

When colossal doses of *Cactus grandiflorus* are given by the vein they sometimes—but not always—appear to exert an extremely feeble action on the heart; but this action is so slight that its nature could not be determined. Even the most colossal doses of *Cactus grandiflorus* administered by the mouth to cats, dogs and frogs exert no perceptible effect.

Sollmann thus satirizes the absurd claims made by the exploiters of proprietary forms of cactus: "Should the heart be too slow, cactus quickens it; if the heart is too fast, cactus slows it; should the heart be too weak, cactus strengthens it; if the heart is too strong, cactus weakens it; does the heart wobble, cactus steadies it; if the heart is normal, cactus does not meddle with it" (THE JOURNAL A. M. A., July 4, 1908, p. 52).

Will physicians continue to accept the statements of an interested nostrum vendor—who submits not a shred of evidence to support his claims, but who has a financial interest in convincing them—even when his statements are diametrically opposed to all the evidence that the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry has been able to secure?

Correspondence

THE RED CROSS INSTITUTE FOR CRIPPLED AND DISABLED MEN

To the Editor:—The Red Cross Institute for Crippled and Disabled Men is organizing an institution in New York to provide the special instructional opportunities for the physically handicapped that will make the cripple productive, and the special placement facilities that will secure for him the right type of employment.

We are anxious to have referred to us by physicians, particularly in the New York district, but in exceptional cases from other sections of the country, men who would profit by such opportunities as the institute may offer. Almost every medical man will be acquainted with some men whose need is industrial rather than therapeutic: men who have reached the stage of medical finality but who will require special training or adaptation to enable them to regain the status of self-support.

The cases in which profit can be derived by reeducational work are varied in character. The most obvious are amputation cases, but others readily suggest themselves: severe rheumatism, Pott's disease, paralysis of individual members. In all such cases the benefits of the specialized industrial educator should supplement the work of the surgeon.

We shall appreciate, from members of the profession, reference of any men to whom we might possibly be helpful.

DOUGLAS C. McMURTRIE, 311 Fourth Avenue, New York.
Director, Red Cross Institute for Crippled and Disabled Men.

URGENT NEED OF A NATIONAL LEPROSARIUM

To the Editor:—There is at present a case of leprosy at Biloxi, Miss., which reemphasizes the facts and arguments presented to the Senate Committee on Public Health and National Quarantine in behalf of a plea for the establishment of a national leprosarium. The Senate committee promptly recommended the establishment of such an institution and an appropriation of \$250,000. The bill received favorable congressional recommendation and was approved by the President, but no further action seems to have been taken with reference to this matter, which is one of urgent importance to the country at large.

The leper at Biloxi was apprehended by the health officer of Harrison County, Dr. D. J. Williams, while at work in an oyster-opening and canning establishment. The disease was in a well advanced stage, leaving no question of doubt that the case must have been known locally for perhaps a year or more. The leper readily complied with the request of Dr. Williams that he abstain from work and confine himself as much as possible to his home. He lives with his aged mother,

and one or two sisters. He is not restricted in his movements, and quite recently made a trip to New Orleans for medical consultation. As far as known, he did not consult a leprologist. His trip to New Orleans was in violation of a federal statute prohibiting interstate migration of persons afflicted with leprosy. The case is, therefore, one demanding interference on the part of the federal health authorities. The case is also clearly one most suitable for segregation in such an institution as was intended to be established by the act providing for a federal leprosarium. There are no facilities for the proper treatment of leprosy in the state of Mississippi. The powers of the state board of health are inadequate to deal with the case in a suitable manner. The manufacture of the product at which the leper was employed is one that enters extensively into interstate commerce. There are reasons for believing that there are three or four other cases of leprosy in Biloxi and vicinity. A new case, a woman, has just been reported by the local health officer to the Mississippi State Board of Health. It is understood that the authorities of the Louisiana Leper Home have considerably offered to take care of this patient, in return for the reimbursement of only the actual expenses. There are, however, reasonable objections on the part of the people of Louisiana against an increase in the number of lepers in their state by the admission of patients from other states. The question, therefore, is pertinent as to why the establishment of a federal leprosarium should have been so long delayed, in view of the fact that a sufficient appropriation has been made therefor, and why this and other isolated lepers should continue a menace to the community in which they live and to the country at large.

FREDERICK L. HOFFMAN, Newark, N. J.

Queries and Minor Notes

ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS and queries on postal cards will not be noticed. Every letter must contain the writer's name and address, but these will be omitted, on request.

THE PROVISION OF PERMIT AND BOND FOR USING AND DISPENSING ALCOHOL

To the Editor:—Will you please give me information concerning the bond required of physicians for the right to use pure grain alcohol, the amount of the bond, by whom to be signed, and other information necessary that I may comply with the law?

EDGAR C. DENNEY, M.D., Milton, Ind.

To the Editor:—Do I understand that a doctor has no right to dispense tinctures without a permit? Most doctors in country practice are obliged to dispense from their cases tincture of digitalis and other tinctures or fluidextracts.

GEORGE D. CARNES, M.D., South Haven, Mich.

To the Editor:—Is it a fact that a physician is required to give bond in order to prescribe medicine containing alcohol? Will not a bond endorsed by a private citizen, which any doctor ought to be able to have done, be sufficient without having to pay a bonding company for it?

S. H. G., Chicago.

To the Editor:—I am enclosing a letter which bonding companies or their agents are sending to physicians. I have not seen the law covering this matter, and if you have not already given a summary of this law in THE JOURNAL, I shall appreciate having you do so.

BERNARD C. FREY, M.D., Jennings, Ind.

ANSWER.—The foregoing questions are selected from many which have been received, showing that physicians are not fully informed as to the requirements of the new regulations on alcohol or as to how these affect physicians. A short abstract of the treasury decisions governing the execution of the regulations appeared in THE JOURNAL, Dec. 22, 1917. As noted by the letters, some of the surety companies are offering to give bond for physicians, and state that every physician and druggist is required by the United States to furnish a bond before he may lawfully use or purchase alcohol for use and resale. This is not strictly correct.

The act of Congress of Aug. 10, 1917, known as the Food Control Act, provides that no food materials shall be used in the production of alcohol for beverage purposes after Sept. 9, 1917, but that under such regulations as the President may prescribe, such materials may be used for producing alcohol