

honorary Fellow), Mr. J. Grantham, Dr. G. Beaman, and Dr. P. Allen. M. Agassiz had been elected a foreign honorary Fellow only five days before his death. The President remarked that at least five of the deaths had occurred prematurely from overwork, the consequence and concomitant of success. Success was a great temptation to exertion. He himself had been subject to this; but, after ten years of professional and hospital duty, he had retired, and had had his strength restored by a comparative rest of twenty years. He urged the Fellows of the Society to send in papers early. He believed that some were unwilling to contribute papers from an idea that the referees acted as censors. This was not the duty of the referees; it was not for them to reject papers because they did not agree with the opinions of the authors. He expressed regret at the failure of the attempt to amalgamate the Societies; but believed that all were working for the common good.

*Votes of Thanks.*—Mr. JOHN GAY proposed, Dr. FAYRER seconded, and it was unanimously resolved, that the President be thanked for his address, and that he be requested to allow it to be printed.—On the proposal of Mr. CURLING, seconded by Mr. W. MAC CORMAC, a vote of thanks was given to the retiring Officers and Council.

*Officers and Council.*—The following were declared to be elected for the ensuing year. Those to whose names asterisks are prefixed did not hold similar offices last year. *President:* Charles J. B. Williams, M.D., F.R.S. *Vice-Presidents:* E. H. Sieveking, M.D.; \*Sir W. W. Gull, Bart., M.D., D.C.L., F.R.S.; W. White Cooper; \*Luther Holden. *Treasurers:* W. Wegg, M.D.; John Birkett. *Secretaries:* E. Symes Thompson, M.D.; J. Cooper Forster. *Librarians:* F. Sibson, M.D., F.R.S.; T. Holmes. *Other Members of the Council:* \*J. Burford Carlill, M.D.; \*W. H. Dickinson, M.D.; C. J. Hare, M.D.; \*W. O. Priestley, M.D.; \*Hermann Weber, M.D.; William Adams; Thomas Bryant; \*George W. Callender, F.R.S.; \*John Gay; \*John F. Streatfeild.

## ASSOCIATION INTELLIGENCE.

### CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND HUNTINGDONSHIRE BRANCH.

A MEETING of the above Branch will be held in the Board Room of Addenbrooke's Hospital, on Tuesday, March 10th, at 3 P.M., to receive communications from the Council of the Branch respecting the place of meeting for 1874.

J. B. BRADBURY, M.D., *Honorary Secretary.*

Corpus Buildings, Cambridge, February 25th, 1874.

### YORKSHIRE BRANCH.

THE spring meeting of this Branch will be held in the Council Room, Halifax, on Wednesday, March 11th, at 2 P.M.

The members will dine together after the meeting, at the White Swan Hotel, at 5 P.M. Tickets 6s. 6d. each.

Gentlemen intending to bring forward any communication, or join the dinner, are requested to communicate with the Secretary.

W. PROCTER, M.D., *Local Secretary.*

York, February 24th, 1874.

### BIRMINGHAM AND MIDLAND COUNTIES BRANCH.

THE next meeting of the above Branch will be held at the Midland Institute, Birmingham, on Thursday, March 12th, at 3.30 P.M.

T. H. BARTLETT.

BALTHAZAR W. FOSTER, M.D. } *Honorary Secretaries.*

Birmingham, March 2nd, 1874.

### EAST SUSSEX AND WEST KENT DISTRICTS OF SOUTH EASTERN BRANCH.

A CONJOINT meeting of the above districts will be held at the Infirmary, Tunbridge Wells, on Wednesday, March 18th, at 3 P.M.; Dr. WARDELL in the Chair, who will read a short paper on the "Progress of Medicine".

Dr. Wardell invites members and their friends to lunch at 1.30 P.M., at his residence, Calverley Park.

Dinner will be provided at 5.0 P.M., at Terry's Restaurant, opposite the Railway Station. Charge, 5s., exclusive of wine.

Notice of intended communications, etc., is requested by the Honorary Secretary before Tuesday, the 10th instant, in order that they may be inserted in the circular convening the meeting.

THOMAS TROLLOPE, M.D., *Hon. Sec.*

35, Marina, St. Leonard's-on-Sea, Feb. 24th, 1874.

### LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE BRANCH.

A SPECIAL general meeting of the above Branch will be held in the Medical Institution, Liverpool, on Wednesday, March 25th, at 4 P.M., to consider the Report of the Subcommittee of the Parliamentary Bills Committee on the Instruction and Registration of Midwives.

Dinner at the Alexandra Hotel, Dale Street, at 6 P.M. Tickets 7s. 6d. each, exclusive of wine.

Gentlemen intending to dine are requested to notify to the Honorary Secretary as early as possible; in any case, not later than Monday, the 23rd instant.

A. B. STEELE, *Honorary Secretary.*

Liverpool, February 28th, 1874.

### BIRMINGHAM AND MIDLAND COUNTIES BRANCH: PATHOLOGICAL AND CLINICAL SECTION.

THE third meeting of the Session was held on Friday, January 30th, 1874. Present: J. MANLEY, Esq., in the chair; and twenty-six members.

*New Members.*—Four Members of the Branch were elected Members of the Section.

*Communications.*—I. Mr. VINCENT JACKSON exhibited a young man, aged 25, whose right foot (for disease principally affecting the synovial membrane) had been amputated through the ankle-joint by Pirogoff's method. Mr. Jackson pointed out the importance, especially when synovial disease exists, of slicing the tibia and fibula above the articulation existing between those bones.

2. Mr. HUGH KERR exhibited a case of Removal of the Fibula for Necrosis. Louisa W., aged 12, a nail-maker, living at Cradley, received on February 3rd, 1873, a kick over the outer malleolus of the left ankle, and periostitis supervened. On February 17th, a free incision was made over the malleolus, and a little pus escaped. On April 3rd, a portion of the lower end of the fibula, about an inch in length, appeared to be loose, and was removed. On April 24th, more bone was found to be loose. Mr. Kerr enlarged the original incision, and removed a second portion of bone; this proved to be the whole remainder of the fibula except its upper articulating end. From this date, the wound rapidly healed. On June 18th, she was able to walk without crutches; and early in August returned to her work. A good deal of new bone was formed in the situation of the lost fibula, especially at the upper end. The action of all the muscles was perfect, as also walking and the contour of the limb.

3. Mr. WEST showed the bones removed in Excision of the Knee-Joint. He also read notes of the case.

4. Dr. RUSSELL exhibited a Brain with a Large Clot in the Posterior Lobe or Left Hemisphere nearly of the size of a small orange. The patient, aged 30, died two hours after his seizure, unconscious, but retaining motor power. The motor tract was not involved.

5. Mr. BENNETT MAY showed the articulation resulting from an old Excision of the Elbow-Joint. Three years before, Mr. Pemberton had excised the joint, removing a considerable amount of bone, which was extensively diseased. In spite of prolonged treatment and rest, a loose flail-like joint resulted; and, at the request of the patient, a man aged 38, Mr. Pemberton amputated the arm. The specimen exhibited the rounded ends of the bones, the interval between which, about one inch and a quarter, was filled up by a softish fibroid tissue.

6. Dr. CARTER showed a portion of the small Intestine, the seat of Tubercular Ulceration.

7. Mr. ARTHUR BRACEY read notes of a case of Optic Neuritis following exposure to a flash of lightning.

8. Dr. MALINS showed an Ovarian Tumour, which he had removed on January 14th. The patient, aged 29, had suffered from it for five years past, had been tapped twice, being pregnant on both occasions, but had resisted all persuasion to have ovariectomy performed. There was at the time of operation great emaciation, abundant ascites, and evidence of anterior parietal adhesions. None could be detected in the pelvis, and the uterus moved freely on the sound. Ether was given; an incision four inches long was first made, and thirty-five and a half pounds of fluid allowed to escape by a small opening. Anterior adhesions were separated, the incision was enlarged to twelve inches, and attachments to the stomach and colon were divided by Richardson's toothed scissors. A drainage-tube was placed behind the uterus through the vagina. The patient rallied well; but died on the following day, twenty hours after the operation, somewhat suddenly, from cardiac syncope. The necropsy showed no clots; about thirty ounces of sero-sanguinolent fluid in the abdominal cavity, none in the pelvis. The contents of the tumour were semisolid; its weight was twenty-three and a half pounds; it was polycystic.

the charge was made for professional attendance and advice, including medicines. The judge ruled that it was "preposterous to suppose that a medical man must send in to his patients gallons of physic, which were not really wanted, to enable him to charge such a sum as would repay him for his time and trouble;" and that the innovation was "a vast improvement on the old system." The trial was gained, and the bill paid, with costs.

Besides his professional work, Mr. Morgan was an ardent politician, and, in his earlier days, always to be found in the heart of the fray; and though he retired from active political strife, in the latter years of his life, he still remained a staunch Conservative. He twice filled the office of mayor. About twenty years ago, he was made a deputy-lieutenant for the city and county of Lichfield. The honour of an appointment as justice of the peace was offered to him, but declined, on the ground of increasing professional work. He was a trustee for many of the charities for which Lichfield is famous, and was an alderman and member of the Town Council at the time of his death.

#### WILLIAM VESALIUS PETTIGREW, M.D., F.R.C.S.

DR. WILLIAM VESALIUS PETTIGREW, who died on February 13th, aged 58, was the second son of a well-known medical man, Mr. T. J. Pettigrew, F.R.S. His grandfather was also in the profession, a surgeon in the Royal Navy, who had settled in practice in London. Dr. W. V. Pettigrew was educated at Westminster School, and, proceeding to his medical studies under the direction of his father, he attended the Windmill Street School of Medicine, and Charing Cross Hospital. He passed the College examination in April 1837, and then went to Glasgow, where, early in 1839, he took the M.D. degree. Returning to London, he established himself in practice in Chelsea, and also soon became known as a teacher and lecturer in anatomy and physiology. His first regular employment in the medical schools, in this capacity, was at Grainger's School of Medicine, in the Borough. Afterwards, for many years, he was one of the lecturers at Mr. Lane's School of Medicine, in Grosvenor Place. In 1844, he was made an honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England; and he became a Member of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society, and of the Royal Institution. For many years he enjoyed an extensive and lucrative practice. In 1866 and 1867, his health painfully yielded, both mentally and physically, so that he was compelled to retire. Although subsequently somewhat restored, he had since been obliged, by increasing physical weakness, to keep in irksome idleness, a mind naturally most vivacious and active. He died at his residence, Colebrooke Lodge, Upper Norwood, of bronchitis.

Dr. Pettigrew married first, and very early, a lady, who died within a year, leaving a son; and, secondly, Frances Mary, daughter of Thomas Moore, Esq., of 5, Dorset Square, who survives. He leaves, also, a second son (now in India), and three daughters. His first son died a few years since, whilst a medical student.

#### ROBERT BRETT, M.R.C.S., L.S.A., STOKE NEWINGTON.

THE unexpected notice of the death of Robert Brett, of Stoke Newington Green, who died on Tuesday, February 3rd, aroused a wide-spread feeling of sorrow, such as is seldom called forth by the loss of a medical practitioner, however eminent in his profession, or however beloved by his patients. Robert Brett studied at St. George's Hospital; and soon after passing the College and Hall, in 1830, he settled in general practice in Stoke Newington, starting as assistant to his uncle, Mr. Reynolds. Here he remained steadily working, hardly ever leaving town for a day, excepting for the sake of attending the Church Congresses during the past few years, and gradually winning the hearts of those around him, until a sudden exacerbation of symptoms of failing strength and cardiac dropsy culminated in congestion of the lungs, and created a blank in the northern district of London, which was indicated by the wonderful funeral which took place on the next Saturday. Following the plain hearse was such a stream of carriages, and such a company of mourners, as has, probably, never before been seen at a doctor's funeral. The thronged and hushed church, to which admission was only by ticket, the silent crowds in the streets, and the closed shops and blind-shrouded windows, along the route from St. Matthias's Church to Tottenham Cemetery, were sufficient evidence of the respect and affection felt for the man who, for forty years past, had laboured unremittingly for the welfare of his parish, and had become one of the leading spirits of that part of London. Scores of eminent clergymen, and other distinguished men, attended from considerable distances, anxious to show their sorrowing respect for their departed friend.

Mr. Brett was, from his earliest childhood, a devoted member of the Church of England. His many published devotional works are

known and highly valued throughout the extent of the Anglican communion, whilst to his efforts mainly—although never, by any means, a rich man—is due the establishment of many churches in the north of London; and, for years past, no great church gathering was deemed complete, without the presence of his fine form and cheery voice.

Perhaps the work of most interest to the readers of a medical journal, was the foundation, in 1864, of a religious society amongst medical students and practitioners, which, under the name of "Guild of St. Luke the Physician," has been quietly working on under Mr. Brett's guidance as provost, until it now numbers over seventy members. The object of this guild was to furnish students who had been trained in, or subsequently embraced, strict Church of England principles, with the means of continual religious sympathy and intercourse during their London life at the schools, and it is believed that the object has been, to a great extent, satisfactorily achieved. While referring, for fuller particulars, to the leaders and long obituary notices of our ecclesiastical contemporaries, these remarks may be fitly concluded in the words of one of our most famous surgeons:—"To have known Robert Brett, is to be reminded of one's responsibilities and deficiencies. He was indeed a type of a true Christian gentleman."

## MEDICAL NEWS.

**APOTHECARIES' HALL.**—The following gentlemen passed their examination in the science and practice of medicine, and received certificates to practise, on Thursday, February 26th, 1874.

Bond, George Weddall, Pulham St. Mary, Norfolk  
Pilkington, Henry Oldfield, Lime Street, Preston

The following gentlemen also on the same day passed their primary professional examination.

Collins, Henry Abdy, Guy's Hospital  
Rygate, Brougham Robert, London Hospital  
Sincock, John Bain, London Hospital

#### MEDICAL VACANCIES.

The following vacancies are announced:—

**ATCHAM UNION**, Salop—Medical Officer for the Alberbury District: £30 per annum.

**BLOOMSBURY DISPENSARY**—Resident Medical Officer. Applications, 16th instant, to F. Latreille, Secretary.

**BRIDGWATER UNION**—Medical Officer for No. 8 District: £56 per annum.

**BRISTOL GENERAL HOSPITAL**—Assistant House-Surgeon: £50 per annum, board, lodging, etc. Applications, 20th instant, to Henry Fox, Sec.

**EDENDERY UNION**, King's County—Medical Officer, Public Vaccinator, and Registrar of Births, etc., for the Rhode Dispensary District: £120 per annum, and fees. Applications, 9th instant, to David Kerr, Hon. Sec.

**EDMONTON URBAN SANITARY DISTRICT**—Medical Officer of Health: £30 for one year. Applications, 14th instant, to W. Pulley, Clerk.

**HOLBEACH UNION**, Lincolnshire—Medical Officer for the Sutton Bridge District: £20 per ann., and fees. Applications, 16th instant, to E. G. Ayliff, Clerk.

**HORTON INFIRMARY**, Banbury—Resident Dispenser and Assistant Secretary. Applications to G. A. Hewitt, Esq., Oxford Road, Banbury.

**IDLE URBAN SANITARY DISTRICT**—Medical Officer of Health: £40 per ann.

**LEICESTER UNION**—Medical Officer for the Workhouse: £100 per annum.

**LIVERPOOL ROYAL INFIRMARY**—Assistant-Surgeon. Applications, 11th instant, to Edward Gibbon, Chairman.

**MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL**—Assistant Physician; Assistant Obstetric Physician; Dental Surgeon. Applications, 31st March, to the Weekly Board.

**NARBERTH UNION**—Medical Officer for District No. 1, and the Workhouse: £35 and £20 per annum, and fees. Applications, 21st instant, to John Thomas, Clerk.

**NORTH LONDON CONSUMPTION HOSPITAL**—Physician. Applications, 15th April, to W. Hornibrook, Sec.

**NOTTINGHAM GENERAL HOSPITAL**—Physician. Applications, 10th instant, to E. M. Kidd, Sec.

**ONGAR UNION**, Essex—Medical Officer and Public Vaccinator for No. 1 District: £105 per annum, and fees. Applications, 24th instant, to Charles Mott, Clerk, Chipping Ongar.

**QUEEN'S HOSPITAL, BIRMINGHAM**—House-Physician and House-Surgeon: £50 per annum each, board, lodging, etc. Applications, 21st instant, to Walter Young, Secretary and General Superintendent.

**RHAYADER UNION**—Two Medical Officers: £40 per annum each, exclusive of vaccination and extra medical fees. Applications to John Jarman, Clerk.

**ROYAL EDINBURGH HOSPITAL FOR SICK CHILDREN**—Assistant to the extra Physicians: £52:10 per annum. Applications, 21st instant, to John Henry, Hon. Sec.

**RUGBY UNION**—Medical Officer for the Workhouse: £50 per annum.—Medical Officer and Public Vaccinator for the Rugby District: £50 per annum, and fees. Applications, 16th instant, to G. V. Hefford, Clerk.

**SALOP AND MONTGOMERY COUNTIES LUNATIC ASYLUM**—Assistant Medical Officer: £100 per annum, increasing to £120 at end of first year, with board (exclusive of wine and spirits) and apartments. Applications, 10th inst., to C. de Courcy Peele, Esq., Shrewsbury.

**TOWCESTER UNION**—Medical Officer: £60 per annum, exclusive of the usual extras.

**ULVERTONE UNION**, Lancashire—Medical Officers and Public Vaccinators for the Hawkshead and Coniston Districts: £20 per annum, and fees, each. Applications, 11th instant, to J. S. Sykes, Clerk.

The announcement of a vacancy in the office of House-Surgeon to the Lincoln General Dispensary, made in last week's JOURNAL, was an error.

## OPERATION DAYS AT THE HOSPITALS.

**MONDAY** ..... Metropolitan Free, 2 P.M.—St. Mark's, 9 A.M. and 2 P.M.—Royal London Ophthalmic, 11 A.M.—Royal Westminster Ophthalmic, 1.30 P.M.

**TUESDAY** ..... Guy's, 1.30 P.M.—Westminster, 2 P.M.—Royal London Ophthalmic, 11 A.M.—Royal Westminster Ophthalmic, 1.30 P.M.—West London, 3 P.M.—National Orthopaedic, 2 P.M.

**WEDNESDAY** ..... St. Bartholomew's, 1.30 P.M.—St. Mary's, 1.30 P.M.—Middlesex, 1 P.M.—University College, 2 P.M.—St. Thomas's, 1.30 P.M.—London, 2 P.M.—Royal London Ophthalmic, 11 A.M.—Great Northern, 2 P.M.—Samaritan Free Hospital for Women and Children, 2.30 P.M.—Cancer Hospital, Brompton, 3 P.M.—King's College, 2 P.M.—Royal Westminster Ophthalmic, 1.30 P.M.

**THURSDAY** ..... St. George's, 1 P.M.—Central London Ophthalmic, 1 P.M.—Royal Orthopaedic, 2 P.M.—Royal London Ophthalmic, 11 A.M.—Hospital for Diseases of the Throat, 2 P.M.—Royal Westminster Ophthalmic, 1.30 P.M.

**FRIDAY** ..... Royal Westminster Ophthalmic, 1.30 P.M.—Royal London Ophthalmic, 11 A.M.—Central London Ophthalmic, 2 P.M.—Royal South London Ophthalmic, 2 P.M.

**SATURDAY** ..... St. Bartholomew's, 1.30 P.M.—King's College, 1.30 P.M.—Charing Cross, 2 P.M.—Royal London Ophthalmic, 11 A.M.—Royal Free, 2 P.M.—East London Hospital for Children, 2 P.M.—Hospital for Women, 9.30 A.M.—Royal Westminster Ophthalmic, 1.30 P.M.—St. Thomas's, 9.30 A.M.—Royal Free, 9 A.M. and 2 P.M.

## MEETINGS OF SOCIETIES DURING THE NEXT WEEK.

**MONDAY**.—Medical Society of London, 7 P.M. One Hundredth and First Anniversary; Award of Medals; Dinner, etc., at St. James's Hall.

**TUESDAY**.—Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society, 8.30 P.M. Mr. G. Gaskoin, "On the Relations of Asthma to Cutaneous Disease"; Dr. Haynes, "On the amount of Carbonic Acid found by experiment in the Air on board Wooden Frigates." Mr. Savory will show the Upper and Lower Jaw Bones from a case of Necrosis from Phosphorus.

**WEDNESDAY**.—Epidemiological Society, 8 P.M. Inspector-General Robert Lawson, F.R.C.S., "On errors in the usual method of Investigating the Causes of Epidemics."

**THURSDAY**.—Hunterian Society (London Institution), 7.30 P.M.: Council Meeting. 8 P.M.: Dr. Barnes's Inauguratory Address; Mr. Reeves, "Some Cases of Excision of the Hip- and Knee-Joints"; Mr. Corner, "Excision of the Elbow"; Mr. Rendle, "Excision of the Hip-Joint."

**FRIDAY**.—Clinical Society of London, 8.30 P.M. Adjourned debate on Mr. Prescott Hewett's address on "Pyæmia"; Dr. Buzzard, "Case of General Paralysis (both sides of face, from extremities, respiration, deglutition), recovery under antisyphilitic treatment."

## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

CORRESPONDENTS not answered, are requested to look to the Notices to Correspondents of the following week.

AUTHORS desiring reprints of their articles published in the JOURNAL, are requested to communicate beforehand with the printer and publisher, Mr. T. Richards, 37, Great Queen Street, W.C.

WE CANNOT UNDERTAKE TO RETURN MANUSCRIPTS NOT USED.

CORRESPONDENTS, who wish notice to be taken of their communications, should authenticate them with their names—of course, not necessarily for publication.

COMMUNICATIONS respecting editorial matters, should be addressed to the Editor: those concerning business matters, non-delivery of the JOURNAL, etc., should be addressed to the General Manager, at the Office, 37, Great Queen Street, W.C.

DR. WADE (Wakefield).—Duly received. Many thanks.

MR. SPENCER WATSON.—If the advertisement be repeated, it will call for comment. We incline to think it an inadvertence.

MARSEUNIENSIS.—1. Hawksley's sphygmograph is one of the best. 2. Murray and Heath.

M. B. (Stirling) will find particulars of the uses and doses of the Eucalyptus Globulus in a past number of the JOURNAL. A summary of existing knowledge, by Dr. Sydney Ringer, will be found in the *London Medical Record* of Feb. 19th, 1873.

S. C. (Loec).—We know nothing of the financial standing of the Edinburgh Life Office referred to by Mr. Garland in his proposition, "Pensions to Medical Men and their Widows", inserted in the JOURNAL of July 12th, 1873.

## CONTAMINATION OF AERATED WATERS.

SIR.—The paragraph in your issue of February 14th, and the letter of M.D., F.R.S., with the analysis following, are, we think, if unanswered, calculated to cause unnecessary alarm as to the purity of the aerated waters that may be obtained in London.

We are at a loss to understand why syphons should have been selected for examination. The whole of the fittings of a syphon, as they are now constructed, are made of tin. The water, when in the syphon, is in contact with a small disc of that metal about the eighth of an inch in diameter, and in being drawn off, passes through the tin outlet as it does in being filled. We are of opinion that the lead must have been in the water prior to the syphons being filled with it. It may be said that this is of small importance; but it becomes of the greatest importance

if we are to suppose that all soda-water in bottles as well as syphons is impregnated with lead to a dangerous degree. No manufacturer anxious to supply waters free from impurities is likely to use either leaden cistern or leaden pipes. Tin or silver are the only metals with which the water need remain any time in contact.

We are, etc.,

MAY DAVIS & CO.

\* \* We fear there is a great deal of carelessness prevalent in this matter, but no doubt it is far from universal. A good many of the aerated waters which were examined for the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL some years since were very carelessly made, did not correspond to their titles, and were not made with pure water.

## PORTABLE HOSPITALS.

A Medical Officer of Health asks for the address of any firm that manufactures "Portable Hospitals", such as would be suitable for a rural sanitary authority to purchase, for moving from village to village, according as a case of an infectious nature shows itself.

## A SPECIES OF THE GENUS "PROVIDENT DISPENSARY".

SIR,—I enclose with this note the report of an inquest held by Dr. Lankester during the past week. I desire to make the case known to you, and to point out some features of it which do not appear in the newspaper; and to explain how the unqualified person, who rendered pseudo-medical advice to the patient, has been introduced to the public in the guise of a duly qualified practitioner, and how he has been enabled in this respect to deceive—and continues to be enabled to deceive—the neighbouring poor. The explanation of these points you will find to be a contribution to the history of "Provident Dispensaries" of the most interesting kind: not, indeed, to the history of that species of Provident Dispensary which you have lately been describing to your readers, but of a kind far more numerous and worthy of the close attention of the profession.

A few months since, a corner shop in the Copenhagen Street, referred to in the report, was fitted up as a "Provident Dispensary"; so the inscription over it declared. On the windows the following notices were painted, "Surgical Operations, Midwifery, etc.", and a further inscription set forth how medical advice on these and other cases might be obtained for the very trifling sum of from one to three shillings and sixpence per week, payable in advance, and during sickness only. In addition to these notices, handbills were distributed showing the benefit conferred upon the poor by such an institution, and announcing Mr. H. Ker as "Resident Medical Officer". Mr. Ker, however, not being a qualified practitioner, was deemed to have offended the law by allowing this brevet rank to be conferred upon him; and accordingly he was summoned to the Clerkenwell Police Court and fined. It then transpired that the proprietor of the establishment is Mr. T. Massey Harding, a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons by examination, resident more than a mile from Copenhagen Street, and that Mr. Ker is his assistant. I shall leave you to judge from the remainder of this letter in what sort Mr. Ker can be described as the assistant of Mr. Harding.

In visiting another patient, I occasionally prescribed for the child of the landlady of the house, a poor widow, who endeavoured to support a numerous family by letting lodgings. At that time the child was suffering from a trifling general derangement, and when I had advised in the case six or seven times, the mother, feeling herself unable to discharge such fees as she anticipated I should demand of her, desired me to discontinue my attendance. I last saw the child about seven days before death. The next day it appeared to be very ill, and its mother (bearing in mind that she could obtain the advice of a Fellow of the College of Surgeons for the trifling consideration of one shilling a week) took it to the "Provident Dispensary" above alluded to. Here it was seen and prescribed for by Mr. Ker, who ordered that it should be taken home and visited there. He saw it the next day, and on the morning following his visit he was again hastily summoned to the house, when he found the patient dead. The mother demanded a certificate. Mr. Ker replied that he must send to the Registrar-General for a book of forms; call again. The mother then applied to me for a certificate, and I referred her back to Mr. Ker. He then gave one on the usual form, assigning death to: 1st cause, "Infantile laryngismus"; 2nd cause, "Convulsions"; it was signed "H. Ker" (in writing which, I believe, from comparison with letters written by him, to be Mr. Ker's writing), pro T. Massey Harding, F.R.C.S. (this in writing not like that of the "H. Ker"). This certificate the registrar refused to register, Mr. Harding never having seen the case in question. Hence the inquest.

I examined the body on the coroner's order, and I found marked congestion of the brain; and in the lungs general acute bronchitis and acute congestion, so much of the latter that only the upper lobe of the right lung yielded more than the most trifling crepitation. The account given of the death by the mother was that she took the child from its bed in early morning, that it gasped once, its breath stopped, and that with a slight struggle it died. After hearing the evidence, Dr. Lankester said that the certificate, though informal, stated the cause of death correctly; thus, any question of neglect or malaproxia on the part of the attendant was put aside. The symptoms described, to be sure, come near enough to a description of *laryngismus stridulus* to admit of death being ascribed to it, if one have any predilection in favour of that disease; but after the information afforded by the *post mortem* examination there can be no doubt but that the child was either already dead when it was taken up (when the change of position would cause an expiration), or that it was at the point of death at that time; and that the death was the result of acute congestion, chiefly accomplished during the cold hours of early morning. Pending the inquest, Mr. Ker came to me and told me that the child had been suffering from croup; that he had looked down its throat and could see no white membrane there; and that he had ordered turpentine stupes to be applied to the neck, and such other remedies to be used as he considered advisable in the case. Had this poor woman's child been subjected to intelligent treatment in the first instance, need it have died?

It must be a very comfortable reflection to the other Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons that there is at least one of their number who, having expended much time and money (and talent, too, no doubt) in obtaining the highest surgical qualification which can be obtained in the United Kingdom, is so philanthropically inclined that he will give the benefit of his advice to the poor for the nominal fee of one shilling a week. The medical profession is the most charitable of professions; and it only needs that Mr. Harding should render his *personal* services for that fee to add one more stone to the monument which the benevolence of his brethren has raised through successive generations, in witness of their claims to be considered the benefactors of their fellow-men.

I am, etc.,

J. ASHBURTON THOMPSON.



# BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL.

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