

three years, has not only never been married, but has never been "unwell." The third, aged thirty, is married, but was never pregnant, nor has she ever menstruated. It is stated that she is "formed" like her eldest sister. The patient's mother married when she was thirty, and died at sixty-five of "cancer of the womb." Of the patient's maternal aunts, one never married; and neither of the two married ones was ever pregnant, and of these only one had ever menstruated. The maternal aunt of the patient's mother was known to have never menstruated. She had been married, but had never been pregnant. After she had been a widow some years, the result of a criminal trial turned upon the fact that she could never have been *enceinte*. The family here referred to hailed from the eastern counties. I have no doubt that this patient will be attending at this hospital on each of the next few Friday afternoons. I am in possession of her name and address.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

BERNARD O'CONNOR.

North London Consumption Hospital, Sept. 26th, 1885.

## ON CIRCULAR HOSPITAL WARDS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Mr. Henry C. Burdett, by his letter published in your issue of the 3rd inst., complains that the arguments in my paper on Circular Wards (see p. 643) are based upon the consideration of buildings of such large size that my conclusions can have no practical bearing upon the construction of hospitals of ordinary dimensions, and to give force to his remarks he makes the astounding statement that to his knowledge there are only "six hospitals in the United Kingdom which have 500 beds and upwards, and there is not a single hospital in this country which possesses 1000 beds." I am unable to say exactly how many hospitals there may be in this kingdom containing between 500 and 1000 beds, but without reference to the statistics which Mr. Burdett's own writings ought to furnish me with, I can count at least fifteen hospitals in the metropolis alone, each of which provides accommodation for a considerably larger number than 500, and in some cases they contain more than 1000 patients. I also call to mind a very large number of provincial hospitals holding over 500 inmates, and two of them I know to contain respectively 1200 and 1300 patients. How many more there may be Mr. Burdett will perhaps kindly tell us when (as no doubt he will) he confesses the error into which his enthusiasm has caused him to fall.

However, as Mr. Burdett takes exception to my illustration of a building containing so large a number as 576 patients, will he be pleased to suppose the two upper storeys of my ideal hospital removed, and then he will have before him a building precisely the same in plan, but containing accommodation for 192 instead of the 576 patients; and if he will suppose the outlay upon the erection and maintenance of this smaller building also to be one-third that of the larger structure, he will see (by reference to my previous figures, and dividing each of them by three) that the additional cost of this hospital for 192 patients, if built upon the circular instead of the parallelogram system, would be £15,914. But this, as before stated, would be at the rate of £105,135 for every thousand patients housed in hospitals constructed on this circular system. So what has his argument gained by my concession to his demand? As a matter of fact, the supposed one-storeyed buildings would be considerably more expensive than those I proposed (three storeys in height), and it only proves therefore that the adoption of this circular system in small hospitals would be a still greater extravagance than I showed to be the case with regard to the larger establishments.

Mr. Burdett again falls into error when he accuses me of selecting hospitals containing 1000 beds as the basis of my calculations. It is true that I took the number 1000 as the unit of comparative cost; but if I had taken this unit as one or ten, and so had shown the cost per bed or per ten beds to be respectively £105 or £1050, Mr. Burdett would, upon the same grounds as before, have complained that I based my calculation upon the consideration of hospitals containing only one or ten beds, as the case might be, and this would clearly be as great an absurdity as saying that I chose for my example a hospital for 1000 beds.

I have only one other point in Mr. Burdett's letter left me to refer to, and that is his attempt to throw discredit upon

the matter contained in my paper by insinuating that I am but a workhouse architect. No one knows better than Mr. Burdett that "my experience as an architect has" not "been chiefly confined to the erection of buildings for workhouses and Poor-law purposes"; and he might properly assume that when the Council of the Sanitary Institute of Great Britain did me the honour to request that I would read a paper at Leicester upon the subject of hospital construction, it had taken care to inform itself whether or not I was competent to deal with the subject in all its aspects.

As Mr. Burdett promises you a further communication upon this subject, may I be permitted to beg that he will confine himself to the questions at issue, and that he will not compel me to again weary your readers by untwisting his contortions of the very plain facts contained in the paper you did me the favour of publishing in your valuable journal.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

H. SAXON SNELL, F.R.I.B.A.

Southampton-buildings, W.C., Oct. 1885.

## APOMORPHIA AND THE NEW BRITISH PHARMACOPŒIA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I observe that Dr. Murrell advocates in your columns the use of a solution of apomorphia which has turned green for hypodermic injection, and condemns the British Pharmacopœia for not sanctioning it. I believe, however, that in nearly, if not quite, all the cases in which an injection has been followed by unpleasant symptoms such changed solutions have been used, and it is therefore doubtful whether they should be generally employed. For administration by the mouth and for sprays I use them freely, but for subcutaneous injection I prefer the compressed tablets or the discs. As stated in my "Guide to the British Pharmacopœia," apomorphine would have been a good addition to the new lamellæ.

I may add that camphor-water is a good solvent for salts of alkaloids. Such solutions keep well, and absolute phenol is not always a desirable addition to hypodermic injections. No doubt the many defects of the British Pharmacopœia will excite criticism, and I have not scrupled to offer my share, but it may be questioned whether it would be well for a potent medicine which has undergone obvious change to receive official sanction.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

Dean-street, Park-lane, Oct. 5th, 1885.

PROSSER JAMES.

## NORTHERN COUNTIES NOTES.

(From our own Correspondent.)

### THE NEWCASTLE COLLEGE OF MEDICINE.

THE opening of the Newcastle College of Medicine in connexion with the University of Durham took place on Oct. 1st. The Mayors of Newcastle and Gateshead attended, as well as a contingent from the practitioners of the district, a fair sprinkling of ladies, and a goodly number of the general public. The students were in high spirits, but, all things considered, kept within moderate bounds, although some of the speech-making was listened to with evidence of impatience. Dr. Heath opened the proceedings, after the invited guests had partaken of a capital luncheon, by remarking that two years had elapsed since he had the pleasure of addressing them. He expressed the gratification he felt in common with his colleagues in welcoming so large and brilliant an assembly, observing that the large attendance of medical students augured well for an industrious and successful session. He next referred to the prospect of soon having larger and more convenient college buildings, a greater number of students, and younger, though scarcely more earnest, professors, and he hoped better paid ones. To do all this money was needed. The College of Medicine a good many years ago had given up all proprietary rights, and dedicated the fruits of many years' labour to the cause of medical education. In doing so they thought they had a claim on the public, and also some claim on the Government, and he could not help thinking that the millions which had been buried without result