

A congress on quackery is to meet in Paris on May 8th under the presidency of Professor Brouardel. The programme, says the *British Medical Journal*, includes twenty-five subjects for discussion, among them being illegal practice of medicine by bone-setters, sorcerers, and empirics; by quacks, magnetisers, and clairvoyants; by lay people or clerics for charitable purposes or under pretext of charity; by members of societies for the aid of the sick and wounded; by nurses, male and female; "massotherapy" and schools of massage; illegal practice of medicine by manicures, pedicures, barbers, and hairdressers, and pharmacists; by herbalists and *bandagistes*; by opticians; by "medical electricians"; by dentists; by midwives; by foreign doctors and by medical students. The part played by the Press in the matter of illegal medical practice and medico-pharmaceutical advertising by persons who do not possess a medical diploma, and illegal and charlatanic practice of medicine by advertisement will also be discussed.

"On May 10th the English doctors pay their return visit to their French brethren in Paris. The festivities will open with a reception at the Sorbonne by the Rector of Paris University and M. Casimir Perier. They will wind up with a banquet on the following Saturday.

According to Guy Patin, a famous French surgeon, all the giants and dwarfs in the Germanic Empire were assembled together in Vienna in the seventeenth century by the order of a whimsical Austrian Empress. All the freaks were housed together, but the greatest care was taken to prevent the dwarfs from molestation by the giants; hardly, however, had the freaks settled down than the giants came to plead with tears in their eyes for protection against the dwarfs! These vicious little creatures never ceased to attack, bully, and rob their Titanic neighbours, till at last sentinels had to be placed in the building for the protection of the giants!

The Suez Canal Company has voted 50 guineas, to be announced at the banquet over which Mr. Chamberlain will preside on May 10th, on behalf of the London School of Tropical Medicine, this being a gift in recognition of the School's services in the tropics.

The New York Board of Health are satisfied of the contagious nature of cerebro-spinal meningitis, otherwise known as "spotted fever." Patients suffering from the disease, including those in attendance upon them, will be quarantined, and their clothing, bedding, and the premises inhabited by them will be disinfected.

It is announced that at the Veterinary High School in Vienna an institute has been opened which may be termed a hospital for sick fish, where the biology and pathology of fish are under regular investigation by a professor and staff. One of the main objects is to learn whether certain diseases of fish are transmissible to man, and, if so, to what extent. The scientific diagnosis of the sick fish is affixed to each compartment containing them. Fishes are to be found suffering from small-pox and others from intestinal catarrh. A dolphin was brought to the institute with a disease which was diagnosed as inflammation of the lungs. The director is reluctant to express as yet an opinion with reference to the curability of fish diseases, but instructive observations in the field of comparative therapeutics are expected.

Guiding Methods of Hospital Administration.

At the Annual Meeting of the Governors of the Nottingham General Hospital, the President, Sir Charles Seely, Bart., who occupied the chair, said that there ought to be a much larger subscription list than at present, and that the income had remained stationary while the expenditure had increased. In reference to hospital expenditure one saw, the speaker said, in the London papers a great many letters touching upon the expenditure of hospitals. In his judgment there was a distinct danger of a mistake being made in this matter. Anything in the nature of foolish waste was, of course, most objectionable, but any attempt at economy which deprived the poor of the advantages which it was the idea of a hospital that they should possess, was one which he was confident the governors of the Nottingham Hospital would never sanction. If a number of gentlemen such as those in that room took upon themselves to relieve the sufferings of the poor, they could not conduct the hospital on any other lines except those which gave to their poor neighbours who were ill every advantage and every comfort which they would themselves wish to have if they were ill and suffering. Only on those lines could they keep the voluntary hospitals going. He would not remain associated with the hospital if he thought that it did not give as good treatment in every possible way as he would have himself if he were ill. There were many cases in which statistics had been given in London papers of hospitals which were diminishing their expenditure. In the Nottingham Hospital the expenditure on drugs last year was £2,757, and the year before £2,400. They could spend whatever they liked in drugs. If the governors said they would like to spend less, expense could be diminished by one-half. There was one patient in the hospital who had £1 worth of drugs each week. It was thought necessary by the physician that a costly drug should be used in the treatment of the case, and the committee made no objection of any sort. There was no restriction on the doctors of the hospital in purchasing any single thing which they thought necessary for the advantage of the patients. That was the only principle, in his judgment, upon which it was proper that voluntary hospitals should be conducted.

Referring to the average mortality in the hospital, Sir Charles Seely said a great deal was made of the average number of deaths in hospitals. It was a somewhat tempting form of statistics. He remembered, when he was new to the position which he now held, the question of the average number of deaths arose, and Mr. Anderson, who was a surgeon of great eminence, said: "Let the Monthly Board say what percentage of deaths they like and they shall have it." The only guide which the surgeons of the Nottingham Hospital had in the admission of patients was the urgency and the danger of the cases. It did not matter from whom the recommendation came, or who it was for, the one thing which regulated the admission of a patient was the dangerous state of the illness. The poor of Nottingham and of the county might rest assured that the worst cases were admitted to the hospital, and that nothing was spared to make their stay in the hospital as beneficial and as comfortable as possible.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)