

admitted to contain "240 grains of paracetyl-phenetidid" (in plain English, phenacetin) in each ounce. In regulating the sale of narcotic drugs a strong blow has been struck at one of the most insidious evils of the nostrum traffic. Instances have come before the authorities at Washington, e.g., in the case of several remedies for catarrh, in which manufacturers have brazenly admitted the addition of morphine or cocaine to their nostrums in order that their continued use might be assured. It is almost incredible that a manufacturer should stimulate the sale of his wares in this way and grow rich by the production of thousands of narco-maniacs. But unfortunately a similar condition of things obtains in this country at the present time without a legal remedy. In regard to self-drugging, the full extent of the mischief is only known to members of the medical profession. A more stringent control of the sale of food and drugs, especially the latter, is called for in this country, but it will require strong hands to pilot a satisfactory measure. It would be easy to control the manufacturers; the main difficulty rests with the advertising managers of newspapers.

#### FATAL AIR EMBOLISM FROM PUNCTURE OF THE LIVER WITH AN ASPIRATING NEEDLE.

IN the *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps* for April Lieutenant N. Low, R.A.M.C., has reported a case of a rare accident in puncture of the liver for abscess. A thin, sallow gunner was admitted into hospital on May 9th complaining of pain in the right shoulder. He had not felt well for three months. The evening temperature was 102.2° F. The lower border of the liver could just be felt below the ribs. In the scapular line dulness extended up to the eighth rib. On the 11th the liver dulness had increased so as to extend three fingers' breadth below the costal margin. On the 13th it was proposed to explore the liver. Under chloroform an aspirating needle three inches long was inserted in the lowest intercostal space in the anterior axillary line and pushed into the liver. Instantly there was a loud hissing noise as of air being sucked in and respiration stopped. One or two feeble beats were felt at the wrist and then the pulse stopped. Lieutenant Low put his thumb over the end of the needle to prevent any further entrance of air. When the air rushed in the right side of the face twitched sharply for a moment, the pupils widely dilated, and the face became livid. Attempts at resuscitation failed. At the necropsy one and a half pints of blood were found in the peritoneal cavity. The right cavities of the heart were filled with frothy blood and air bubbles. The base of the right lung was adherent to the diaphragm above an abscess in the right lobe of the liver. The liver was much enlarged and weighed 116 ounces. The needle puncture was in the right lobe two inches above the lower margin; a small clot adhered to it. On cutting down upon a probe passed into the wound it was found that a large branch of the portal vein had been opened. On squeezing the liver frothy blood and air bubbles issued from the vein. The upper portion of the right lobe was occupied by an abscess of the size of the foetal head, containing 32 ounces of pus and surrounded by a fibrous wall a quarter of an inch thick.

THE Oliver-Sharpey lectures of the Royal College of Physicians of London will be delivered by Dr. W. D. Halliburton on Monday and Tuesday, April 29th and 30th, at 5 o'clock, at the College, Pall Mall East, the subject being *New Facts in Relation to the Processes of Nervous Degeneration and Regeneration*.

THE Department of Public Health of Queensland in a bulletin dated March 16th reports a case of bubonic plague in a male aged 23 years, who was attacked on

March 10th. In the same bulletin the health officer of Port Douglas reports 6 fresh cases of plague admitted to the hospital during the week ending March 16th. As regards the Mauritius a telegram from the Governor received at the Colonial Office on April 19th states that during the week ended April 18th there were 2 cases of bubonic plague and no deaths from the disease.

WE have several times alluded to the fact that a committee has been sitting to discuss the possibility of starting a coöperative plan by which medical men can be insured upon favourable terms against the risks of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906. The negotiations with various insurance companies have been tedious, but the definite result of the work of the committee will shortly be published.

## THE INTERNATIONAL BUILDING TRADES EXHIBITION.

THE International Building Trades Exhibition, which was held at Olympia from April 6th to 20th, was a great success and we take pleasure in recording this fact since the exhibits in so many instances were striking illustrations of hygienic advances. Public health, indeed, was written large on almost every stall, and the visitor intent on acquainting himself with new departures in sanitary applications in relation to house construction ought to have been very pleased with what he saw, while a satisfactory feature of the exhibition was that the demonstrations were in many instances illustrative of the attempts being made to bring domestic comforts framed upon sanitary principles within the reach of the poorer classes. A very interesting section also which concerns the comfort of us all was that known as the "Surveyor" section in which were shown examples of the way in which roads are "metalled" and of the attempts to deal with motor problems. Besides, there were illustrations and working models of water-supply, refuse collection and disposal, sewage disposal, and other departments of municipal engineering work.

We do not pretend to give more than a short reference to those exhibits which seemed to us to be of direct sanitary significance, seeing that in the words of the organisers "the whole of the spacious building, ground floor, gallery, and even the annexe, was crowded to the last available inch with exhibits—a record for a trade exhibition in any part of the world." It speaks well for the energy of those responsible for it that such an exhibition should have been got together, but one disparaging word we are bound to add: the ventilation of the vast building left much to be desired. The interest of the exhibition was marred by a stagnant impure air; the crowd of visitors was great and many complained of a splitting headache, which may safely be attributed to the dust and foul air present.

Amongst the first exhibits brought to the notice of the visitor were specimens of a beautiful material for rendering floors fireproof shown by the Stonwod Fireproof Flooring Company, Limited, of 109, Victoria-street, Westminster, London, S.W. The floors are stated to be warm to the feet, fire-resisting, and proof against water and dampness. They have been employed in hospitals, schools, and factories. Illustrations of the application of fireproof sheeting known as Dovetail corrugated steel sheeting were given by the Fireproof Company, Limited, of 10, York Buildings, Adelphi, London, W.C. A device for obviating dampness and decay was exhibited by Mr. A. W. Andernach (agency, 30, Patshull-road, Kentish Town, London, N.W.), consisting of the Kosmos grooved slabbing, as it is called, which acts by encouraging a circulation of air in the walls themselves. Specimens of slag wool and silicate cotton as a vehicle for fireproof partitions were shown by Messrs. Fred Jones and Company, of 1, 2, and 3, Perrin-street, Ryland-road, London, N.W. Messrs. Elkay and Comes, of Bath House, 59, Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C., have recently introduced a very ingenious folding bath in various types for mansion or cottage. The cabinet folding bath, made of enamelled sheet steel, is designed for bedrooms or dressing-rooms and when