

Medical Matters.

MEDICAL REGISTRATION.



The Bill to amend the Medical Acts, 1858 to 1886, recently introduced in the House of Commons by Sir Richard Jebb, says the *Times*, has been framed by the General Medical Council after communication with the Universities and other licensing medical authorities of the United Kingdom. Clause 1 enables the General Medical Council to erase from the medical register for a limited period the name of a practitioner who has been guilty of misconduct. At the present the council can inflict only one punishment—viz., permanent erasure. The object of the proposed change is to enable the council to graduate the penalty according to the nature of the offence. Clause 2 enables the medical authorities to withdraw his diploma from a practitioner whose name has been erased from the register. At present the disciplinary powers of the bodies which grant diplomas vary much, and it is possible that a practitioner whose name has been erased from the register should retain his diploma. Clause 3 provides that all fines and penalties recoverable under the Medical Acts shall be paid to the General Medical Council; to be applied in aid of the expenses in executing those Acts. At present such penalties, when awarded in a Metropolitan police-court, are claimed by the Receiver of Police. The Bill is backed by all the representatives of the Universities in the House who are not members of the Government; and in view of the fact that it represents so much professional and academic unanimity on points of great importance to the public safety the hope is entertained that the Government may, if they have reason to regard it as non-contentious, afford special facilities for its enactment.

THE CARE OF THE EPILEPTIC.

In view of the fact that at least one individual in every thousand of the population is epileptic, it is satisfactory to note that schemes are being developed in various parts of the country for the care and treatment of patients suffering from this disease.

The London County Council are about to erect, on their Horton Estate, a working colony

for 300 male insane epileptics. These are to be housed in separate villas, each accommodating thirty-six patients. The decision to erect such an institution is, we presume, the outcome of the observation that epileptics require more fresh air than other insane patients. Fits are less frequent if they have plenty of fresh air, and, as Dr. Lord observed in a paper read before the Medico-Psychological Association last year, their life is more apt to be shortened by phthisis than that of other members of the community.

There are, however, plenty of asylums for the epileptic when once he has become insane. The difficulty of finding a home for him exists in the period when he is yet sane.

The sane epileptic is in the unfortunate position of being unable to gain employment, in constant risk of injury in the street or elsewhere when a fit occurs, or—should he be liable to post-epileptic automatism—in danger of imprisonment or even the gallows.

We are constantly being asked for the names of some homes to which such patients may be sent, and on each occasion we have to regret that there are but three institutions in the country suited to such cases. These are the Colony of the National Society for the Employment of Epileptics at Chalfont St. Peters, Buckinghamshire, the Meath Home for Epileptics at Godalming, Surrey (for females only), and a home for epileptics at Maghull, near Liverpool.

OYSTER PHOSPHORUS.

FRENCH observers have recently made very exhaustive examinations of the quantity and form of phosphorus which exists in oysters. They have found that a dozen Portuguese oysters contain about two-fifths of a gramme of phosphoric acid, that is to say, about six grains, which represents about fifteen grains of the tribasic phosphate of lime. About one-third less was obtained from French oysters. The matter is obviously of much practical importance, and a similar investigation into the constituents of English "natives" would be very valuable. The advantage of giving oysters in convalescence, which is a generally accepted dietetic fact, might perhaps be accounted for, to some extent, by the large proportion of phosphorus in a directly assimilable form which the succulent bivalves are thus shown to possess.

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