

AN INSURANCE INCIDENT.—Under this heading, Dr. John B. Cowan relates, in the last number of the *Glasgow Medical Journal*, the case of a man aged 49, who, having proposed for assurance and being unable to state whether he ever had smallpoxor been vaccinated, had himself vaccinated on the left arm. The operator states that the patient had “the original marks of vaccination as distinct as you could expect to find them in a man between forty and fifty years of age who had not been vaccinated since childhood. I vaccinated him on the left arm; three places all took thoroughly, and he went through the whole process satisfactorily.” Seven months after re-vaccination, this man died of virulent smallpox. Dr. Cowan states that “in the experience of an assurance company which has carried on business for upwards of thirty years, no similar incident has occurred.” [Vaccination cannot be expected to protect more thoroughly than smallpox itself, and cases of death in a second attack of smallpox are not unheard of. We know that during the last epidemic in Edinburgh some of the worst cases were in those who had smallpox previously, and some of these died. [We have seen very sharp cases of secondary vaccinia caught from the cow within a comparatively short interval of each other. And interesting as the above case may be in a pathological point of view, it in no way invalidates the protective power of vaccination, or contradicts the ordinary view that death almost never occurs from smallpox after properly-performed vaccination—on the contrary, it rather confirms it.]—*Edenburg Medical Journal*.

ON THE NATURE OF THE SPLEEN.—Dr. Silvester, whose name is so well known as the promulgator of a method of resuscitating those apparently dead from drowning, etc., believes that he has discovered the true nature of the spleen, from an investigation of the lateral homologies of the liver, stomach, intestinal canal. His pamphlet is long and learned, and illustrated by a somewhat fanciful diagram representing the “missing links” in our interior. The conclusion he arrives at may be given in his own words: “The spleen is a sanguiferous gland, situated on the left side of the abdominal cavity. It is the left lateral homologue of a portion of the liver, the liver being a combination of a sanguiferous gland and a biliary apparatus.” The left biliary apparatus, the left end of the stomach, left pancreas and small intestines being all missing in our bodies as presently constituted, the only remains of the latter being the appendix vermiformis. The heroine of one of Disraeli’s novels is represented as expressing her application of prevalent theories of development by the exclamation, “Oh!

I know, I was a fish, and I shall be a bird." But Dr. Silvester's views of the development of the spleen seem even more incomprehensible, and it is difficult to conceive how our knowledge of the spleen is to be advanced by their adoption, or why their promulgation should be entitled a "discovery."—*Pamphlet* published by John Churchill & Sons.—*Edinburgh Med. Journal.*

FRACTURE OF ANTERIOR SPINOUS PROCESS OF ILIUM BY MUSCULAR CONTRACTION.—Drs. S. Joy and J. W. McWhinnie report (*Canada Med. Journal*, Sep., 1870) a remarkable case of this in a very muscular youth, æt. 17, who, in a foot-race, in turning at a given point, felt something snap in his right hip, walked a few steps and fell. "On examination distinct motion and crepitus could be felt by pressure over the process, also by placing the thumb over the origin of the Sartorius and rotating the thigh. The fracture extended into the notch below, but there was no great tendency to displacement, save when the leg was abducted, thus placing the Sartorius upon the stretch, the process, doubtless, being partially kept in place by the fibres of the tensor vaginæ femoris arising from this process on the one hand, and Poupart's ligament on the other, when tension was taken off the Sartorius. The patient was placed in bed with the thigh flexed and the shoulders raised, a bandage being applied to aid in steadying the fracture. It may be as well to state that this position and abduction of the right leg was maintained by bands attached to the posts of the bed. In two weeks the patient made a good recovery without displacement.—*American Jour. Med. Sciences.*

FATALITY OF SMALL-POX AT DIFFERENT AGES.—The Registrar-General states that of 755 deaths registered in London from small-pox during the last five weeks, 348 occurred to children under five years of age, 196 to young people aged between five and twenty years, 168 to persons between the ages of twenty and forty, and 43 to persons over forty years of age. Taking the ages of the living into account, the mortality in the five weeks from small-pox was at the annual rate of 10·6 per 1,000 among young children, of 2·6 per 1,000 between the ages of five and twenty, of 2·1 per 1,000 between twenty and forty, and of less than 1 per 1000 above forty years of age. It is thus shown that the fatality of the disease is four times as great in the first five years of life as it is at any subsequent period, and we hope that the knowledge of this fact will be spread abroad as affording indisputable proof of the importance of early vaccination.