

Apothecaries' Hall, Dublin, and will feel obliged if he will take the trouble to examine the Hall list, and inform them if the name of William Harding Flint appears as a member thereof; and if so, the date of his diploma will be an additional favour.

Apothecaries' Hall of Ireland,
12th Sept. 1848.

The secretary of the Apothecaries' Hall begs to inform the Editors of the "Medical Directory" that he has examined the registry of the Hall, and does not find any person of the name William Harding Flint among the members of this body.

To the Editors of the London and Provincial Medical Directory.

USE OF THE HOT-AIR BATH IN CHOLERA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As the hot-air bath is strongly recommended in cholera, congestive typhus, and other affections where it is desirable to restore the warmth of the surface of the body promptly, and with but little fatigue to the patient, you, or any of your correspondents, would confer a great favour on me, and doubtless on other young practitioners, by stating the cheapest and most convenient apparatus of this kind, and where it may be procured. Your prompt notice of this request will greatly oblige, Sir, your obliged reader,

London, Sept. 12th, 1848.

JUVENIS.

. As we cannot reply with personal satisfaction to the request contained in the above note, we think it right to give the document publicity, in the hope of eliciting further information on the subject.—ED. L.

CHOLERA—PREVENTIVE QUALITIES OF CARBONIC ACID GAS AND CARBON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your last number, I perused with much pleasure the highly interesting letter of Dr. Parkin, relating many important facts in addition to those already adduced, which tend to establish that carbonic acid gas was the principal cause of exemption from cholera of the places there named, and that carbon may be beneficially employed as a preventive and remedial agent in that disease.

I should not have trespassed again on your valuable time and space, did it not appear to me necessary that I should avail myself of the opportunity led to by Dr. Parkin, to state how I came to the conclusion that carbonic acid is a preventive of cholera, and at the same time to offer a few remarks on the objections urged against that opinion, by your correspondent, Mr. Evans.

When the cholera reached Marsala, about one half of the inhabitants was distributed over the surrounding country, (a tract averaging three miles in breadth and nine in length,) conducting preparations for the vintage; and all the deaths that occurred, with one or two exceptions, were in the town, prior to the commencement of the vintage, at which time, from the fermentation of the must, the proportion of carbonic acid gas is considerably greater than at any other period. I may mention here, that diarrhoea was very prevalent, and that carbonate of soda, in doses of a teaspoonful, dissolved in as much water as held it in solution, taken every hour, was found to have a very beneficial effect, checking the disease after the second or third dose.

The cholera made its appearance in Palermo, and in other towns, in the neighbourhood of which considerable quantities of wine is made, one or two months previous to the commencement of the vintage. At that time the produce of the former year was nearly consumed, and the remainder, through the fermentation having ceased, would emit an inconsiderable quantity of carbonic acid: from these circumstances alone I attributed the exemption to the elimination of carbonic acid gas, which supposition seems to me to be fully established by the additional facts of a similar nature cited by Dr. Parkin.

Since carbonic acid gas, when inhaled in a state not largely combined with air, produces death, in the same way that chlorine does under like circumstances, each being attended by similar symptoms, it is possible that the former may possess in a high degree the disinfecting properties of the latter, though differently constituted.

The first objection urged by Mr. Evans has, I think, been satisfactorily replied to by the numerous facts adduced by Dr. Parkin, in addition to those you did me the favour to insert in your publication of the 5th of August.

The late exertions of the government in behalf of public health, will afford, I think, sufficient testimony to show that there exists in all thickly-populated places, noxious vapours, arising from bad drainage, dirty sewers, and decomposing animal matter, themselves great causes of disease; therefore the carbonic acid exhaled by the inhabitants cannot reasonably be supposed to be pure, mixed as it is, in such places, with a polluted atmosphere.

Though carbonic acid was undoubtedly the primary cause of mortality to those who were confined in the black hole, yet there were other noxious gases arising from a number of human beings being crowded together in so small a space, without free access to pure air, that contributed materially to increase it, and to render the carbonic acid exhaled very impure: it must have been, in quality and quantity, in a very different state of combination there from its condition in the atmosphere which surrounded the wine-growing district of Marsala.

I am, Sir, yours most respectfully,

Manchester, Sept. 13th, 1848.

THOMAS T. RITSON.

MEDICAL FEES AT ASSURANCE OFFICES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Having perused in your journal of this date a letter from Mr. E. Jones, of Dover, who justly exposes (through your impartial medium) an assurance society that has refused him his fee as a medical referee, and who, I think, wisely suggests that the names of those offices should be given publicity to that do recognise our claim to remuneration for information given to them in that capacity—information of such vital importance for their security, and which they are always so anxious to obtain. With the idea of carrying out this view, I beg to say that I have this day received a liberal fee from the Engineers', Masonic, and Universal Mutual Life Assurance Society, for information afforded to them two days since, relating to the general health of a patient of mine; and I am further induced to give publicity to this, by observing in the prospectus sent me the following, which I think reasonable and correct—viz., "Medical referees paid in proportion to the sum assured." I am not aware that this rule exists in any other office.—I remain, Sir, yours very obediently,

WILLIAM FINEN, Surgeon, &c.

North-place, Kingsland-road, Sept. 9th, 1848.

P.S.—The address, as you will see by the circular I forward you, is, "Engineers', Masonic, and Universal Mutual Life Assurance Society, 345, Strand, London."

Since the receipt of the above the following letter has reached us:—

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

Engineers', Masonic, and Universal Mutual Life Assurance Society, Head Office, 345, Strand.

SIR,—In reply to your correspondent of Saturday last, wishing to be informed what office (if any) pays for medical certificates on the lives of patients proposed for assurance, I have to acquaint you that this office pays medical referees in all cases.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient servant,

Sept. 20th, 1848.

FRED. LAWRENCE, Actuary & Secretary.

ON MEDICAL REFORM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have for a length of time been watching, with considerable interest, through the pages of THE LANCET, the proceedings of the parliamentary committee upon medical reform; I have also read with some anxiety the opinions of your many able correspondents on this vital subject. Many schemes have been projected, but they might be put in a nut-shell, if the profession were not so divided in opinion. The worst part of the business is, parties are at an enormous expense to complete their medical education; and at present, after passing a rigid examination at the Hall, and the College of Surgeons, they are left unprotected; whilst quackery, ignorance, and charlatanism reign triumphant. No appeal to the powers at Blackfriars will rouse them from their slumber; their coffers are almost weekly replenished, yet they plead poverty as an excuse for their apathy. As they have let their powers lie dormant so long, and continue to do so, in spite of every entreaty, the sooner those powers are confided to other parties the better. I conceive the better plan will be for Government to concede a certain power to the College of Surgeons; and this is the wish of many able surgeons—to have but one governing body, whereby to examine and test medical men before they