

to be maintained. And we are hence glad to state that both in this country and elsewhere preparations are being made, by way both of improved sanitation and by the provision of means of isolation, to meet any imported infection. In France there is an evident determination to insist on the strict enforcement of the regulations as to notifying residence by persons who are allowed to pass the frontier from Spain, and several who have failed to comply with the rules as to this have been both fined and imprisoned.

THE DIURETIC ACTION OF CALOMEL.

THE diuretic action of calomel is now so well recognised, and its value in the treatment of cardiac dropsy, owing to this property, has become so well established that further reference to it may seem to be unnecessary. We may, however, venture to note the appearance of a paper by Dr. Packler of Cincinnati (*Journal of American Medical Association*, Aug. 16th), since it embraces an interesting historical sketch of the subject, from the original observations of Dr. Jendrassik in Budapest in 1884, and the subsequent work of Rosenheim and Stintzing, who formulated rules as to its prescription. Dr. Packler gives details of a few cases of his own, and concludes his study of the subject as follows:—1. Calomel, and in all probability other mercurial compounds, possess diuretic properties. 2. If given in proper dose, the effect of calomel becomes evident in from two to ten days. Continuance of the treatment during the diuresis will not alter or increase the effect. 3. Its action is most marked in dropsies due to heart disease. Its action in dropsies of hepatic origin is not to be relied upon. Pathological changes in the kidney prevent or abridge its action. 4. Small doses will prove of no avail. 5. The diuretic action may, in all probability, be ascribed to the irritating effect which the mercury, during its elimination, exercises upon the renal epithelium.

OPHTHALMOPLÉGIA EXTERNA OF EMBOLIC ORIGIN.

MM. BOUVERET and CURTILLET record (*Lyon Médical*, Sept. 14) the case of a young woman, the subject of double mitral disease, who two months after an attack of left hemiplegia, clearly due to embolism, was suddenly seized with vertigo, accompanied by diplopia. The latter symptom persisted, and Professor Gayet ascertained that it was due to paresis of both internal recti muscles, that of the right side being the more pronounced. Visual acuteness was normal, and the iris was unaffected. The diplopia was crossed, and occurred to the right and left (not so marked) and also in median vision, the last being only ascertained by the perimeter. The facts that the two muscles mentioned were alone affected, that the iris maintained its integrity, taken in connexion with the bilateral character of the paresis, excluded any lesion of the orbit or base of the brain. Nor could it be cortical, since in monocular vision the movements of the internal recti were of normal extent; and for the same reason it was held that the nucleus of the motor oculi was intact. It was noteworthy that the paralysis was most marked when there was an attempt to turn the eye to the right or left—i.e., when the internal rectus of one side was acting in concert with the external rectus of the other; and the authors point out that the internal rectus is innervated by fibres from the sixth (proceeding to the muscle of the opposite side) as well as from the third pair of nerves. The former fibres ascend beneath the floor of the fourth ventricle, and intersect with those coming from the other side. They infer that the lesion was at this point of intersection of fibres, coming from the nucleus of the sixth to join those of the opposite third nerve—fibres which are

only excited when contraction of the internal rectus is associated with that of the opposite external muscle—as in lateral binocular vision. At this spot in the pons, then, there was probably a patch of embolic softening, due to a plug in one of the arterioles furnished by the basilar artery to the pons. The embolus must have been very minute to produce so limited a lesion.

FOREIGN UNIVERSITY INTELLIGENCE.

Bonn.—The Honorary Doctor's Degree is to be conferred on Sanitary Councillor Cassel of Cologne.

Erlangen.—Dr. von Gerlach, Professor of Anatomy, who had intended to retire, has decided to continue his lectures next session.

Florence.—Dr. Chiarugi of Siena has been appointed Professor of Anatomy.

Munich.—Dr. Messerer has been promoted to be Extraordinary Professor of Forensic Medicine.

Naples.—Professor Bianchi of Palermo has been appointed Extraordinary Professor of Mental Diseases.

DEATHS OF EMINENT FOREIGN MEDICAL MEN.

THE deaths of the following distinguished members of the medical profession abroad have been announced:—Dr. Duménil, Clinical Professor in the Rouen School of Medicine; and Don J. I. Quesada, of the Valladolid Provincial Hospital.

DURING the months of June and July the mortality and sickness of the European section of the population at Cape Coast is reported to have been very great. It seems there is no proper system of sanitary control; indeed nothing but a personal watch kept on each individual could check the filthy habits of the natives. Except when diluted with a fresh breeze from the sea the odour from every side is said to be intolerable. Proper sanitation is very much hampered by want of funds.

IN consequence of the alarming increase of granular ophthalmia in the south of Hungary, the Minister of the Interior has arranged that courses of instruction on the treatment of this affection shall be given to medical practitioners in different centres. These will last a fortnight. The first course, which is now just completed, was given in the Eye Hospital at Maria-Theresiopel. Other courses will be given both there and at Szegedin. Practitioners attending these courses will receive a Government allowance for their travelling and expenses.

ONE of the interesting events in connexion with the recent annual meeting of the British Dental Association was the presentation by the president, Mr. S. Lee Rymer, on behalf of the committee of the Turner testimonial fund, of the portrait of Mr. Smith Turner to the Association; also a replica of the portrait to Mr. Turner, or rather, to his family.

AT the Glasgow Maternity Hospital, Dr. Murdoch Cameron, on Sept. 11th, added a fourth successful case to his list of Cæsarean sections. The patient was rachitic, the conjugate diameter being only 2 in. Both the mother and child are doing well.

DEPUTY SURGEON-GENERAL WILLIAM WALKER, M.D., Retired List, Bengal Medical Department, has been appointed Honorary Physician to the Queen, vice Surgeon-General F. F. Allen, C.B., deceased.

PROFESSOR MARIANO SEMMOLA of Naples, in consideration of his services to medicine, particularly in pathology and therapeutics, has just received from the Sultan the Grand Cordon of the Medjidie.

THE minutes of the evidence taken before the House of Lords' Committee on the Children's Life Insurance Bill and the report of the committee have just been published as a Blue-book.

THE Austro-Hungarian Government has officially announced its intention of taking part in the International Sanitary Conference which is to meet in Rome.

THE Society of Naturalists and Physicians in Germany holds its next meeting in the autumn of 1891 at Halle—a city in which it has not met since 1824.

THE LANCET Special Sanitary Commission.

REPORT ON SANITATION AT SEA.

SEAFARING men have more than once complained in our presence that sanitation seemed to cease at the seashore. Once the ship leaves port, there is no authority save that of the captain. But the captain rarely takes an intelligent interest in health questions; and if he does, he meets with but scant encouragement from the shipowners. There has been legislation abroad, in the colonies, and at home which protects, to some extent at least, the health of emigrants. The second and first-class passengers are able to take care of themselves. The fierce competition raging amongst the different lines of steamships generally enables the traveller to obtain excellent accommodation if he can afford to pay for it. But the sailor and the fireman are almost unprotected. Scattered and separated from each other by the very nature of their work, ignorant because they have but little social intercourse with the rest of the world, spending but a few days at a time on shore, where they often indulge in dissipation rather than in study, the sailor and the fireman have not been able to bring their grievances forward and obtain redress. Now, however, there are decided signs of improvement. The sailor has learnt to follow the example of the workmen who remain on shore. Strong societies have been formed. Eighteen of these associations were represented at the Liverpool Trades Union Congress by twenty-one delegates, and they succeeded in obtaining the unanimous support of all the other trades represented in carrying resolutions that have a direct bearing on the preservation of health at sea. One of these resolutions demanded the amendment of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, section 231, subsections 1 and 2, which, as they now stand, only allow 72 cubic feet of space for each seaman on board ships, and recommended that such amendment should provide for a space of not less than 150 cubic feet.

The question of space, we need hardly remark, is really of less importance than that of ventilation. Even 150 cubic feet, where no ventilation is possible, is not sufficient, and 72 cubic feet, with ventilation, would be preferable. We have visited the sailors' and firemen's quarters on a great number of ships, and in no instance have we found any scientific effort to grapple with the question of ventilation. On several of the vessels which we boarded, not only were the cabins devoid of proper ventilation, but the air was rendered still more foul by the paints and mineral oils which were stored in small cabins or lockers generally situated on either side of the gangway leading to the sailors' fore-castle. There is a twofold objection to this.

In case of fire it would render escape from the cabin impossible; and, secondly, the odour of the paint, the fumes of the volatile oils, pervade the sailors' quarters, thus making them still more unwholesome. Very frequently, to reach their quarters, the sailors have to pass through a very small hatch and descend by a ladder to a depth of ten or more feet into the lower decks of the ship. If an accident or collision occurs, and something falls over the hatch, this aperture is so small that the sailors or firemen below are unable to get out. Many lives have been lost in this manner. The men below might have saved their lives, and perhaps the ship also, if the hatch had been wider and not so easily blocked by débris.

Down in these noisome cabins the sailors and firemen herd together in a manner that would certainly not be tolerated by any farmer for his cattle, dogs, or horses. We have heard more than one sailor indignantly protest that convicts in Her Majesty's prisons enjoy 370 cubic feet of space, whereas the British tar, the pride of England, has only 72 cubic feet of space. The comparison, it is true, is scarcely allowable. There is more available space in a prison than on board a ship. But there is very just ground of complaint in the fact that ventilation is much better studied in prisons than on board ship, though, in consequence of the want of space, careful ventilation is far more necessary in the latter than in the former.

In some services—notably steamers trading with the coast of Africa—the condition of the sailors' quarters is rendered infinitely worse by the live stock kept therein. We were assured that in some instances the crews were paid less than the ordinary rate, but in compensation they were allowed to trade a little on their own account. This trade consists principally in bringing over to England monkeys, parrots, and other such animals. We visited the fore-castle of several ships that had just arrived from Africa, and found that the space which should have been air space was rigged up with shelves, perches, &c., and crowded with living animals. Seventy-two cubic feet is not much for a human being, but if this space is shared by parrots, monkeys, the vermin these animals carry, and the filth they make, the atmospheric conditions that result may better be imagined than described. As an apology, it is urged that the sailors and firemen do not often sleep in their berths, but find some secluded corner on the deck where they can rest in the open and pure air. This may be possible when the weather is fine, but after enduring the tropical heat of Africa how can men sleep on deck when beating up the Channel against fogs and rain?

On board these African steamers, and also on many other ships, we found that the berths for the sailors and firemen were placed against the very shell of the ship. The iron sides were not covered with wood; consequently, the moisture of the air condenses on these iron walls, and runs down the sides. As the man lies sweltering in the heat of the overcrowded, badly ventilated cabin, he may unconsciously, and while sleeping, rest a bare limb against the cold, wet iron side of the ship. This may well help to determine an attack of rheumatism. There are also any number of angles, ledges, corners, dark and inaccessible, which are rarely if ever washed, where dust accumulates, and which form an excellent culture-ground for the breeding of microbes. If ship carpenters and joiners had some notion of the principles that govern the construction of hospitals, they could render cabins far more healthy, and so arrange as to obtain a maximum of cleanliness from a minimum of washing. In some of the cabins the berths were so situated that the men's heads lay against their neighbours' feet, without any partition. Also we failed in many instances to find scuppers, so that the floors could not be freely washed. Where there are no scuppers the wet must be mopped up and carried on deck by means of buckets. This involves a great deal of labour, which sailors, wearied by their ordinary duties, can hardly afford to give; consequently, the cabin remains in a dirty condition, and if a sea comes in we have in addition to the dirt the inconvenience of wet and damp. In one vessel which we visited we found that the caulking was coming out; pieces were protruding from the boards, and hanging down, so that they could be seized with the fingers and pulled away. In the engine men's quarters so much water had come in through the leaking deck that portions of exposed iron within the cabin were covered with rust. Other ships had no bottom to the bunks. The bedding was kept in by very small metallic laths. These cut the