

elder-flowers, instead of pure water. It is difficult to give judgment as to which is the best of these methods. M. Maisonneuve's plan, and pre-eminently the alcoholic dressings, are those which are most in favour. In addition, all surgeons are agreed in acknowledging the salutary influence exercised on wounds by the most perfect possible ventilation of the wards, the mental condition of the patient, the suppression of pain by anæsthetics, the careful ligature of arteries, great care not to excite pain while dressing wounds, and good alimentation.

## ASSOCIATION INTELLIGENCE.

### BIRMINGHAM AND MIDLAND COUNTIES BRANCH.

THE first meeting of this Branch in the present session will be held at the Council Room of the Midland Institute, on Thursday, October 10th. The chair to be taken at three o'clock precisely.

A council meeting of the Branch will be held after the meeting.

### SOUTH-EASTERN BRANCH: EAST SURREY DISTRICT MEETINGS.

THE next meeting of this Branch will be held at the White Hart Inn, Reigate, on Thursday, October 10th. The chair will be taken at 4 P.M. by Dr. J. LANGDON DOWN.

Papers are promised by Mr. Maunder, Dr. Holman, and Dr. Walters. Dinner will be provided at 6 P.M.

HENRY T. LANCHESTER, M.D., *Hon. Sec.*

### SHROPSHIRE ETHICAL BRANCH.

THE annual general meeting of the above Branch will be held at the Lion Hotel, Shrewsbury, on Monday, October 21st, at 2 P.M. Dinner will be provided punctually at 4 P.M. Tickets 7s. 6d., exclusive of wine.

Gentlemen intending to read papers, or to be present at the dinner, are requested to communicate their intention, at their earliest convenience, to

JUKES STYRAP, } *Hon. Secs.*  
EDWYN ANDREW, }

## MEDICAL NEWS.

### ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS: IMPORTANT ALTERATIONS IN EXAMINATIONS.

THE readers of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL will remember that on the appearance of the last published edition of the *Medical Register*, an elaborate analysis of that work appeared in this JOURNAL, showing how many registered practitioners appeared with only one qualification, and that purely surgical, although they were in general practice; and we took occasion to urge, as we had for some time previously, the necessity for the College of Surgeons to institute joint examinations in medicine by a regularly appointed Board of Physicians. The profession and the public generally will be gratified in learning that the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons of England has just given notice that on and after the 1st of October, 1868, all candidates presenting themselves for the final examination for the diploma of Fellow or Member of the College, as the case may be, will be required to pass an examination in medicine at the College, or to produce a recognised degree, diploma, or licence in medicine before receiving their diploma. Our readers will agree with us that "Melius tardè quam nunquam venire," is a good motto.

**QUEKETT MICROSCOPICAL CLUB.**—The monthly meeting was held at University College on Friday evening (September 27); Mr. Arthur E. Durham, President, in the chair. Mr. Slade read a paper on "Snails' Teeth," in which he described those organs of mollusca known as the tongue or palate, consisting of a long and narrow strip of membrane on which are arranged in various patterns successive series of strong recurved teeth, by the rasping action of which the animal is enabled to obtain its food. By this means the carnivorous mollusca bore through the shells of the animals on which they prey. The number, arrangement, and shape of these teeth afford to naturalists a means of determining species. Dr. Maddox exhibited a collection of beautifully executed micro-photographs of deep sea soundings, many of the objects being magnified three thousand times.

## OPERATION DAYS AT THE HOSPITALS.

MONDAY .....Metropolitan Free, 2 P.M.—St. Mark's, 9 A.M. and 1.30 P.M.—Royal London Ophthalmic, 11 A.M.  
TUESDAY.....Guy's, 1.30 P.M.—Westminster, 2 P.M.—Royal London Ophthalmic, 11 A.M.  
WEDNESDAY..St. Mary's, 2 P.M.—Middlesex, 1 P.M.—University College, 2 P.M.—London, 2 P.M.—Royal London Ophthalmic, 11 A.M.—St. Bartholomew's, 1.30 P.M.—St. Thomas's, 1.30 P.M.  
THURSDAY....St. George's, 1 P.M.—Central London Ophthalmic, 1 P.M.—Great Northern, 2 P.M.—London Surgical Home, 2 P.M.—Royal Orthopaedic, 2 P.M.—Royal London Ophthalmic, 11 A.M.—Hospital for Diseases of the Throat, 2 P.M.  
FRIDAY.....Westminster Ophthalmic, 1.30 P.M.—Royal London Ophthalmic, 11 A.M.  
SATURDAY....St. Thomas's, 9.30 A.M.—St. Bartholomew's, 1.30 P.M.—King's College, 1.30 P.M.—Charing Cross, 2 P.M.—Lock (Clinical Demonstrations and Operations), 1 P.M.—Royal Free, 1.30 P.M.—Royal London Ophthalmic, 11 A.M.

## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

*All Letters and Communications for the JOURNAL, to be addressed to the EDITOR, 37, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C.*

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

*Communications as to the transmission of the JOURNAL should be sent to MR. RICHARDS, 37, Great Queen Street, W.C.*

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

We are favoured by correspondents with copies of the *Birmingham Post*, of the *Bury Post*, September 24th, *et alæ*, of the *Belfast Whig*, the *West Surrey Times*, September 28th, and the *Irish Times*, containing matters of medical interest.

In consequence of pressure on our space, we are compelled to omit numerous letters, reviews, progress, etc.

### MEDICAL CORONERS.

SIR,—Having recently taken a prominent part in advocating the appointment of a medical coroner, I will venture to reply to the remarks of my very old friend Mr. George Terry, which appeared in your columns last week; and, in doing so, I think I can convince him that he has written under a misapprehension of the true position of the matter. His views, if correct, amount to this, that the duties of a coroner cannot be efficiently discharged either by a lawyer or a doctor separately, and that the former is to be preferred because he can more readily supplement his own deficiencies by calling in a medical man to assist him; and, further, that such an arrangement would promote the pecuniary interests of the medical profession. But such a system would never work practically; for if a legal coroner required the advice of a medical man in any other capacity than as a witness, he would have to pay the fee himself; and one of the main arguments in favour of a medical coroner is, that he can discriminate, and therefore more correctly decide not only when an inquest is necessary or not, but also when medical evidence is essential and when it can be dispensed with, and thus save expense to the ratepayers and needless annoyance to the friends of the deceased. I fear that, however desirous we may be to urge our own pecuniary claims in the coroners' court, they will always be regarded in this matter as secondary to those of the public at large. We must be content with such fees as are paid for medical evidence in those cases only, in which the inquiry cannot be properly conducted without our assistance. The object of an inquest is simply to determine the cause of death, and this can be done more effectually by a medical man than by anyone else. Legal intricacies, when they occur, are only incidental to the inquiry, and as to these and to questions of criminal responsibility, etc., they are settled and determined in the law courts, to which they are necessarily referred for subsequent investigation. The amount of legal knowledge required by a coroner for the proper discharge of his functions, comprises nothing more than any clear-headed, well-educated man of sound common sense naturally possesses, not more in fact than is found sufficient to enable clergymen, country squires, borough magistrates, and others, to conduct (frequently with much ability and propriety) the preliminary legal investigations which come before magistrates, justices of the peace, grand juries, and so on. But the medical knowledge necessary for conducting an investigation into the cause of death, deciding when experts are required for analysis in cases of alleged poisoning, or for giving special evidence in cases of peculiar difficulty and various other matters, cannot be met with in anyone who has not had a medical education, and certainly can never be acquired for the nonce by the most able lawyer on the rolls. It is probable that a medical coroner would dispense with medical witnesses in cases where a lawyer could not see his way clear to a decision without their aid; but, on the other hand, it is notorious that non-medical coroners frequently commit serious blunders by allowing juries to find a verdict without medical evidence, and perhaps the one pretty nearly balances the other; at all events, even if we lose a few fees by a medical coroner, we have the satisfaction of knowing that the important functions of a most useful court of inquiry is conducted in the manner most conducive to the public good.

Liverpool, September 1867.

I am, etc., A. B. STEELE.

J. B. ROMNEY.—It was customary to place a coin with the corpse, generally over the eyes, as Charon's fee. In the ethnological collection in the Museum of the College of Surgeons, a skull may be seen with an ancient copper coin so placed, and from the verd antique in the other socket, it is evident it was once the receptacle for a similar coin. The following are the lines to which, no doubt, you allude. They were written on a celebrated vendor of nostrums.

"This Quack to Charon would his penny pay!  
The grateful Ferryman was heard to say—  
'Return, my friend! and live for ages more,  
Or I must haul my useless boat ashore.'"

**NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS.**—Advertisements should be forwarded direct to the Printing-Office, 37, Great Queen Street, W.C., addressed to Mr. Richards, not later than *Thursday*, twelve o'clock.

**AN AMERICAN.**—Your request will, no doubt, be granted, on application to the Conservator.

**A MEMBER (SHEFFIELD).**—It is another of the endless blunders of the *Lancet* in stating that the number of members admitted to the Fellowship is not published in the Calendar of the College of Surgeons. The particulars will be found at page 257. The Spectacles of Natchez are very good.

**SPECIAL INSTITUTIONS.**—A correspondent asks for further information concerning the following, which appeared in the *Times*:—"Blackheath Sanatorium, for the Treatment of Diseases by Specific Remedies.—Under this system, gout, rheumatism, neuralgia, asthma, etc., are often immediately relieved and speedily subdued. Diseases, even which have been pronounced incurable, have yielded to this mode of treatment. No mercury, colchicum, nor any other deleterious drug employed.—Dr. Maconbray, West Grove House, Blackheath, Kent."

#### THE ROYAL HOSPITAL FOR DISEASES OF THE CHEST.

**DRS. RICHARDSON, LEARED, and POWELL,** have issued a final reply, addressed to the Governors of the Hospital. They remark that Dr. Dobell's last circular brings the matters in dispute to the mere question of truth, honour, and good faith. The so-called Minute of the Medical Council of July the 3rd, 1866, quoted by Dr. Dobell, is said by them to be not a *bona fide* Minute; it was not confirmed because Dr. Richardson and Dr. Powell, who were present at the meeting, and constituted the majority, were unable to accept its accuracy. Without any offence to the members of the Hospital Committee, they hold that if they (the Committee) have assumed to settle this point by accepting an unconfirmed minute, they have acted contrary to all rule. On the same principle the Governors might, at a general meeting act on an unconfirmed minute of the Committee on the mere authority of the Secretary; a position they think which the governors would not assume.

a. They deny that they have confounded the acts of the Committee of Management, in relation to the use of certain remedial measures, with the interference of Dr. Dobell. They were ready enough to act in harmony with the unbiased will of the Committee; but they complain that another physician, who had no business to interfere, did interfere. They suggest, as a subject for investigation—What has been the amount of money spent in the past two years on pancreatic emulsion?

b. The placarding of the physicians' room of the hospital with an insurance bill was not a trivial act. The character of the act is best understood by considering how the objects of the institution would have been perverted, if all the physicians had made it an advertising wall for companies with which they were connected.

c. The respirators placarded by Dr. Dobell in the Hospital were, they re-affirm, altogether unknown to them. Even if they had seen or heard of them, it was improper to advertise them without their approval and consent. If it were proper, every physician might have placarded the walls with the advertisement of some special instrument and special manufacturer. But as Dr. Dobell himself must know, such placarding would not be allowed in any other hospital.

d. They state that the assumption of Dr. Dobell at the dinner of 1863 was not an accident, but obviously an intention. Dr. Richardson, who was present all through the dinner, sat opposite to Dr. Dobell, and spoke to him and to the Secretary, so that both of them knew he was present; he was also called for by the Chairman, and rose to reply, but was interrupted by Dr. Dobell. It was nothing to any of them who responded for the Medical Staff so long as there had been a proper understanding; it was the impertinence of one member getting up without any such understanding, and his after-justification, that he had arranged with the Secretary to represent the Staff himself, that constitutes the objection.

e. They state that the offensive manner in which Dr. Dobell acted as the Secretary of the Medical Council, could not be better proved than by the tone of the minute on this point.

f. They assert that Dr. Dobell himself stated to them that he added to the resolutions of the general meeting, and that he set the Secretary to get "proxies" to support the proceeding. According to a long existing rule of the Institution, and of many other Institutions, candidates for the office of physician were admitted, on engaging to become members of the Royal College of Physicians within a year after election. At the general meeting this year, when the laws were revised, it was proposed that every candidate for the post of physician or assistant-physician should be *at the time* a member of the College. This Dr. Leared vigorously opposed, and Dr. Dobell defended. In the end it was agreed that the physician must be a member of the College at his election, but that the assistant-physician should have a year of grace in which to take up membership.

g. They assert that their previous statement about the insult offered to Dr. Powell, in respect of the patient operated upon by him is strictly true. On July 26th, 1867, this point in dispute was discussed with Dr. Dobell, and his assertions have led to a correspondence on the question with Mr. Adams; so that the entire denial of his interference is, to their minds, incomprehensible.

In his first letter, they remark, Dr. Dobell affirmed that they had resigned without making their objections known to him: which, in his last letter, by admitting a "hot discussion" that occurred twenty-eight days before they resigned, he contradicts his first statement.

The fact that Dr. Dobell should send out to the poor patients *one* of his diet bills, is a sufficient cause of objection; and if another handbill, recommending bread and water, had been issued, the objection would be the same.

With respect to the proposition of a "tribunal," as it was proposed to Dr. Richardson by Dr. Dobell, they observe that, had Dr. Richardson consented, as was suggested, to a "tribunal," made out of Dr. Dobell's friends of the Council and one physician, with Drs. Leared and Powell pointedly excluded, he would not only have shown absurd weakness, but he would have admitted by the act that two of his own colleagues were unworthy of credit. With these replies they, on their parts, close this controversy.

Drs. Richardson and Leared, however, apart from Dr. Powell, add a postscript, stating the following facts. Dr. Powell was first introduced to the Hospital, as well as to Dr. Richardson and to Dr. Leared, by Dr. Dobell, on the ground that he would prove a most ready and willing representative of any of the physicians during their absence from duty: a fact which the experience of his conduct for seven years has most fully confirmed. Such has been the confidence reposed in Dr. Powell by the Authorities and Staff of the Hospital, that during several months, while the hospital was being rebuilt, Dr. Powell was asked officially by the Secretary to see *all the physicians' patients at his own residence*, a labour which he cheerfully carried out, and for which he received a special vote of thanks from the management.

#### THE VICTORIA WINE COMPANY.

We have caused the wines of the Victoria Wine Company to be submitted to skilled examination. They were selected from the ordinary stock, and purchased at random and in the usual way, without any knowledge on the part of the vendors of the purpose for which they were procured. The chemical analysis of these wines has already been made by skilled authority; and, as might have been expected, the results are found to be accurately stated. The chemical analysis of wines affords but a very imperfect index of their therapeutic value, and no indication whatever of their quality as beverages. The empirical tests of the palate, the sense of smell, the eye, and the judgment of an experienced wine-taster, are more serviceable guides in the selection. At least, they cannot be dispensed with in forming a *complete* judgment of wines and in the statement of their worth. To these must be added a comparison of the flavour, soundness, bouquet, and condition of the wines, with their selling price. Tried by these various methods and tested by this standard, the Victoria wines command warm praise for their excellent qualities and their singularly low price. They are fully equal in all appreciable respects to a variety of wines with which they have been carefully compared, but which are only procurable by ordinary buyers at twice and three times the price.

#### THE ABUSE OF HOSPITAL OFFICES.

SIR,—As the writer of the letter in the *Birmingham Gazette*, referred to by "North Staffordshire," I may perhaps be allowed a few words in explanation. The hospital in his neighbourhood in no way comes up to the ideal set forth in my letter, which was written expressly in condemnation of the gratuitous labours of our profession; whereas, "North Staffordshire" admits, the medical officers receive no salary for their services in the hospital he brings under notice. Further, the said hospital is supported by a compulsory tax, levied on the workman of the district by their employers, which is a system not to be advocated in a free country, where the men should be free to subscribe to hospital, club, dispensary, or any other institution. In virtue of this tax, the writer says, the families feel a right to the services of the said hospital staff. This should not be, unless it is expressly stated that the penny a week levied is on behalf of the man, his wife, and children; but for this, it is evident such a sum is in no wise adequate. Further, in the hospital quoted, no provision is made, as far as I can see, for those who are not regular subscribers. Are they excluded? In my opinion, all proper applicants, even if non-subscribers, should be admitted, with a graduated weekly payment, according to their circumstances.

Again, in the hospital of "North Staffordshire," there is no committee, as in the Northampton Dispensary, to consider the eligibility or otherwise of the subscribing members; so the writer may well complain of his private practice suffering, which it would do equally if the gratuitous system were fully carried out in his neighbourhood. Further, the writer need not be surprised if respect is not considered due to his profession, if it is known that payment is levied for medical purposes, of which the medical men themselves get nothing. Surely, the scintillations of the doctor's brain cannot be compared in value to his haustus niger.

For these and other reasons, I do not consider the hospital in question any example to elucidate the views expressed by me in the *Birmingham Gazette*, as also in letters that have from time to time appeared in the *BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL*.

I am, etc.,  
MEDICUS.

#### COMMUNICATIONS, LETTERS, ETC., have been received from:—

Mr. William Leigh (with enclosure); Dr. Langdon Down, Earlswood (with enclosure); Dr. Alfred Carpenter, Croydon (with enclosure); Sir James Y. Simpson, Edinburgh (with enclosure); Dr. John Murray (with enclosure); Mr. A. B. Steele, Liverpool (with enclosure); Dr. E. G. Clarke, Mold; Mr. Pridgin Teale, Leeds (with enclosure); Mr. Norman (with enclosure); Mr. Crouch (with enclosure); Mr. Ladd (with enclosure); Messrs. Murray and Heath (with enclosure); Dr. Quinlan, Dublin; Mr. Redgrave, Inspector of Factories; Dr. T. M. Madden, Dublin; Mr. Bingham, Bristol; The Registrar-General of England; The Lecturers of Charing Cross Hospital; Dr. W. Murray, Newcastle upon-Tyne (with enclosure); Mr. H. Fenton, Shrewsbury; Dr. Mapother, Dublin (with enclosure); Dr. Styrap, Shrewsbury (with enclosure); Dr. Dobell; The Honorary Secretary of the Birmingham and Midland Counties Branch; Dr. Prior, Bedford (with enclosure); Dr. J. Braxton Hicks (with enclosure); Dr. H. Bennet (with enclosure); Dr. Macnamara, Dublin (with enclosure); Mr. Henry C. Rogers, Newport Pagnell; Dr. A. T. H. Waters, Liverpool; Dr. McNeill Whistler; Dr. T. T. Derby, U.S.A.; Dr. Corner, Mile End; Mr. R. A. F. Gurney, Thame, Oxon; Dr. Divers (with enclosure); The Registrar of the General Medical Council; The President and Treasurer of St. Thomas's Hospital; Mr. Berkeley Hill; Mr. J. Vose Solomon, Birmingham; Mr. Capes; Mr. P. C. Little, Dublin (with enclosure); Dr. McLoughlin; Mr. A. S. Gooding, Alconbury; Dr. F. J. Brown, Rochester (with enclosure); Dr. Graily Hewitt (with enclosure); Drs. Richardson, Leared, and Powell; The Secretary of the Quekett Microscopical Club; Dr. W. A. Miller; Dr. Broadbent (with enclosure); Mr. Solly, F.R.S. (with enclosure); Mr. Teevan (with enclosure); Mr. Oliver Pemberton, Birmingham (with enclosure); Mr. W. Bates, Birmingham (with enclosure); Mr. T. P. Teale, jun., Leeds (with enclosure); Dr. Letheby (with enclosure); Dr. Cobbold (with enclosure); Mr. Holmes (with enclosure); Dr. Odling (with enclosure); Mr. Durham (with enclosure); Dr. Thorburn (with enclosure); Dr. Humble (with enclosure); Mr. W. Baker (with enclosure); Dr. Vale, Birkenhead; Dr. P. Black; J. G. H.; Mr. Stone; Mr. Higley; Mr. Thomas Smith (with enclosure); Mr. Berkeley Hill; Mr. T. Sawyer, Melrose; Dr. Cossar, Hurworth, Darlington; Dr. Gidley; Mr. H. Fenton, Shrewsbury; Mr. E. T. Shepard, Vienna; Dr. J. W. Young, Dublin.

#### BOOKS, ETC., RECEIVED.

Report on the Sanitary Condition and Public Health of Mile End Old Town, etc. London: 1867.

Second Report of the Quekett Microscopical Club, and List of Members. London: 1867.

Report of the City of Glasgow Fever Hospital, etc. By Dr. James B. Russell. Glasgow: 1867.

The Northern Whig, September 23rd.—The Sunday Gazette, September 29th.—The Irish Times, September 25th.