

simply absurd. There are plenty of writers in your own school who would deny such assertions. Dr. Andrew Combe, for instance says :—(*British and Foreign Med. Review*, vol. 21, page 521) “If I were now in practice I should hold myself bound, without further delay, to test its truth by careful and extensive experiments.” Again, to compare it with Morrison or Holloway, is worse than absurd, for surely no useful analogy can be drawn between a system which is supported by thousands of competent authorities, (educated medical men,) and a single medicine which rests for support on the testimony of one or two interested persons. Read the fine philosophic views in the paper of Combe’s above quoted, and then see whether such reasoning is applicable to homœopathy.

Depend upon it, Sir, that whether homœopathy is true or false, the course pursued by the periodical medical press is alike impolitic and injurious to the respectability of the profession. The public are beginning to inquire into the matter, and it will be hard for the profession to come well out of the scrutiny. If you really believe homœopathy to be a “mischievous fallacy,” you ought to urge on your readers to set to work to expose it without delay, by experimenting honestly with their medicines, and publishing their failures. You should tell them that what has heretofore been called refutation, (in other words, abuse and calumny,) has been tried for sixty years, and has most signally failed;—that homœopathy to-day is more rampant than ever;—that, therefore, the further reliance on these weapons is hopeless;—that nothing can be expected from persecution;—that that also has been tried and found wanting;—and that if despotic Austria was obliged to abandon it, it is scarcely probable that the miserable efforts of the Scotch Universities in the same direction will answer better. Wonderful to say, however, the unwillingness of the profession to enter on our destruction in the way which (if we are wrong) would insure success, is only equalled by our eagerness to court this destruction. We open hospitals, we put every facility in the way of medical men attending them, we say to our bitterest enemies—come, and welcome. On the present occasion I have tried to bribe the profession to expose us, by offering a twenty guinea prize, (I will make it forty if you please,) for the best series of cases illustrative of the failure of the treatment, but all to no purpose. You fall back on the old tactics, and solemnly pronounce your deliberate conviction, that out of two or three thousand medical men not one has ordinary conscientiousness and intelligence combined. And you say this, although many of these men have made the greatest possible sacrifices, personal and professional, in embracing homœopathy; and though they have enlisted on their side such men as the scientific Chevalier Bunsen, the logical Archbishop Whateley, and the hard-headed statistician Wilson. Verily, Sir, the extreme of scepticism is the quintessence of credulity.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

GEORGE HILBERS.

19, South Bedford Street,
July 29, 1851.

Medical Intelligence.

THE LAW OF LUNACY.

On Thursday, the 17th ultimo, a meeting of the “Association of Medical Officers of Hospitals for the Insane” was held by appointment at twelve o’clock, at the Freemasons’ Tavern. Dr. Conolly, being the senior member of the Association, was voted in the chair. The following members, with others, were present:—Dr. Bucknel, of the Devon Asylum; Dr. Huxley, Kent Asylum; Dr. Stewart, Belfast Asylum; Dr. Huckle, Asylum, Oxford; Dr. Kirkman, Suffolk Asylum; Dr. Boyd, Somerset Asylum; Mr. Diamond, Surrey Asylum; Mr. Prosser, Asylum, Leicester; Dr. Fox, of Northwood; Dr. Munro, of Bethlem; Dr. Lloyd Williams and Dr. Nesbitt, of the Northampton Asylum. The Association has been in operation some years. The meetings have hitherto been held in the provinces, at or in the neighbourhood of the various County Asylums. It was, however, determined this year to summon a meeting of the Association in London in order to afford the members living in the metropolis an opportunity of discussing with their provincial friends some important matters of business.

As a preliminary matter, the question arose as to the organization of the Society. The Association has always met annually in the provinces, and has been confined to medical gentlemen officially connected with County or Public Lunatic Asylums. It was proposed and carried that the medical proprietors of private Asylums should be eligible as members; and a number of gentlemen were immediately elected. It was also resolved that for the future the annual meetings should take place in London, in the second week of July; and that the members of the Association resident in or near London should hold quarterly meetings in the metropolis for the despatch of business.

The condition of the criminal lunatics was then brought under the notice of the Society by Dr. Conolly, and after a long discussion, in which Drs. Boyd, Nesbitt, and Winslow took a part, it was agreed to present a petition to Government for the establishment of an institution, apart from Bethlem, exclusively for the reception of persons acquitted of crime on the plea of insanity. The unfortunate, desolate, and unhappy condition of the criminal lunatics was feelingly dwelt on by all the speakers, and it appeared to be the unanimous opinion of the Association that sufficient attention had not been paid to their state. It was thought that great good would result from the separation of the criminal from the other lunatics confined in Bethlem and other public asylums. The state of the law relating to the insane was then fully discussed. It appeared to be opinion of the Association that the Lunacy Acts were greatly defective, and that the whole of them required careful revision. Nearly all the speakers pointed out most glaring errors in the construction of the Acts of Parliament bearing upon the management of asylums and the care of the insane. It was proposed that a Committee of five members of the Association be formed to consider the subject. The following gentlemen were nominated:—Dr. Corsellis,

Dr. Conolly, Dr. Forbes Winslow, Dr. Boyd, and Dr. Nesbitt. It was also proposed and carried that Dr. Winslow should be appointed Secretary to the Committee; that he should communicate with the various members of the Association, and obtain from them suggestions as to the amendment of the law, and embody them with his own views in an official shape, for the consideration of the Government and the Commissioners in Lunacy. The inquiry which Dr. Winslow was authorized by the Association to make was to extend to all the Lunacy Acts, embracing also the enactment relating to the administration of the property of lunatics, which was considered unjust and defective in its operation.

After the despatch of other business, the Association agreed in a body to visit Colney Hatch and the Surrey County Asylum, with the view of inspecting their arrangements.

The first quarterly meeting of the Association is to be held in London early in September, when important matters of business are to be considered.

THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS.

The portals of this College, which have, until lately, appeared hermetically sealed in their aristocratic staterooms, were thrown open, for the second time this season, on Wednesday evening; and to the great gratification derived from the former *soirée* was doubtless to be attributed the large number of visitors, both home and foreign, who assembled on this occasion. To the genial influence of this eventful year may be attributed the dissolution of many barriers to social intercourse, and in the College of Physicians the effects were visibly portrayed in the kindly manner in which the President and Fellows received their guests; nor was it difficult to perceive, that mutual recognitions and exchanges of courtesy formed the staple of the hour. The floral decorations throughout the various *salons* were displayed in excellent taste, added to which, the brilliant mode of lighting the grand library greatly facilitated the observation of such objects of interest as covered the tables, and gave additional effect to the charming *coup d'œil* from the gallery of the Museum. We cannot in justice omit a remark, *en passant*, on the profusion with which the supper tables displayed in elegant arrangement their tempting delicacies;—the greatest credit is due to the Messrs. Staples, on whom, we understand, this, not the least important, part of the entertainment devolved. We only hope the Council of the College of Surgeons will not fail to profit by the example afforded them, and render their public meetings more dignified and better worthy the object they seek to elevate. Among the company assembled we observed—the Duke of Newcastle; Lord Colborne; Bishop of Sodor and Man; Archdeacons Hale, Sinclair, and Burney; Sir Henry Ellis; Sir Wm. Newton; Sir Benjamin Brodie; Sir James Ross; Sir Charles Fellows; Sir James South; Sir John Herschell; Sir Charles Young; Lieutenant-Colonel North; Captain Sibthorpe; Judge Patteson; Sir Frederick Thesiger; Sheriffs Carden and Hodgkinson; Seyd Abdoolah; Baron Homfeldt; Don José de Odriozola; Don Miguel de Odriozola; Don Cubi y Solis; Dr. Pantaleone; Father Gavazzi; Pro-

fessor Pattison; Rev. Drs. Russell, Croker, Plumptre, Major, Richard Fayle, Edwin Fayle, R. N. Russell, Babington, Rowlatt, Williams, Mr. Pusey, M.P.; Mr. Gladstone, M.P.; Mr. Hastie, M.P.; Mr. Goulbourn, M.P.; Mr. Jacob Bell, M.P.; Hon. Charles Villiers, M.P.; Mr. Pickersgill; Mr. David Roberts; Mr. Copley Fielding; Sir Richard Westmacott; Doctors Paris, Monro, Hawkins, Alison, Hue, Merriman, Tyler Smith, Dew, Henry Monro, Sieveking, Walshe, Babington, Roberts, Balfour, Blacklock (of Dumfries), Malcolm (of Edinburgh), Benjamin Bell, Quain, Jenner, Bushnan, Hodgkin, Turley, Thomson, Reid, Diruf, Lee, Cox, Toogood, Scholfield, Goodfellow, etc. etc.—*Medical Times*.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

The following gentlemen were admitted on the 18th ultimo:—Charles Le Gay Bereton, Beverley, Yorkshire; John Page Cooper, Coborn Road, Bow, Middlesex; John Edward Davies, Stone's End, Southwark; Michael Cudmore Furnell, Pelham Place, North, Brompton; John Grabham, Rochford, Essex; Thomas Ligertwood, Foveran, Aberdeenshire; James Mudge, Bodmin, Cornwall; Robert Vaile Skinner, Headcorn, Kent; Charles Henry Tovey, Bermondsey Street, Southwark; Thomas Delamine Wheatley, Carlisle, Cumberland.

The following gentlemen were admitted on the 23rd ultimo:—Merrick Lloyd Burrows, Devizes, Wiltshire; Edward Davis, Thatcham, Berkshire; Frederick Wm. Headland, Guildford Street, Russell Square; James F. Henry, Royal Navy; Horace F. Howard, New Buckingham, Norfolk; George William Nichols, St. Ives, Huntingdonshire; John Henry Peacock Oldmeadow, Great Coram Street; John Douglas Tapin, Barbadoes; William Warke, Liverpool; William Robert Woodman, India.

The following were admitted on the 25th ultimo:—James Hobson Aveling, Rochester, Kent; George Burnham, Great Grimsby, Lincolnshire; David Daniel Davies, Carmarthen; Francis Godrich, Brompton, Middlesex; Robert Joseph Hodges, Barrington, Dorset; John Langdon, Bampton, Devon; William Cecil Lovell, St. John's Wood; Frederick Pratt, Swimbridge, Devon; Richard Richards, Carnarvon, North Wales; John S. Sanderson, Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Willoughby Francis Wade, Derby.

The following were admitted on the 28th ultimo:—Arthur Adey, Hon. East India Company's Service, Madras; Edward Ashton, Boston, Lincolnshire; Herbert Beresford, Chesterfield, Derbyshire; Henry Bond Ware, Herts; Charles Wm. Chaldecott, Dorking, Surrey; James Crawford, Belfast; Jeremiah Cronin, Cork; Southmead Langworthy, Modbury, Devon; D. Leman, London; William Henry Yates, Stroud, Gloucestershire; Henry William Wood, Royal Navy.

SOCIETY OF APOTHECARIES.

Gentlemen admitted members on Thursday, the 24th ult.:—Henry Gregory King, Kingston; George Wise Mackenzie, Maidstone; Thomas Joseph Wm. Marsh, London; William Parater, Exeter.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications have been received from Mr. Lawrance and Mr. McNab.

It is requested that all letters and communications connected with the *Editorial department* be sent to J. H. Walsh, Esq., Foregate Street, Worcester. Parcels and books for review may be addressed to the care of Mr. Churchill, Princes Street, Soho.