

McCAW'S "CRANE-AGRAFE" v. ORMSBY'S "CRANIUM HOLDER."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Referring to Dr. Ormsby's letter in THE LANCET of the 14th inst., kindly allow me to say that he has had the discourtesy—I am sure unintentionally—to give the *makers* and not the *inventor* credit for suggesting the "Crane-Agrafe," which you were good enough to notice for me in your issue of the 7th inst. I am the inventor of the instrument, which, in my opinion, bears not the slightest resemblance to Dr. Ormsby's "Cranium Holder" (as he is now pleased to call it), which a medical friend informs me was formerly dignified by the name of "Corona," but which, from some cause or other, has not come into general use either in the medical schools or the hospitals. Dr. Ormsby's "Corona" and my "Crane-Agrafe" are now before the profession; and I leave it with them—the most unprejudiced and competent judges—to pronounce an opinion as to which of the instruments is the better one. I have to thank Messrs. Mayer and Meltzer of Great Portland-street, W., for the great care and trouble they took in making for me such a perfect and beautiful instrument as the "Crane-Agrafe" really is.

I am, Sir, yours truly,
Portlengone, Belfast, April 16th, 1883. J. D. McCaw.

APOTHECARIES' HALL, LONDON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The letter of "A Candidate" on the subject of the Examinations of the Society of Apothecaries in your journal of the 14th inst. would be unworthy of notice, if it were not for a note of yours that "the fact he states is one of great significance." But what he states as a "fact" is not the fact, which he might have known by referring to your journal of January 20th last. Instead of doing so, he invents numbers to square with his no less erroneous assertion that "they [the Society of Apothecaries] have now suddenly raised the standard of one of their examinations at least to an absurdly high level." Affirming that "at the last January Examination in Arts they passed only 23 out of 115 candidates," or 1 in 5. Now, as a matter of fact, 37 passed out of 110, or 1 in 3. Nor are we singular in this large per centage of rejections, for the same is observed, it is sad to relate, in all public examinations.

The motive which pervades the letter is too apparent for comment. It is quite true, and it should be made known, that the standard of the examinations at the Hall, both in Arts and in Medicine, has been materially raised compared with former years. But it is not true that it has been raised "in view of the new Medical Act," but was brought into operation long since to meet the requirements of the age. And there is every desire on the part of the Society to advance yet further in the path they have so many years pursued.

Your obedient servant,
T. PEREGRINE, Sec. pro tem.
Apothecaries' Hall, April 18th, 1883.

MAIL LINES TO THE WEST INDIES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Some time back there was an inquiry in your columns respecting the above subject. I can furnish a few particulars.

In my own case, on getting out there, I was transferred to an inter-colonial boat that did the following work:—Once a month she ran up and down certain islands, calling at each somewhat in the manner of a penny steamboat, and taking three days' run each way. The rest of the month was spent lying in harbour in a foreign possession. This is always an expensive thing, and there was no chance of making any fees whatever. This ship happily was paid off, and I was to be sent home, with some of the other officers, as passenger. Being subsequently ordered to go on another ship I refused, as I had a perfect right to do. Next day, the company's superintendent sent for me, and in the presence of the captain told me that I had made myself amenable to the law, and could be "lodged in the fort." Being asked if he threatened me

with the fort, he replied that he did not threaten: but I pointed out to him that, standing in our then relation, his mention of the fort could not be held otherwise than as a threat. He then spoke about the inconvenience they had been put to, when I pointed out that that was a matter of sentiment, and putting things on a very different ground. This is a specimen of the "Royal" way in which the profession is treated. The theory seems to be that they "must get more hold over the doctors."

I may mention that it was by the merest accident that I escaped being put on a small cargo-boat with few or no passengers; knocking about from place to place to pick up cargo; and finally running up to New York. If, as must sometimes happen, there be an unpopular captain, or an uncongenial set of officers, life under such conditions must be little better than that of a prison. Personally, I was very fortunate in the matter of captains and brother-officers.

From the date of being paid off in the West Indies to the date of leaving the company's service, I am offered the magnificent sum of two-and-sixpence a day, an arrangement known as "harbour-pay." I sent in a claim for full pay up to reaching Southampton, and have no doubt that I can do so legally. But the company may pretty safely conclude that not many young surgeons would have either the time, means, or inclination to bring an action, involving, as it would, a journey to the local County Court.

I could add a good deal more; for instance, there is a compulsory insurance at an exorbitant rate, even when, as in my case, one is already insured; but what I have said is enough to give an idea of this truly "Royal" service. My strong advice to anyone meditating a voyage in it is somewhat similar to that of *Punch* on an oft-quoted occasion.

I am, Sir, yours truly,
April, 1883. EL MEDICO.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

(From our own Correspondent.)

SEA-WATER FOR NEWCASTLE.

THE scheme for supplying our city with sea-water, promoted by a public company, is being actively opposed in Parliament by our Corporation. It must be admitted, however, that Newcastle, considering its large population, is very deficient in baths and washhouses, now admitted to be necessary in all large towns. The new company seeks to supply us with pure sea-water brought from Whitley, but the Corporation objects to our streets being taken up for the purpose. The excuse is not a very good one it is felt here, because, should the company take up the streets, surely the Corporation could compel it to put them down again. It is to be hoped that the Corporation may abandon the "dog in the manger" policy, and allow the Sea-water Company to proceed with the works. Gateshead, in the matter of public baths and washhouses, is much in advance of Newcastle, and in this respect it has one of the most complete and well-regulated establishments in the kingdom.

A FEVER DEN AT SPENNYMOOR.

Dr. Anderson has reported to the Auckland Guardians that a family had been affected with typhus fever at Spennymoor. He found the man and his wife lying on a filthy bed covered with a few dirty rags, and a girl of twelve, herself just recovered from the fever, waiting upon them. Three days later two more of the family were down, and the whole were laid in the same bed; a woman living in the house also took it, and had to lie on the floor; her husband, through nursing his wife and from also assisting the girl, contracted the malady and died. The house was a wretched hovel, consisting of two rooms, one of which had an earthen floor and the other was paved with bricks. It was very badly lighted and had no convenience of any kind. The authority decided to send a copy of the report to the Local Government Board.

SMALL-POX AND NEGLECT OF VACCINATION AT JARROW.

At a late meeting of the Jarrow Town Council it transpired that there was an outbreak of small-pox in the town, twenty-six cases being under treatment. The present tem-