

POISONING BY CREOSOTE.

An important case has recently been published in a foreign contemporary, in which a patient who had taken 18 drops of creosote in three doses in one day, became very ill, suffered from difficulty of swallowing, complained of great gastric pain, and had diarrhoea and vomiting; later, paralysis of the palate and larynx supervened, and albumen and casts appeared in the urine. Five days after taking the creosote, the patient, who had become drowsy and then comatose, died, and at the post mortem large erosions were found in the œsophagus and pylorus. The kidneys were acutely inflamed, and it would appear that the greater indirect force of the poison had spent itself upon these organs. It would almost seem as if there must have been some extraordinary impurity in the creosote which was used in this case, because although cases of poisoning have been reported before, it has only been when much larger quantities have been taken. It is a well known clinical fact that the urine is curiously discoloured in some cases while taking this drug, and by some observers this has been thought to be due to the presence in the preparation, of impure carbolic acid. Then, again, the quantity of six drops to a dose is much larger than is usually employed in this country, in which it usually varies from one to three drops, and it is a good general rule to commence medication with one drop and gradually increase the amount. Altogether, this case is a very important one, and we cannot but think that the toxic effects were probably due to the presence of some impurity in the drug combined with the unusually large dose which was administered.

CANCER HOUSES.

Evidence is accumulating as to the interesting facts that cancer, like phthisis, repeatedly occurs in certain houses, and amongst inhabitants who are entirely unrelated to each other in any way. Mr. D'Arcy Power has recently published some interesting cases proving this fact. In one, a lady died of cancer of the stomach in 1884; a lady who succeeded to the occupancy of her bedroom died of cancer of the liver in 1885; and the lady who followed her in her place and bedroom died of cancer of the breast and womb in 1893. These women were entirely unconnected with each other, and seemed each of them to be in perfect health until they came to occupy this particular room. There is no proof that cancer is contagious, and at present such facts, as those alluded to, can only be regarded as important coincidences. It would be well, however, if all such cases could be put upon record, so that in due time, by the accumulation of evidence for, and against, the theory of cancer houses, some definite conclusion might be arrived at.

Reflections

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



THE QUEEN has, through the Duke of YORK (who presided at the festival dinner on the 1st inst.), forwarded a donation of £100 to St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington, in connection with which a CLARENCE Memorial wing is being built.

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THE Prince and Princess of WALES, accompanied by the Duke of YORK and the Princesses VICTORIA and MAUD of WALES, visited Poplar on Monday afternoon, and opened the new home of the Missions to Seamen, which has been erected at a total cost of £13,500. The Duke of YORK, as President of the London Fund Committee of the Institution, read an address of welcome, to which the Prince of WALES responded, expressing his strong sense of the importance of the work done by the mission in British and foreign ports.

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THE Royal party then proceeded to the Poplar Hospital for Accidents, and the Princess of WALES declared open the new building which has been erected for the purposes of the charity, towards the cost of which £30,000 has been subscribed during the last three years. The thoroughfare in which the two institutions stand was decorated for the occasion, and the Royal visitors were cordially welcomed by large crowds of spectators.

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THE Duke of CONNAUGHT, president of St. Thomas's Hospital, performed on Saturday afternoon the ceremony of opening the new buildings in connection with the Medical School of that Institution. Two new blocks have been added to the school buildings, the east block containing the Students' Club and the west block various laboratories in which the work of tuition will be carried on.

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A BRITISH committee, of which Sir DOUGLAS GALTON is the chairman, and Professor W. H. CORFIELD the treasurer, has been formed to further the interests in this country of the Eighth International Congress of Hygiene and Demography, which is to be held in Budapest, from the 1st to the 8th September, this year. Information about the congress can be obtained from the hon. secretary, Dr. PAUL F. MOLINE, 42, Walton Street, Chelsea, S.W.

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