

THE
Journal of the American Medical Association.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY.

THE EDITOR of this JOURNAL would be glad to receive any items of general interest in regard to local events, or matters that it is desirable to call to the attention of the profession. Letters written for publication or containing items of information, should be accompanied by the writer's full name and address, although not necessarily to be published. All communications in regard to editorial work should be addressed to the Editor.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, INCLUDING POSTAGE.

PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE..... \$5.00.
SINGLE COPIES..... 10 CENTS.

Subscriptions may begin at any date. The safest mode of remittance is by bank check or postal money order, drawn to the order of the undersigned. When neither is accessible, remittances may be made at the risk of the publishers, by forwarding in REGISTERED letters.

Address

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION,
No. 65 RANDOLPH STREET,
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 1885.

OVARIOTOMY STATISTICS.—Our readers will remember that in the JOURNAL of Oct. 25, 1884, we published a brief letter from Prof. Donald Maclean, correcting a simple error in the date of an ovariectomy alluded to by him, in a debate in the Section of Obstetrics and Diseases of Women of the American Medical Association, at the last annual meeting, which was followed in the JOURNAL of Nov. 15, by a note from Dr. R. S. Sutton, saying that he had a "Death Certificate" of another case, and asking if Prof. Maclean would add this to his previous correction. To this the latter replied in the JOURNAL of Nov. 29, declaring that if such certificate existed, it was either a gross blunder or a forgery. To offset this, Dr. Sutton promptly forwarded to us the certificate he held, asking for its early publication. It was in the usual form of death certificates used in cities where such are required by law, and on its face gave the cause of death as "*Ovariectomy*." But careful examination showed that it was not signed either by the attending physician of the deceased or the operating surgeon. And further information showed that the signer of the certificate had done it to accommodate the undertaker, and had given the cause of death as a "Surgical Operation" without assuming to know or state what kind of operation it was. Afterwards some other party, whom we have not been able to identify, crossed out the words "Surgical Operation," and inserted the word "Ovariectomy" without the knowledge of the signer of the certificate. In that condition it appears to have been sent to Dr. Sutton. Of course, *such* a certificate is utterly worthless, except as an example of how

carelessly many death certificates are filled, and we refused to publish it.

From several sources, including Prof. Maclean himself, we learn that the death to which the certificate referred, was that of a lady who had suffered many years, and until near the stage of fatal exhaustion, not from ovarian cysts or tumors, but from such symptoms as are supposed to be sometimes relieved by Battey's operation or technically Oöphorectomy, which operation was performed just before the patient died.

When we published, a few weeks since, in this JOURNAL, the case of Successful Ovariectomy, by Dr. Geo. E. Ranney, of Lansing, Mich., we had no knowledge of the fact, that the same case had already been reported by Dr. E. W. Jenks, of Detroit, and published in the *Medical Age* of that city. The number of the *Age* containing it had escaped our observation. Having published the case as reported by Dr. Ranney, we could not properly refuse to publish the letters of both Drs. Jenks and Ranney, in which each gives his own exposition of facts and circumstances in full, by which we think every attentive reader will infer that as the two gentlemen had mutually participated in the performance of an important surgical operation, they should have equally coöperated in reporting it for publication. Having given both parties a full hearing, we do not feel at liberty to encumber our pages with any further personal controversy on the subject.