

craft flitted here and there, burning Bengal fire or carrying numerous lamps that reflected their colours on the transparent lake. The Congress once on board, the steamer put off a little distance from the pier, and then commenced a display of fireworks, starting simultaneously from the gardens of the hotels that line the shore, and from points high up in the mountains. Against the dark background of the black mountains, the Bengal fire enabled us clearly to discern the elegant hotels and villas poised some three thousand feet above us at Les Avants and at Glion. The church steeple of Montreux was brightly lit. Vevey and the surrounding villages joined in the festivities. For some two or three miles along the coast it was one blaze of light, and rocket after rocket shot up towards the sky; while the roar of the cannon, the stirring strains of the British national anthem (played by a powerful brass band), the cheers from the ship and the shouts from the shore, all helped to conclude a reception unsurpassed for its cordiality, and which will for ever remain deeply impressed in the memory of the guests. Nothing could have more conclusively proved the public spirit of the Swiss population, the interest they have taken in the work of the Congress, and the high honour they wished to confer on their distinguished visitors. Another evening reception, concert and supper, on the Friday, at the mansion of Mde. Eynard, and a farewell banquet on Saturday evening, concluded the festivities of the Congress; and certainly, whatever services the members may have rendered by their work during the week, they have been amply rewarded by the cordiality and unbroken harmony of the reception accorded to them. If sanitary science can always be propagated under such auspicious circumstances, it will certainly become the most popular of all sciences.

PROSECUTION FOR FORGERY OF PRACTITIONER'S NAME TO CERTIFICATE OF DEATH.

At the Thames Police Court, on September 2nd, before Mr. Lushington, William Henry Viner, of 123, St. George's-street, East, appeared to answer a summons issued at the instance of the Medical Alliance Association, charging him with the wilful forgery on the 21st August ult., of a certificate concerning the death of a child named Annie Niendorff. Mr. C. J. C. Pridham, solicitor to the Association, appeared for the prosecution; and Mr. Besley, barrister, for the defendant.

Mr. Besley took a technical objection to the summons on the ground that no one but the Superintendent Registrar of the District had the power to issue the same under the Act; but after a lengthy argument from the learned gentlemen engaged, it was over-ruled by the magistrate.

The facts of the case as proved disclosed a very serious offence, and Mr. Pridham, in opening the case, stated it was the gravest charge of the kind in which he had ever been instructed to prosecute. It appeared, from the evidence of the mother, that the child Niendorff fell ill about the 17th or 18th August, and was taken by her to a medical hall and dispensary at 123, St. George's-street, East, kept by the defendant in the name of a registered medical practitioner named Berdoe. The child was seen there on two occasions by the defendant, who represented himself to the mother as being properly qualified, and whom the mother believed to be Dr. Berdoe, as that name appeared over the door. On the 21st August the child died, and the mother applied at the dispensary for a certificate of its death. The defendant thereupon wrote and signed in the mother's presence a certificate, in which he stated that he had attended the child Niendorff, certifying the cause of death as pneumonia and convulsions, and signed the name of Edward Berdoe, M.R.C.S., L.S.A., 123, St. George's-street, East, and gave the same to the child's mother.

Formal evidence was given by the district registrar of the receipt of the certificate from the mother, and of his having entered the death in the register as certified by Dr. Berdoe.

Dr. Berdoe was then examined, and stated that he had never seen or attended the child Niendorff, or certified the cause of death. The signature to the certificate was a forgery.

In cross-examination the witness stated he had sold the

business of a chemist and druggist, at one time carried on by him in connexion with his medical practice at 123, St. George's-street, East, to the defendant in October, 1879. Since that time his connexion with the place and the defendant had entirely ceased. He had desired the defendant on several occasions to remove his name from the facia, which he promised to do, and was unaware of the fact that it was still up there until so informed by the solicitor for the prosecution. He had never given the defendant on any single occasion any authority to act for him or to use his name. The defendant had made overtures to him to attend there and see patients, which he declined.

Mr. Lushington, in giving judgment, said the defendant had committed an offence of a most serious kind. It had been suggested by the defendant's counsel that he had no power to deal with the summons. He felt some difficulty in doing so, not on the technical ground put forward by Mr. Besley, but because he was in some doubt whether he ought not to commit the defendant for trial. However, as he had not been requested to do so by the prosecution, he should impose the severest penalty he had power to inflict. He ordered the defendant to pay a fine of £10, and £5 5s. costs, or to be imprisoned for three months in default.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE ABSENCE OF SCURVY IN THE "EIRA" ARCTIC EXPEDITION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I cannot help thinking that the suggestions which have been made as to the probable explanation of the absence of scurvy in the *Eira* expedition are founded upon a misapprehension of the circumstances in which the crew were placed. If Mr. Neale's most interesting narrative in THE LANCET of August 26th be carefully read, it will be seen that the crew were abundantly supplied with vegetables to eat along with their ample allowance of meat. They averaged half a pound of vegetables to each man per diem. I suppose there are few of us who eat more than this. The experience of the *Eira* expedition, therefore, so far from being in the least degree contradictory of the generally received opinion as to the cause of scurvy, lends the best possible support to its correctness. Had scurvy occurred in the circumstances described, the fact would indeed have been very remarkable.

Mr. Neale has been good enough, at my request, to record (THE LANCET, Sept. 2nd) certain particulars respecting the mode of preservation of the vegetables which were saved, and the state in which they were consumed. These details appear to me to be of great importance, and will need to be carefully noted in the preparations for any future expeditions.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Grosvenor-street, W., Sept. 1882.

THOMAS BUZZARD.

AUTUMNAL DIARRHŒA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Allow me to call the attention of medical men to the prevalence, in autumn, of sickness and diarrhœa, which is put down to fruit. Autumn is the time for ripe fruit, but because diarrhœa is also prevalent at the same time we must not blame fruit for it. If we carefully examine each case which comes before us, we shall find that fruit plays a very small part in it. The real cause is the heat of the weather and the animal food taken. I will now describe an ordinary case and its usual cause. The patient goes to bed all right and in his usual health; he is awake about two or three hours after retiring by a sharp gripping pain across the abdomen, he also feels blown up, and keeps eructating mouthfuls of flatulence and acid fluid. Purging soon sets in and offensive liquid stools are passed. Vomiting next occurs of an acid acrid fluid. There may be cold shivers and hot flushes, which are followed by a feeling of great prostration. This continues during the night and best part of next day. Food, especially if warm, only makes matters worse.