

has now been found possible to prepare active insulin by extracting from the pancreas of an animal slaughtered in the ordinary way, so that this substance has become more readily available. But the process of extraction is exceedingly difficult and technical. Thus, unless the most meticulous care is exercised, the final product may be inert or, on the other hand, may be dangerous.

In the circumstances there can be no reasonable doubt that the Medical Research Council has deserved well of the public by the measures which it has taken. Incidentally, thanks to the intensive work proceeding in its laboratories, the insulin-yield per pancreas (or "sweetbread") has been greatly increased—a matter of supreme importance when the smallness of this gland and the fact that each animal possesses only one are taken into consideration.

The story of the discovery of "insulin" appears to be a romance of science of the most fascinating kind. Dr. Banting, to whom belongs the credit, was a combatant officer who was wounded in the war. He was discharged and completed his medical studies. Thereafter he proposed to settle in practice and had, it is said, actually bought a practice, house, and furniture, when the idea for the treatment of diabetes struck him. So compelling was it that he determined to sacrifice everything to it. Practice, house, furniture, everything, was disposed of and he went to the laboratory in Toronto where his discovery was made. He was then in his early twenties.

There were vast obstacles in the way and many difficult techniques had to be mastered. Yet the young doctor surmounted all troubles and carried his idea to a successful conclusion. That he received great kindness and help from many others in no wise detracts from the credit of a remarkable performance.

VACCINATION.

The centenary of the death, on January 26th, 1823, of Dr. Jenner, a native of Berkeley, Gloucestershire; who discovered vaccination against smallpox, will be commemorated in Paris on January 23rd and in London on January 26th. Vaccination was performed for the first time by Jenner on May 14th, 1796, on a boy of eight. The vaccine was taken from the hand of a dairymaid who had become infected with the cow-pox. Six weeks later Jenner inoculated the boy with smallpox, but no disease followed, since which time thousands of lives have been saved, and human beings saved from disfigurement, by vaccination.

NURSING ECHOES.

We hope no reader of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING has failed to record her Vote, and return her Ballot Paper, for the colleagues she wishes to be elected to form the General Nursing Council for England and Wales. This is our last chance of reminding our readers of the great importance of this duty, as the Ballot Paper must reach 12, York Gate, London, N.W.1, before Wednesday, January 24th.

Trained nurses will learn with satisfaction that the vacancy in the office of Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Health for Scotland has been filled by the appointment of Captain Walter E. Elliot, M.C., M.P., who represents the Lanarkshire Division of Lanark. Captain Elliot had a very distinguished military career during the War, serving continuously from August 4, 1919, until the end of the War, for the greater part of the time as Medical Officer to the Scots Greys. He won the Military Cross, with bar.

In the House of Commons, of which he has been a member since 1918, Captain Elliot has made his mark as a fluent and humorous speaker, and what is more important, as a fearless advocate of what he thinks right, irrespective of Party "whips."

The Ministries of Health in England and Ireland have, through the Nurses' Registration Acts, so much influence in determining our status and treatment as Registered Nurses, that it is all-important to have in office in these Departments men of understanding and sympathy where nursing is concerned.

Scottish Nurses are specially to be congratulated on the appointment of Captain Elliot, who has proved in the past his sincere goodwill towards the profession as a whole.

British Journal of Nursing Nurses offer hearty congratulations.

The allegation that a dying man was refused a drink of water was commented on by Dr. Guthrie, the coroner, at an inquest at Stepney on Samuel Cohen, of White's Row, Spitalfields, who died in Whitechapel Infirmary.

Dr. Guthrie said there had been some discrepancy in the evidence of the nurses, and he had come to the conclusion that Cohen hardly got the attention to which a dying man was entitled. He thought the nurses in that ward had better take it as a lesson.

Dr. Woodyat, the medical superintendent, pointed out that there were fifty-two cases in

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