

SCIENCE.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1886.

COMMENT AND CRITICISM.

THE OBLIGATIONS and the rights of physicians throughout the state of New York are matters of such importance that we propose to give those extracts from the laws which bear upon the question of registration, and also such opinions as have come to our notice under the law. This matter is being critically examined by very many practitioners, and it is a subject about which there should be no doubt : if any exists, the legislature should, at its coming session, enact such a law as will not be subject to the different interpretations which seem to have been given to the present law. The law under which physicians register is chapter 513 of the laws of 1880. Section 2 of the law reads as follows : "Every person now lawfully engaged in the practice of physic and surgery within the state shall, on or before the first day of October, eighteen hundred and eighty, and every person hereafter duly authorized to practise physic and surgery, shall, before commencing to practise, register in the clerk's office of the county where he is practising, or intends to commence the practice of physic and surgery, in a book to be kept by said clerk, his name, residence, and place of birth, together with his authority for so practising physic and surgery as prescribed in this act." Very many physicians neglected to register before the 1st of October, and in the following year another act was passed, and is chapter 186, laws of 1881. The section bearing on the point in question (section 1) is as follows : "Any person who was duly authorized to practise physic . . . and who shall not have registered as required by the provision of said chapter (513, laws of 1880) shall have until the first day of October, eighteen hundred and eighty-one, in which to register as prescribed by section two of said act, entitled 'An act,' etc."

Several questions have arisen since these laws were enacted, among others the following : can a physician register who is a graduate of one of the medical colleges of the state, but who was out of the state at the time these acts were passed, and

did not return until after the 1st of October, 1881 ? The following case occurred in Brooklyn, and practically answers the question in the affirmative. The papers referring to it and the other cases mentioned hereafter are in the office of the clerk of Kings county, and the substance of them only is here given. Willis E. Crowell received a diploma in June, 1874, from the New York eclectic medical college, authorizing him to practise medicine. He subsequently left the state, being absent five years, and was not within the state to register in compliance with the law of 1880. In 1883 he applied to the clerk of Kings county for registration, but was refused. On Feb. 1, 1883, Hon. Charles F. Brown, justice of the supreme court, ordered the clerk to register his name. A similar case occurred in Brooklyn in 1885, in which the county clerk refused to register Horace B. Ransom, who had a diploma from the University of the city of New York, granted in 1857. Dr. Ransom had soon thereafter gone to Burlington, Io., not returning until 1885. Upon presentation of the facts to the Hon. E. M. Cullen, justice of the supreme court, he ordered the clerk to register him. The order is dated April 22, 1885. In January, 1886, Ashbel P. Grinnell applied to the clerk of Kings county to be registered, and was refused. The facts in the case were these : Dr. Grinnell received his diploma from Bellevue hospital medical college in March, 1869 ; afterwards he moved to the state of Vermont, where he resided until Jan. 1, 1886, when he again came within the state. In reference to this case, Hon. E. M. Cullen, justice of the supreme court, said, "I think, on making the affidavit or exhibiting the diploma or certificate, a physician is entitled to be registered at any time. The first of October, 1881, mentioned in the act, does not limit the time within which physicians can be registered, but any physician practising after that time without registering is guilty of an offence." It would appear from this latter case to be the opinion of Justice Cullen that a physician not only can register at any time, but must do so, even though he neglected to do so prior to Oct. 1, 1881, and that if he fails to do so he 'is guilty of an offence.' Until this decision was made, a considerable number of physicians had applied to be registered, who had,

through neglect or absence from the state, failed to register before October, 1881, and whose subsequent application had been refused. Some of these are still unregistered, not aware of the fact that Justice Cullen has decided not only that they have the right to register, but that it is their duty to do so. If this statement comes to the knowledge of any such, they should at once apply for registration.

Another question has arisen in connection with the registration law, and that is, must a physician who has registered in one county of the state, if he desires to practise in another county, re-register in that county? We simply desire to have appear what the views of the two justices are on this question. Until the case comes before them in such shape that a judicial opinion in the strictly legal sense can be given, we do not know how their views could be better expressed. In the last number of *Science* (viii. No. 200, p. 515), we stated these views as those of Justices Cullen and Bartlett. We should have said Justices Bartlett and Brown. The entry in the county clerk's book is as follows: "Dr. John Smith registered as a physician in Greene county in 1880, in compliance with chapter 513, laws of 1880. Dr. Smith afterwards, on the 13th of March, 1885, applied to the county clerk of Kings county to be again registered; but the county clerk of Kings county refused to register him. The matter was brought before Judges Bartlett and Brown, who decided orally that Dr. Smith was not obliged to register in every county of the state." The deputy informs us that at the time one of the justices remarked that "it was absurd to suppose that a physician must register in the sixty counties of the state if he wanted to practise in them all." In view of all these facts, perhaps it would have been more exact if, instead of saying that re-registration was absurd as a matter of law, we had said that it was absurd as looked upon by a supreme court judge. That these views are not held by other judges appears from the letters of the counsel to the medical society.

WE HAVE RECEIVED a reprint of an article by Dr. Crothers of Hartford, which was printed recently in the *Alienist and neurologist*. It is entitled 'Certain hereditary and psychical phenomena in inebriety,' and contains some facts which are of great interest not only to students of psychological heredity, but to those taking part in

the social and political arguments on the liquor-question. Dr. Crothers has found two sorts of instances of inheritance of the symptoms of inebriety, — one in which the symptoms of intoxication are present all the time; the other in which these symptoms only appear from some peculiar circumstance or exciting cause. In the first class some prominent defect, such as idiocy, imbecility, and congenital deformity, is present, and gives the case a distinctness irrespective of the signs of intoxication. These symptoms may appear after birth, or be slowly evolved with the growth of the child, coming into prominence at or before puberty. Among other instances, Dr. Crothers cites this one: "In the home of a former patient I found a little girl, an idiot, whose voice and rambling utterance, with intensely red eyes and drunken expression, pointed back to causes and conditions that had not been noticed before. Other defects and deformities of the face and body cover up these peculiar signs of intoxication."

The second class of cases is less common, but the symptoms are very distinct. Unlike the first class, here the persons affected possess average brain-power, and in many instances are men of positive force. They are usually temperate men, never using alcohol, yet under certain circumstances they act and appear as if intoxicated. In these cases some sort of mental shock takes place that destroys the balance and brings uppermost an inherited neurotic effect. These cases come from inebriate parents or moderate drinkers, and they have inherited some defective nerve-organization which thus manifests itself. Dr. Crothers cites this instance: "A merchant, in good health, and temperate, while at work in his counting-room, received a despatch of the death of his daughter. He lay down on a sofa in his office, and very soon became wildly intoxicated. A physician made this diagnosis, although there was no odor of alcohol in the breath. He was taken home, and remained in bed a week. Two opinions prevailed, — one, that he had drunk in his office; the other, that it was congestion of the brain. He denied having used spirits, but was confused about the events of the past. In this case an heredity from alcoholic ancestors was present."

Then there are cases of persons who have been inebriates or intoxicated, and have since become total abstainers, but from unknown causes sud-

denly manifest all the signs of intoxication. Dr. Crothers concludes, 1°, that symptoms of alcoholic poisoning cannot be trusted as evidence of the immediate use of alcohol; 2°, that the excessive use of alcohol leaves a permanent defect or impress on the brain, which will go down into the future with great certainty. The author says that he presents these facts as a sort of preliminary survey of a comparatively unknown field. The subject is of so great and so far-reaching interest, that we trust the survey will be speedily pushed to completion.

AT THE LAST GENERAL MEETING of the English society for psychical research there was some discussion over Mr. Myers's paper on multiplex personality, which was published in the *Nineteenth century* for November, and an extended account was given by Mr. Myers of some observations made by Mr. Gurney, Dr. A. T. Myers, and himself at a meeting in Paris of the Société de psychologie physiologique. At their conclusion, Prof. Henry Sidgwick, who was occupying the chair, made some remarks on the general subject of psychical research, which, both because of their import and the distinguished reputation of the speaker, will undoubtedly carry much weight and attract very general attention among scientific men. Professor Sidgwick said that the society for psychical research had now reached an important crisis. The work prepared by Messrs. Gurney, Myers, and Podmore, entitled 'Phantasms of the living,' — of which we will give our readers an extended notice shortly, — was about to be put in the hands of the public; and for the first time the scientific world would have before it in complete form the grounds for the 'momentous conclusion' announced some time ago by the authors of the book, and in which he (Professor Sidgwick) *was entirely disposed to concur*, — the italics are our own, — that the mental state of one person might affect another otherwise than through the recognized channels of communication by the senses, and even, at a distance so great as to render a physical mode of communication very difficult to conceive.

Were this result to be generally accepted by scientists, Professor Sidgwick continued, even those now most opposed to psychical research would admit the great importance of the achievements. However, he did not anticipate any such

sudden conquest of the scientific world, though he thought that this failure to convince would result only from paying no attention to either the evidence or the reasoning of the authors of 'Phantasms of the living.' Undoubtedly some, not a few perhaps, would read the book and remain unconvinced. Professor Sidgwick cited as ground for this expectation the "thoughtful and instructive address of Prof. Simon Newcomb, president of the American society for psychical research, published last summer. Professor Newcomb had undoubtedly given serious and candid attention to the subject before pronouncing the discouraging opinion that the work of his society had "almost entirely removed any ground which might have existed for believing thought-transference a reality." While welcoming this candid criticism from Professor Newcomb and others, Professor Sidgwick could not accept it as valid, for it mainly rested on the fact that the English society had constructed no theory of thought-transference.

To this Professor Sidgwick answered, and we think his answer fully meets the objection, that the establishment of the fact of thought-transference, and the framing a theory to account for and explain that fact, are two very different things. The one cannot be legitimately rejected because the other is not immediately forthcoming. Still the crucial point is to exclude, in the experiments, all communications through the recognized channels of sense; and Professor Sidgwick expressed the hope that Professor Newcomb, and any others who shared his opinion, would indicate exactly how, in their view, the experiments could be made more conclusive. Professor Sidgwick's entire address was calm and judicial, and his avowal of his belief in the possibility of thought-transference, while guarded, is a serious blow to those who have been doubting the value of the very carefully and conscientiously conducted investigations and experiments of the English society for psychical research.

THAT PASTEUR'S VIEWS are not accepted by all was shown by the criticism passed upon his recent report which was read at the Academy of sciences, and to which our Paris letter alludes in this number of *Science*. In Pasteur's report there were included 1,700 French who have been inoculated for rabies. M. Colin, a veterinary surgeon, takes

exception to these figures. He thinks that a very large number of dogs that have bitten people, and supposed to be rabid, were not rabid, and points out several other possible errors in Pasteur's deductions.

THE UNSEEMLY WRANGLE that has been caused by the *Quarterly review* article on Mr. Edward Gosse has greatly excited the literary men at the universities. Whatever be the merits of the case, from this distance we can only see that the whole proceeding is derogatory to the dignity of men of literary reputation and culture. Journalistic quarrels are usually of no benefit and questionable taste, but it would be bad indeed if the outcome of this one should be, as one English critic insinuates, to prove that at one university is a professor who is not a scholar, and at the other, one who is not a gentleman.

THE AMERICANISTS.

THE sixth session of the Congress international des Americanists was held in September last at Turin. It may not be amiss to say that the previous meetings were held at Nancy (1873), Luxemburg (1877), Brussels (1879), Madrid (1881), and Copenhagen (1883). The sixth session would have been held last year had not the cholera prevented. The congress held its meetings in the old chamber in the Carignan palace, where the deputies of the Sardinian kingdom held their meeting, while the capital of that kingdom remained at Turin. M. Desiré Charnay opened the real business of the meeting with an address complaining that too little attention was given in Europe to the study of American history, and too much to that of the east. "Why," said he, "men care more for the discovery of a finger of Venus or a toe of Mercury than they do for the finding of a whole city in America." He instanced especially the apathy with which Maudslay's work was received in England, saying that it took the directors of the Kensington museum three months to make up their minds as to whether they would accept a monolith as a gift.

The first discussion arose on a paper read by M. Guido Cora on the Zeni Brothers. The speaker declared that the well-known map which goes under the name of the Zeni map was the best authority in the case. He recognized the Faroe Islands in Frislanda; Iceland in Islanda; Greenland in Engronelant; and portions of North America in Estotiland and Drogeo. M. Beauvois thought that the Zeni explored Newfoundland, while M. V. Schmidt argued that Engronelant

corresponded to the modern Angramanlant and Norway.

M. Jimenez followed with a very long and detailed communication on the migrations of the Carib race. In his opinion, that movement was by the Amazon and Orinoco rivers. Then M. le Baron de Baye presented a note by the Marquis of Monclar with regard to a trepanned skull from the upper basin of the Amazon, and M. Pigorini a memoir of M. Strobel upon picture-writing of South America. M. Grossi finally read a paper upon coins of the old and new worlds.

The next day M. Schmidt presented, in behalf of Dr. H. Rink, a paper describing the Eskimo tribes of the extreme west and east. He gave very detailed statements of the manners, customs, houses, dress, social order, myths, and traditions of those tribes. Dr. Rink agrees with Captain Hohn, that the Eskimos have occupied the coasts of Greenland on all sides.

A description, purporting to have come from Mr. A. S. Gatschet of the ethnological bureau at Washington, of the Maya dictionary, was then read. Without doubt it is of the greatest importance in the study of this ancient language, and the deciphering of the old inscriptions in that language. The dictionary, or rather vocabulary, forms part of the Carter-Brown library in Providence. The dictionary is in two parts, each forming a small quarto volume. Part i. contains the Maya-Spanish part; part ii., the Spanish-Maya part. It was probably composed between 1590 and 1600. It is named after the monastery where the author lived, Motul. The author is unknown, and the copy in question is not the original manuscript, but a copy. According to a somewhat minute calculation, it was estimated that the volume contained about 15,400 terms. Others have thought the number higher. It gives us the Maya tongue as it existed at the time or shortly after the conquest. A vote was passed asking the government of the United States to publish the dictionary at its own expense. The congress soon after adjourned, after providing for another meeting at Berlin in 1888.

ARCHEOLOGICAL ENIGMAS.

THE meeting of the Anthropological society of Washington on Nov. 16 was devoted to the reading of two papers bearing on the antiquity of man in America. Mr. G. K. Gilbert, chief geologist of the U. S. geological survey, described minutely the finding of an ancient hearth on the southern shore of Lake Ontario, at the bottom of a well about thirty feet deep. The formation at the base of which the hearth was discovered is one of a