

ASSOCIATION MEDICAL JOURNAL.

EDITED BY JOHN ROSE CORMACK, M.D.

No. LXXIV.

LONDON: FRIDAY EVENING, JUNE 2, 1854.

NEW SERIES.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

DR. O'CONNOR, in the *Lancet* of the 27th May, accuses the Editor of this Journal of flagrant falsehood. This subject will come before the Metropolitan Counties Branch on the 13th inst.

LETTERS, ETC., FOR THE EDITOR, may be addressed to 21, EDWARDS STREET, PORTMAN SQUARE; where members may see the Editor, on *Wednesdays*, between 12 and 1 o'clock.

MEDICAL BENEVOLENT FUND.

WE beg to call the attention of our readers, especially of the members of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association, to the approaching Biennial Festival of the MEDICAL BENEVOLENT FUND, which is announced to take place on the 14th of June, at the London Tavern, under the presidency of the Right Hon. the Lord Ashburton.

Unadorned by the patronage that has been accumulated around the Benevolent College—cautious in its expenditure—unostentatiously pursuing its unwearied course of practical charity—and sparing of its promises—the Benevolent Fund has continued its course for eighteen years. Known chiefly to those who have been the recipients of its bounty, and avoiding display, it has had to contend with straitened circumstances; yet to the utmost extent of its income, it has relieved the practical distresses of the profession. Upon the present occasion, we call upon all the members of the Association to support their own Benevolent Society with renewed exertions. The annuity fund is mainly dependent upon this festival and legacies for its extension. Annuities are not given to those who have £15 a year to live upon, but to those who have no means of support; while the houses of Mr. Bailey, at Chippenham, form a quiet asylum to such annuitants. There the aged, the infirm, and the widow, may find a peaceful retreat in their own homes from the asperities of life. A public asylum and a private home are evidently suitable for two distinct classes of persons requiring the assistance of the benevolent. The Medical Benevolent College is a noble enterprise; but the Medical Benevolent Fund is equally so; and, at the present moment, its claims are more urgent, inasmuch as it is unable adequately to deal with many valid and pressing claims for immediate succour.

INSTRUCTION IN COMMON THINGS.

ON recent occasions [pp. 385, 431], we have drawn attention to the necessity which exists of instructing pupils in the ordinary routine of medical and surgical practice, as a preliminary step to their attendance on Lectures and Hospitals; and we expressed our conviction that this important kind of knowledge was best acquired in the house or under the immediate superintendence of a practitioner.

We have no hesitation in expressing our opinion that a course of pupillage, such as that to which we allude, is

indispensable to every medical man who aspires to be able to do his duty to the public with efficiency. If one more distinguished than the rest should become the President of the College of Physicians, or of the College of Surgeons, he will not make a worse leader of his fellows or a worse practitioner from having received such a preliminary training; but, on the contrary, he will always look back with satisfaction to the period when he was engaged in learning "common things".

It is quite true that, some years since, by far too much time was devoted to mere practical pursuits; but the progress of abstract science and the increased enlightenment of the age have blended the theoretical with the practical, to the infinite improvement of the art and science of medicine. There is now some fear that the tendency is a little too much in the opposite direction to the [practical]; and that the profession and the public, disgusted with the excessive administration of mixtures, draughts, and pills, have fled to the opposite extreme of despising medicines altogether, or at least of undervaluing their importance. Hence, indeed, we may trace the cause of the popularity of homœopathy, hydropathy, and the other forms of quackery, which have superseded the over-medication of the old apothecary, and the apparent success of which in a few cases has induced a feeling of scepticism as to the efficacy of medicine, in the minds of persons who have not been taught to observe and think.

The appropriate cure for the delusions which exist both in and out of the profession at the present day is to be found, we think, in the dissemination of sound knowledge among the rising members of our body, and in the early direction of their minds to a practical acquaintance with the duties which will devolve upon them in after life. Before a boy is placed with a practitioner, or while he is under his roof, he should be obliged to prove his knowledge in scholastic pursuits; for while a perusal of the classical authors will fill his mind with noble and generous sentiments, the pursuit of the exact sciences, such as arithmetic and geometry, will strengthen his intellect and improve his reasoning powers.

When we advocate the propriety and the necessity which exist for a young man to learn "common things" with a practitioner, instead of entering at once to the universities and medical schools, we do so from a number of reasons.

In the first place, we may mention, that on the score of morality, the plan which we propose is the best; for the domestic restraint, which is necessarily imposed upon a youth who is received into a private family, must unquestionably be preferable to the life which he must lead, if thrown by himself upon a large city. If he be studious, in the latter supposed case, he must feel most acutely the want of an elder friend to guide and direct him in his pursuits; and if he be idle, sad experience too amply proves that he is sent on the road to ruin with accelerated velocity, when exposed to the temptations in which our metropolis abounds, in common with all capital and university towns.

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Fig 1.

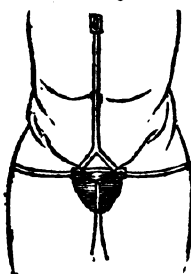


Fig. 2.

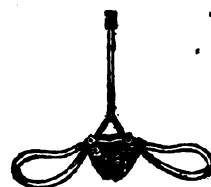


Fig. 1. MR. BOURJEAURD'S NEW SUSPENSORY BANDAGE, as applied to a patient. — The bag supporting the scrotum is made of a delicate webbing of silk and India-rubber; the bands running round the thighs consist of the most yielding elastic tissue, and will stretch to twice their length; a third band is adapted to the upper part of the bag, the former being intended to be fastened to the flannel waistcoat of the patient. The scrotum is thus kept raised and fixed *in situ*, without distressing the organ in the least, the suspensor allowing of the most varied movements of the body.

Fig. 2. The same suspensory bandage, taken off.

MEDICAL BENEVOLENT FUND.

The Committee beg to announce that the BIENNIAL DINNER of the MEDICAL BENEVOLENT FUND will take place at the LONDON TAVERN, BISHOPSGATE STREET, on WEDNESDAY, the 14th of JUNE NEXT,

THE RIGHT HON. LORD ASHBURTON IN THE CHAIR,

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The liability of the Steward is limited to £1 : 1, the amount of the Dinner Ticket.
12, Cambridge Square, Hyde Park.

JAMES BRIGHT, M.D., Honorary Secretary.