

a little precaution, there should be no bar to the father going to work.—  
I am, sir, yours faithfully,  
JAMES OWEN, M.B., M.A.,  
Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge.  
Albert Park, Didsbury, Manchester, September 16th, 1882.

SIR,—As a practical contribution to the discussion at present being carried on as to the compulsory notification of diseases, will you allow me to suggest the following scheme, which appears to me to be an eminently workable one, and one which is not open to most of the objections urged against the other systems in vogue.

I should propose that every medical man be provided with a couple of foil and counterfoil books, of such proportions as to be conveniently portable.

Of these, No. 1 would contain such a form as this: "I hereby certify that, to the best of my belief, (name and address of the patient), your (relationship to the head of the house), is suffering from an infectious disease, to wit (name of disease)."

No. 2 forms would run somewhat as follows: "I hereby certify, on soul and conscience, that the arrangements for isolation and for preventing the spread of infectious disease in the case of are sufficient, and I assume all responsibility in regard to the prevention of the spread of such disease from this case. (Addressed) To the medical officer of health."

It should be enacted that it shall be the duty of every medical man, on being called to a case which he shall recognise as actually, or to the best of his belief, one of infectious disease, to fill in form No. 1, and hand it to the responsible party. So far, no objection can be taken to my proposal; it only provides for the formal shaping of the intimation which a medical man necessarily makes in such cases. It should be further enacted that the responsible party aforesaid shall forthwith transmit this intimation to the medical officer of health, under a penalty. In this way, there is no betrayal by the medical man of the confidence of the patient, about which so much has been said, and he cannot be brought into penal relations with the medical officer of health. To complete this part of the scheme, I would have a clause authorising the infliction of penalties on householders who, having "reasonable grounds" for suspecting the existence of infectious disease in their houses, fail to call in a medical man; and another authorising the granting of a justice's order entitling the officers of the sanitary authority to enter any house in which they have "reasonable grounds" for suspecting the existence of an unreported case of infectious disease.

Certificate No. 2 is intended to provide against injudicious or arbitrary interference on the part of the sanitary officials. In cases where the medical man is prepared to take the serious responsibility implied in that certificate, he should fill in the form and transmit it to the medical officer of health, and such certificate should bar all interference on the part of that officer.

In cases which the medical officer of health may consider as unprovided with proper means for the isolation of the patient, and the prevention of the spread of the disease (all cases in which certificate No. 2 has been granted being exempted), it should be open to him to present a certificate to that effect (on soul and conscience) to a justice of the peace, who should be authorised on such certificate to grant an order for the removal of the patient to the hospital provided for such cases occurring in the district. In all such hospitals, I would have accommodation provided for the reception of better class patients, with their own nurses, if necessary, and with provision for the attendance of their own medical man, if desired.

I should like to have the opinion of the profession as to the practicability of this scheme, as it is the one which, with my present light on the subject, I should be prepared to advise the sanitary authority of this town to adopt in the event of their applying for powers for the better control of the spread of infectious disease.—I am, sir, yours, etc.,

A. C. MUNRO, M.B., M.R.C.S.E., B.Sc.,  
Medical Officer of Health, South Shields.

South Shields, September 18th, 1882.

#### DEATH-RATES IN EDINBURGH.

SIR,—In the report of my remarks, at page 512 of the JOURNAL for September 16th, I am represented as saying that the number of cases of measles reported in Edinburgh fell from 440 in February of this year to 220 in March. What I did say was that, "if they had fallen to 220, we should have had a strong presumption that some powerful controlling agency had operated on the disease. The fact was, however, that instead of falling, the number rose from 440 in February to 1,118 in March, and 1,139 in April." I shall be obliged by a correction of this error.—  
I am, sir, yours truly,  
WILLIAM CARTER,

#### SMALL-POX HOSPITAL.

SIR,—I see by your issue of the 16th instant that you have again returned to the subject of small-pox hospitals, in an article on Mr. W. H. Power's report on that at Fulham. That gentleman appears to have proved, at any rate to his own satisfaction, and probably to that of some others, that the Fulham Hospital, and, therefore, other hospitals also where cases of small-pox are aggregated together, are productive of small-pox material which can, and does produce, by its dissemination through the atmosphere, an unusual amount of the disease in the immediate neighbourhood of these hospitals. This theory is by no means new. It was first promulgated by the late Mr. Godrich of West Brompton, and founded on his observation of the effects produced, as he thought, by the Fulham Hospital, on the neighbourhood surrounding it. It is now more than four years since this lamented gentleman made known his observations and conclusions as to the effect of small-pox hospitals when insufficiently isolated, on their respective neighbourhoods; more especially as to the effects produced by that at Fulham. His writings attracted the attention of the medical authorities of the Hôtel Dieu at Paris; and on the lines laid down by him, observations were made there with reference to the effect produced on its immediate neighbourhood by the small-pox *annexe* of that hospital. These observations were embodied in the form of a map, which showed, as the late Mr. Godrich's maps showed, that there was a much greater excess or preponderance of cases of small-pox in those houses near to the hospital than in those at a greater distance from it; in fact, the same results appear to have been obtained in Paris as have been at Fulham, and in Copenhagen. Also at a later date, Dr. Bristowe, in his annual report as Medical Officer of Health for Camberwell, just published, appears to have arrived at the same conclusions. Dr. Tripe, another Medical Officer of Health, some time ago seems also to have suspected the evil influence of these hospitals on the neighbourhoods surrounding them, but to the late Mr. Godrich belongs any credit there may be in calling attention to the question. For my part, I think that we appear to be quite in ignorance as to how far this small-pox contagium material, or whatever it may be, can travel under different conditions of atmosphere and aggregation of cases, but now that these hospitals have been in full operation for some years, we surely ought to have the means of arriving at some more definite conclusion on the subject than now appears to exist.—Your obedient servant,  
SURGEON-MAJOR.  
Lincoln, 1882.

### MILITARY AND NAVAL MEDICAL SERVICES.

#### THE MILITIA MEDICAL SERVICE.

SIR,—Articles have lately appeared in the medical papers relative to the grievances of militia surgeons serving under the old warrants; and it seems most necessary that their position should be considered. But, in considering the question, it would be well to regard likewise the position of those who at present are engaged on the same branch of the service.

In 1876, a warrant appeared forbidding any new appointments on commission. A scale of contract rates was then fixed to be paid to private practitioners who were to be employed, instead of new appointments made, when the existing regimental surgeoncies became vacant. These rates were at the rate of three half-pence per individual per week. Considerable difficulty was experienced in getting medical men to accept the duties on such terms; and, as a rule, when application was made, "consolidated pay" of twenty shillings *per diem* while on duty was granted. This pay was inclusive of every duty required, and of medicines, etc. For a number of trainings, each lasting about twelve weeks, several surgeons received this pay, which, although roundly it seems ample, is really much less than was formerly expended by Government; and to anyone who knows all the work, time, and worry involved, as well as necessary outlay, is only fair remuneration. In July 1881, a new warrant appeared, which professed to improve the existing contract rates, giving payment at the rate of £10 *per annum* for every twenty-five officers and men. In this warrant, the supply of medical was not included; but, in March last, an amendment (1) was made by Army Circular, which ordered that private practitioners were to find medicine at their own expense. The engagement "shall at all times be of a temporary nature; and, however long a time it may have been continued, shall be terminable according to the exigencies of the service, and without any previous notice."

Now, in the Army Medical Regulations, there is nothing laid down showing that more than actual professional duties as a physician are required; yet the whole duty of an army medical officer is exacted without additional fee or emolument. The difficulties are enhanced by the fact that no trained sick attendants or clerks are permitted. With the aid of a collier or tramp, as the case may be, the same perfectness in hospital and regimental work is required as in the regular service. It is impossible to even indicate in short manner the numberless encroachments on time, and the multifarious duties expected from the medical man in charge of a regiment.

To make things still more miserable, the fees for examination of recruits have also been amended! Formerly, 2s. 6d. per man was paid up to 20s.; now, on no occasion, however many recruits are examined in a day, is more than 10s. 6d. given. I have had to examine thirty-six for this noble sum. It may very justifiably be asked, if all these hardships exist, why have anything to do with the duty? Well, when one has been connected for some years with a particular employment, it is against the grain to sever with it; and hopes are entertained that matters may again change for the better. The true explanation of the