

ASSOCIATION MEDICAL JOURNAL.

EDITED BY JOHN ROSE CORMACK, M.D.

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NEW SERIES.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. GAY'S BIOGRAPHY. Mr. Gay writes to us, that his biography has this week been reprinted in the usual vehicle, "not only without his concurrence, but in opposition to his wishes".

THE MANCHESTER MEETING. We are constantly receiving letters of inquiry regarding the exact date of the anniversary meeting to be held at Manchester. We are as yet unable to state anything in reply. There is unfortunately no law fixing the time of the annual meetings of the Association, so that no one, in making arrangements in advance for the autumn's leisure, can take the time of the annual meeting into due consideration. The months generally fixed on are August or September, as the teachers in the different schools are then free from their academic duties, as it is the most general holiday season.

MR. CROUCH'S CASE. We have received some rather smartly censorious letters complaining of the appearance of a paper in our pages as an "Original Communication" after it had appeared in the *Lancet*. We can only express our regret at the occurrence. The paper was sent to us in manuscript, as a communication which had been read at the meeting of the Bath and Bristol Branch. Mr. John Crouch, the author of the paper, has not been a member of the Association for more than twelve months past; but that circumstance, as some have suggested, does not exclude his papers from these pages. We allude thus publicly to Mr. Crouch's paper, because we wish it to be clearly understood, that articles which are inserted in the ASSOCIATION JOURNAL as "original articles" are believed by us never to have been before published; and not to have been sent for publication to any other periodical.

SECOND EDITION OF NO. LV. Both editions of our number for 20th January ought to be preserved for binding, as the second edition contains matter regarding Mr. Gay's case, which we have not given in any other issue. The pages of the second edition are distinguished by an asterisk, to prevent confusion in the index.

PERSONALITIES OF THE ROYAL FREE HOSPITAL AFFAIR. We have received many letters regarding collateral controversies connected with Mr. Gay's dismissal. We have, from a sense of duty, avoided all mere personalities in discussing this subject; and we therefore decline to insert any of the letters to which we refer. Barren personal disputations tend to no good, and generally savour more of partizanship than of an honest war for right principles. The Free Hospital Committee, and the Biographical system must, in our pages, be viewed apart from questions of individual veracity, and journalistic rivalry.

THE NEW VACCINATION ACT.

We refer our readers with much pleasure to the proceedings of the Metropolitan Counties Branch regarding Vaccination and Lord Lyttelton's Act. At a meeting in which the three branches of the profession were represented by men of the highest standing there was a pledge given to cooperate with Lord Lyttelton in his patriotic desire to establish on a right basis a system of National Vaccination. We doubt not that this pledge will be as nobly redeemed as it was cordially given; and that another great proof will be afforded by the opportunity which is now offered, that we are, notwithstanding our minor disagreements on questions of medical polity, united as a profession in willingness to cooperate with the State in promoting the health and happiness of the people. We shall soon have more to say on this all important subject, especially with reference to the constitution of the proposed committee and its probable plan of operations.

BIOGRAPHICAL ADVERTISING AND ABUSING.

THE danger which existed of a temporary buoyancy being given to the biographical system by Mr. Gay's case being so unfortunately complicated with it and its main abettors, has evidently roused the profession from an unseemly lethargy, and pointed out the necessity of taking every possible opportunity of testifying that, although it condemned the unjust conduct of the Free Hospital Committee, it likewise repudiated the abominations of the biography traffic, and had nothing in common with those persons in whose hands it has become so loathsome, and by whom it is still attempted to be carried on.

We refer to the speeches reported in following pages with no ordinary feelings of pleasure. As strengthening, if that were possible, the verdict of so influential a meeting, we here subjoin a communication which we have received from one whose name has already contributed, in no small degree, to the success of the present movement:—

"2, Russell Square, Feb. 14th, 1854.

"SIR,—I greatly regret that it was quite impossible for me to attend the meeting of the Metropolitan Counties Branch, having always a special engagement on each Tuesday.

"I feel deeply the gross injustice that has been inflicted on Mr. Gay, whom I have never even seen to my knowledge; but I cannot but feel that such a measure as has been adopted, tending to degrade him in one branch of the profession, tends also equally to degrade the other two branches; and that it behoves every member of either branch of the profession boldly to come forward and express their extreme disgust. I glory in my profession, and I hope and trust that the day may not be far off, when, laying all petty jealousies aside, the three branches of the profession may act in perfect unanimity: then and then only shall we occupy that position in the world that we are so justly entitled to. I earnestly hope that if Branches of the ASSOCIATION should propose any resolutions with respect to Mr. Gay's unjust treatment, that they may be at least equally strong as those that I had the honour of supporting at the great meeting at the Hanover Square Rooms.

"In concluding this, I cannot lose the opportunity of hoping that the system that has unfortunately prevailed of late, of different medical men publishing their effigies and biographies, may speedily cease; because I can regard it only as a means of puffing and advertising themselves to the detriment of their less fortunate though perhaps equally deserving professional brethren; and not one iota better than those advertisements that we daily see in the newspapers from Messrs. Morison, Holloway, and Du Barry. You have my perfect permission to use this letter in any way you may think proper. And I anxiously hope that the example set by the Great Meeting in the Hanover Square Rooms, may be quickly followed throughout all the provinces of the United Kingdom.

"I am, etc.,

"TO THE EDITOR, ETC."

"H. S. ROOTS.