a saturated solution of citric acid. The impossibility of including within the incisions all of the *infected* territory, without trenching upon important structures, also suggested the employment of the acid as an adjunct to the scalpel. As a result, the environmental cells, which were then believed to be the *fons et origo* of metastatic foci, were destroyed, the tumors atrophied, and were later destroyed to save time. No recurrence within six years.

More recently, December, 1890, after a cancerous mamma had been extirpated the indurated and persistent wound was effectively treated in a similar way, and at the time of her death from peritoneal (mental?) cancer sixteen months later, presented a normal cicatrix.

There is an undoubted antagonism between this salt and cancer cells, and hence the presumption that citric acid is the potential agent in "cancerin." Furthermore, it is harmless and would seem to merit separate investigation.

Note.—Injections of the acid into the substance of an immense colloid carcinoma, near the termination of the case, caused disintegration of portions of the tumor.

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FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

LETTER FROM BERLIN.

Koch Institute for Infectious Diseases.

Of the many institutions established in Berlin for the advance of medical learning and research none is of greater importance than the Koch Institute for Infectious Diseases. Through the liberality of the Prussian government, this institution began its career on the 17th of August, 1891, and since then considerable important work has gone from its doors. The institute consists of two departments, the scientific department—a building of laboratories and a hospital. The scientific department occupies a large triangular building bordering on Charité, Unterbaum and Schumann streets. This is a building formerly utilized for dwelling purposes and which has been thoroughly rearranged for laboratory uses. In the cellar are janitor and servant apartments besides stalls arranged for the stabling of animals. The first story contains the important rooms of the scientific department, laboratories for the director of the institute and his assistants. On the second floor are found the laboratories of the hospital director micro-photographic rooms, other laboratories and a library. The laboratories are thoroughly equipped with all necessary appliances. The hospital lying opposite the main building of the Charité is arranged in the form of pavilions, seven in number. Each pavilion contains a long ward, a reception room, kitchen, pantry and lavatory. In all, the hospital contains 108 beds, sixty for males, thirty-six for females and twelve for children. The pavilions are built according to one of three types; the first form contains one ward of eighteen beds; the second, one ward of fourteen beds and two separate rooms, each containing two beds; in the third form the building is divided into exactly two parts, each ward having six beds. By this arrangement all forms of infectious diseases can be entirely isolated. The pavilions are all well built and thoroughly protected against wind and weather; their interior is of such a nature that each part with its contents can be completely disinfected. Disinfection is accomplished by means of a hot water vapor apparatus constructed according to the most recent improvements. On the hospital grounds there is also an executive building with lecture hall, and an autopsy room. The Institute for Infectious Diseases has for its object the study of infectious diseases and the solving of the many problems which these studies may give rise to; investigations are carried on into the life history of bacteria regarding the sources and modes of infection and the relation of organisms to the causation of disease. With this object in view examinations are made not only with materials obtained from the institute, but also with substances such as earth, water, derived directly from the source of infection. At the head of the institute stands Robert Koch, with Brieger as director of the hospital, and Pfeiffer director of the scientific department. Among the other investigators are Ehrlich, Behring, Trosch, Tebruschky, Kossel, Beck, Kitasato, Wasserman and assistants, twenty-five in all. No teaching is allowed at the institute and only advanced workers permitted in the laboratories. The post-mortem examinations are conducted by Koch himself, and each assistant given some work, which he is expected to complete. At weekly conferences, held under Koch's direction,

matters under investigation are discussed and new work bearing on bacteriological subjects reviewed. Considerable important work has already gone forth from the institute, such as Behring's "Blood-serum Therapeutics" in diphtheria and tetanus, Brieger, Kitasato and Wasserman's various papers on immunity, Ehrlich on hereditary immunity; immunity with abrin and ricin; Pfeiffer, the discovery of the influenza bacillus.

DR. JULIUS FRIEDENWALD.

Berlin, April 9, 1893.

BOOK REVIEWS.

THE HYGIENE OF THE SICK ROOM. A book for nurses and others, being a brief consideration of Asepsis, Antisepsis, Disinfection, Bacteriology, Immunity, Heating and Ventilation, and kindred subjects, for the use of nurses and other intelligent women. By WILLIAM BUCKINGHAM CANFIELD, A.M., M.D., Lecturer on Clinical Medicine and Chief of Chest Clinic, University of Maryland, etc., Baltimore. Philadelphia. P. Blakiston, Son & Co., 1892. Pp. 247.

The material for this manual is derived from a series of lectures delivered at the University of Maryland Training School for Nurses. The principle idea of the author seems to be to show the relation of bacteria to disease and how to prevent sickness by antagonizing its causes. He offers a concise and comprehensive explanation of bacteriology in language so simple that any intelligent person can understand it. He treats of contagion, infection and disinfection, and gives rules for making and using disinfectants published by the American Public Health Association.

The chapter on diphtheria is one of the best in the book. The wider the dissemination of this kind of information, the better for the public. A short description is given of the infectious diseases, and interspersed are helpful hints for nurses. The chapter on the bacteria of surgical diseases, like a considerable portion of the rest of the book, seems to be addressed as much to the doctor as to the nurse. All the details of antiseptic preparations for operations are dealt with at length.

If the simple directions for the prevention of ophthalmia neonatorum were generally observed, probably more than 20 per cent. of blindness could be prevented. What life-long misfortunes are suffered through ignorance and neglect! We would be blessed with healthier and wealthier homes and children if mothers would read and heed the likes of this little book.

ATLAS OF CLINICAL MEDICINE. By BYRON BRAMWELL, M.D., Assistant Physician to the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, etc. Volume 2, part 1. Edinburgh: T. & A. Constable.

The contents of part 2 are Cases Illustrative of Alterations in the Field of Vision (continued). Syphilis. Cases of Friedrich's Ataxia with main-en-griffe. Asiatic Cholera.

There are numerous well executed plates, illustrative of the text. A high standard is maintained throughout.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF DISEASES OF THE SKIN. By P. H. PYE SMITH, M.D., F.R.S. Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, and Physician to Guys Hospital. Cloth; 8 vo.; pp. 408. Lea Bros. & Co., Philadelphia. 1893.

This manual is well executed typographically, admirably arranged, and will take its place with other modern manuals as a worthy companion.

DISEASES OF THE SKIN; a manual for students and practitioners. By CHARLES C. RANSOM, M.D., Asst. Dermatologist at the Vanderbilt Clinic, N. Y. Cloth. Pp. 201. Lea Bros. & Co., Philadelphia. 1893.

This little book belongs to the Student's Quiz Series, issued by the publishers and is on a level with the other books of the series published by this firm.