

£300 a year, with quarters, or an allowance for them. He has, however, to subscribe to the retiring fund—a demand which no one grudges, as by it a provision is made in the most advantageous way for a retiring pension.

Usually in a year, more or less, the assistant-surgeon obtains some post which gives him allowances of from £3 to £12 per month besides his pay. These allowances vary so much, that it is not possible to tell any man how much pay he may be receiving two years after he has commenced his service. He may be getting only £350 per annum, or he may be getting £400, or even £500. As his service advances, and he becomes entitled by seniority to better posts, the pay improves even more. At the end of ten years, the assistant-surgeon can have a holiday for three years; and, at the end of seventeen years of actual service, he can resign on captain's retiring allowance, viz., £190 per annum, to which is added either £200 or £300 from his fund. So that, if he goes out at 22 years of age, when he is 39 he is secure of £400 per annum; and the chances are that, if he has been prudent, he has saved money in addition.

We will venture to say, that scarcely one professional man in England is able to accumulate property to this extent in anything like seventeen years.

Married men going out to India are rather heavily pressed for the first two or three years, as they have to pay largely to the fund for their wife, and for each child. When this pinching time is over, however, they have the inexpressible pleasure of feeling that, if they are taken away, their families are secured from want by the allowances granted to them by the fund.

ELECTION OF DR. BEGBIE AS PRESIDENT OF THE EDINBURGH COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS.

IN a recent article (p. 117), we made, it appears, two errors, which the *Monthly Medical Journal* has been kind enough to point out to us, in return for our incidental reference to his very intemperate criticisms upon the conduct of the principal medical institution of Scotland. A majority of the Edinburgh College, being desirous of placing Dr. BEGBIE in the chair, elected a Council known to be favourable to the claims of that gentleman, as the election of President is vested in the Council. This proceeding did not appear to us to be wrong, even though Dr. Begbie had recently joined the College, and had "found it convenient to relinquish general practice". We indeed seized the opportunity of expressing the opinion that honours ought in our profession, as in all others, to be open to merit; and here is the rejoinder of our northern contemporary:—

"There never was a job perpetrated, however gross, which did not find an apologist. In a leading article abounding in misstatements, such as that the Edinburgh College is composed of seventy Fellows, whereas the exact number on the roll is forty-eight—that its President's chair was the chair of Abercrombie, although it is well known that physician never sat in it, and so on,—the ASSOCIATION JOURNAL defends the votes of the

junto for the following extraordinary reasons: 1st. That the names of the present Council are guarantees to Europe of the desire of the College to do honour to well-earned professional reputation; 2nd. That the College presents a noble example of a representative body departing from routine and the distinction of professional grades, in order to open up a successful career to talents alone! Would indeed that such were the case; for then not only would the College be supported by us, but by the medical world at large. But what will the profession think of a journal disingenuously attributing such exalted reasons for an act which, in the place of Professor Simpson, introduced Dr. Wm. Seller; which rejected Professor Bennett [Editor of *Monthly Medical Journal*], in order to elect Dr. John Burt; and which slighted some dozen highly respectable general practitioners, all seniors to Dr. Begbie, in order to put that gentleman in the chair? What must our continental readers and the profession suppose when informed by the ASSOCIATION JOURNAL that Drs. Seller, Burt, and Begbie, are recognised above all others in the Edinburgh College of Physicians as possessing the greatest talents and the most extensive European reputations?" (*Monthly Medical Journal* for March, p. 277.)

We are not ashamed to defer to the superior local knowledge of the Editor of the *Monthly Journal*, and to admit that we were mistaken in stating that the number of resident Fellows of the College was "about seventy", while it appears to be only forty-eight. Nor do we hesitate to inform our readers that we were wrong in supposing that Abercrombie had occupied the chair of the College. Although several movements were made to place that distinguished man in a position which he so well deserved, we learn that he would never allow himself to be put in nomination. His library was, however, left after his death to the two Colleges of which he was a Fellow, and of which he continued to the last a willing, though not perhaps a very active supporter. His marble bust, moreover, placed in the most conspicuous position in the Hall of the "Physicians", and in the Museum of the "Surgeons", testifies to the good feeling which existed between this eminent physician and his professional brethren, although he had committed the unpardonable fault of finding it convenient to relinquish general practice.

Having thus adopted the corrections of our contemporary when he states simple facts, we are not going to follow him any further in his peevish and puerile criticism either on the College or on ourselves. In the article referred to, we made no invidious personal allusions; and it is not now necessary for us to inform our readers why the modest virtues of the "general practitioner" may sometimes be very properly preferred to the sounding brass of a European reputation.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

BOOKS RECEIVED. [*An Asterisk is prefixed to the names of Members of the Association.] 1. BRODRURST, [Bernard E.] on Lateral Curvature of the Spine; its Pathology and Treatment. pp. 67. London: 1855. 2. BRAINARD, [Daniel, M.D.] Essay on a New Method of Treating Serpent Bites and other poisoned Wounds. Plates. pp. 26. Chicago: 1854.

BOOKS, LETTERS, AND COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE EDITOR AND GENERAL SECRETARY may be addressed, after 25th March, to 37, Russell Square, London.

NOTICE. COVERS FOR THE VOLUMES for 1855 and 1854 may be had at the Office of the Journal, 37, Great Queen Street, London, price 1s. 6d. each. Members in the country can readily obtain them by order to their local Booksellers.

MR. ELLIOTT (Chichester). The letter on the Army Medical System is in the hands of the printer.