

ASSOCIATION MEDICAL JOURNAL.

EDITED BY JOHN ROSE CORMACK, M.D.

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NEW SERIES.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE EDITOR AND GENERAL SECRETARY TO
37, RUSSELL SQUARE, LONDON.

MANY ARTICLES are excluded this week from want of space. The papers of Dr. COCKLE and Mr. B. HUNT (Birmingham) are in type. Were brevity more studied, we could accommodate a greater number of authors.

THE NEWSPAPER STAMP ACT AND THE POSTAGE OF PRINTED PAPER. The agitation against the compulsory newspaper stamp, which commenced about six years ago, has triumphed: and on the 15th of June the royal assent was given to an Act to which we must all give obedience and attention.

We wish our readers also to know, that on the 6th June, a Treasury order (already in operation), appeared in the *London Gazette*, admitting all printed matter to postage at the rate of One penny for four ounces; the postage to be paid by a Queen's head affixed on a cover open at the sides. Packets exceeding sixteen ounces, will be charged Two-pence for every eight ounces, or fractions of eight ounces.

Our correspondents frequently send letters without the requisite amount of stamps. With two or three gentlemen we almost invariably have to pay double postage, notwithstanding the stamps affixed to the letters for which we are charged. The remedy for this is the use of letter-weights.

MEDICAL REFORM. MR. GEORGE KING, of Bath, and many others, write urging Petitions in favour of Headlam's Bill. We trust that this important duty is being fulfilled by all who are in favour of that measure, so well embodies the principles for which the Association has always contended.

BOOKS RECEIVED. [**An Asterisk is prefixed to the names of Members of the Association.*] 1. *CLARKE [J. F.] The Medical Profession in its Relations to Society and the State. An Oration. pp. 21. London: 1855. 2. HUTCHINSON [Jonathan, Esq.] On the Form of Dyspepsia which often precedes and attends Phthisis. pp. 22. Reprinted from the *Medical Times*. 3. GARROD [Alfred Baring, M.D.] The Essentials of Materia Medica, Therapeutics, and the Pharmacopoeias for the Use of Students and Practitioners. pp. 282. London: 1855. 4. RIANORE [J. E., M.D.] On Local Treatment of the Mucous Membrane of the Throat for Cough and Bronchitis. pp. 99. London: 1855.

PARAGRAPHS FROM OUR PORTFOLIO.

XXXIV. WIGSTON MAGNA REPORT. We have received Mr. Dickens' report on Wigston Magna, which Mr. Fry has referred to at page 616. It affords the most conclusive evidence of the intimate connexion between sanitary neglect and mismanagement on the one hand, and the prevalence of disease, excessive mortality, and heavy expense, with increased pauperism, on the other hand. At the same time, it shews pretty convincingly how very generally local boards and parochial authorities are incompetent of themselves to devise and carry out the necessary work for the effective improvement of their town or district; and how essential to the useful working of any legislative enactments on the subject of the public health is the power of supervision by a Government Central Board, having competent medical and engineering inspectors on its staff.

Here is the case of a small village, pleasantly and favourably situated in a healthy part of the country, where yet the average mortality during the last seven years has been quite as high as in the metropolis itself, with all the abounding sources of mischief to health that almost inevitably attend such an enormous congregation of human beings in a limited space.

In some years, the mortality in Wigston has been as high as 33 in 1,000 of the inhabitants! and this, too, owing mainly to the ravages of typhus fever, a disease which, above all others, has been found to be so dependent on local, and therefore preventible causes.

Another sure test of local insalubrity is an excessive rate of mortality in early life. How stands Wigston Magna in this respect?

"In 1851, the deaths under five years of age were more than one-third of the total number registered; and in 1852-3, they were nearly one-half of the total number registered." (p. 23.)

Now for a few of the causes of this state of things.

"The cesspool system is and has been one of the great evils of Wigston. There is scarcely a block of houses in the whole inhabited portion of the parish that is not more or less poisoned by a cesspool. Fever has been the great scourge of the place, and will no doubt be so again and again, until these receptacles are abolished. The paving of the courts or alleys and yards is very defective. Much impurity lies on the surface, causing offensive smells." (p. 9.)

With respect to the water supply, Mr. Fry states:—

"That in many instances the wells are so near the cesspools that the water must become contaminated." (p. 19.)

Mr. Blunt, the medical officer of the union, states:—

"That some little time since he had some water brought to him from a well supplying one of his cottages. The occupiers complained very much of the badness of this water. Witness tested it, and detected sulphuretted hydrogen. Supposed the impurity arose from the decomposition of vegetable matter in the well, and recommended it should be cleaned out. This was done, and a considerable deposit of vegetable refuse was found at the bottom. Besides this, the lower part of the pump had decayed, and was rotting in the water." (p. 19.)

When, in addition to these evils, we find that many of the cottages are wretchedly ventilated, and overcrowded to excess, with filthy pigsties at their doors, who can wonder at the consequences? Is not disease and death the simple result to be looked for from such a state of things?

On the point of draining off the liquid contents of cesspools, and leaving the solid matter behind, the less that is said the better. The only wise and safe plan to deal with such abominations is to effect the speedy removal of *all* the contents; and this can only be properly done either by water-closets, along with proper drains and sewers, or (which is the next best means) by a systematic daily emptying of tubs, etc., and carting it away to a distance.

Upon no pretext whatever, should excrementitious matters be permitted to remain near the dwellings either of man or of beast. This is a simple law of nature, which cannot be violated with impunity; and by keeping it constantly in view, an enormous amount of sickness, suffering, and death, might be prevented.

XXXV. ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM ASSOCIATION. This Association held another great meeting in Drury Lane Theatre on Wednesday evening, June 27th. The speakers were Mr. Charles Dickens, Mr. Layard, M.P., Mr. M'Cullagh, Mr. Morley, and Mr. Bennoch. The speech of Mr. Dickens was very effective. The movement is gaining strength with every hour; and for that reason we are not afraid to mingle with the notes of triumph a voice of warning. We trust a little more care will be taken by the leaders in this great and patriotic movement to prevent it degenerating into a mere affair of "business men", who glorify themselves on the unwonted patriotism of having "left their desks in the

it is only when we see such men as Dr. Burrows, Dr. Billing, Mr. Fergusson, and others who are called "the heads of the profession", mixed up with its unprofessional projects, that we—regardless of all personal considerations,—touch so foul a thing as the *Medical Circular*, speak out plainly in the name and on behalf of our insulted colleagues, and do what we can to stem a tide of licentiousness which, if allowed to flow, would soon make the profession of medicine the scorn and the derision of all honourable and educated gentlemen.

THE ROYAL MEDICAL BENEVOLENT COLLEGE.

It is this week our gratifying duty to record the opening of the Royal Medical Benevolent College, which took place on Monday last, the 25th instant, under the auspices of His Royal Highness Prince Albert. On this occasion, a brief review of the rise and progress of this noble institution will, we doubt not, be regarded as interesting and seasonable.

Previously to the year 1851, there was no institution, belonging to the profession itself, to which the medical practitioner could look as a refuge either for himself if disabled by calamity or old age, or for his family if he should be removed before being able to make adequate provision for them. For the pecuniary relief of such cases, there existed, it is true, several excellent charitable institutions, such as the Medical Benevolent Fund of our ASSOCIATION, the Essex and Herts Medical Benevolent Society, the Kent Benevolent Medical Society, the West Riding Medical Charitable Society, etc. These all did much good, both in the form of temporary relief, and also in providing annuities for disabled medical men and their widows; but there was still wanting a great institution, which should not only relieve but shelter the distressed.

In the early part of the year 1851, the scheme of forming a Medical Benevolent College occurred to Mr. Propert, who had had prominently brought before his notice the necessity which existed for such an institution. That gentleman, having mentioned his project to some of his friends and professional brethren, in a short time received contributions in money and land amounting to £3,000, including a donation from Dr. Graham of ten acres of land at Epsom. On June 25, 1851, the proposed College was formally organised at a numerously attended meeting held in the Hanover Square Rooms; Earl Manvers being in the chair. The meeting pledged itself to promote the success of the College, and elected a President and other officers. The Earl Manvers, a nobleman of known benevolent disposition, was appointed President; and has always shown great interest in the progress of the institution.

At this meeting, it was determined that the erection of the College buildings should not be commenced until the funds subscribed for that purpose should amount to two-thirds of the estimated cost of the building.

For the purpose of promoting the success of the College, local secretaries were appointed in the provincial towns in England; and by their exertions, in combination with those of the central executive of the College, the sum of nearly £10,000 had been secured in June 1852; £1,000 being annual subscriptions.

On December 1st, 1852, the Council formally took possession of the land on which the College was to be built. The first stake was placed in the ground by J. W. Fresh-

field, Esq., M.P.; and this ceremony was followed by the company joining in prayer offered by the Rev. George Pocock, one of the Council. The funds subscribed up to that date amounted to about £12,000.

On July 6th, 1853, the foundation stone of the Medical Benevolent College was laid by Earl Manvers. It had been intended that the ceremony should be performed by Prince Albert: His Royal Highness was, however, prevented from attending by an attack of measles. The religious portion of the ceremony was performed by the Lord Bishop of Winchester, in whose diocese Epsom is situated; and the band of the Royal Marines attended. Ladies presenting the sum of five guineas on this occasion were declared entitled to the privilege of life governors; and three hundred and fifteen availed themselves of the opportunity. The donations received during the day amounted to £3,400; including fifty guineas from the Earl Manvers, five hundred guineas from B. E. Winthrop, Esq. (of Dover), £130 from the inhabitants of Epsom, etc.

On September 6th, 1853, the Council announced that Dr. Kenny of Canton had, unsolicited, advocated the cause of the College in China, and had remitted money amounting to £55:10; many of the Chinese being liberal contributors.

On April 28th, 1854, the second festival of the friends of the institution was held at the Freemasons' Tavern; the Earl of Shaftesbury being in the chair. About one hundred and fifty gentlemen attended the meeting.

The third annual festival of the College was held on February 28th, 1855, at the London Tavern. On this occasion, it was announced that Her Majesty had graciously given permission for the Institution to be designated the "Royal Medical College." Subsequently, however, the name was changed to that of the "Royal Medical Benevolent College"—the title which it now bears. The amount collected on the occasion amounted to £2,100; raising the funds of the College to nearly £28,000.

The ceremony of opening the College was performed on Monday last, at half past three P.M.; and when it is remembered that the actual building operations only commenced in March 1854, it must be acknowledged that the work had made such rapid progress as to afford a most gratifying spectacle to those who were present on the occasion. His Royal Highness Prince Albert, who had kindly consented to open the College, having arrived at the time appointed, first proceeded, accompanied by the President and Council, the Bishops of Winchester, Oxford, and St. Asaph, etc., to inspect the interior of the building, with the arrangements of which he expressed the highest satisfaction.

The party then proceeded to the entrance, where, in the presence of a concourse of four or five thousand persons, the following address was read by the Lord Bishop of Oxford:

"May it please your Royal Highness,—We, the President, Vice-Presidents, and Council of the Royal Medical Benevolent College, beg most respectfully to express to your Royal Highness, our deep gratitude for your kindness this day in honouring the inauguration of this College with your Royal presence, which has been raised, as your Royal Highness is aware, by the voluntary subscriptions of many connected with the Medical Profession, who know and feel for the needs of their poorer brethren, and many more who have rejoiced to testify in this manner their gratitude to a body of men, who face gladly many dangers, and bear readily many sufferings, in order to minister to others God's merciful gifts of healing. We rejoice unfeignedly that our most gracious Sovereign has condescended

to bestow on it her Royal patronage, and that your Royal Highness has added to this favour by your presence with us this day. We know that your Royal Highness and your august Queen are ever ready to sympathise with all who suffer, and believe that you are in this especial case further not unwilling to testify your gratitude to that profession which aims, with God's blessing, at removing disorders and relieving suffering, from which in this world of sorrow, the highest in virtue and the most elevated in rank can claim no more exemption than the poorest or least worthy of the common family of man. May God abundantly return into your own bosom the kind assistance you have this day rendered to us!"

His Royal Highness replied in the following terms :

" Mr. President and Gentlemen,—It has given me great pleasure to attend here this day to open this valuable Institution. Gratitude to the members of the medical profession is a feeling in which all must participate, and I have gladly witnessed the ready and general support which has been given to this undertaking, which has for its object to administer to the distresses of those who have in their more prosperous days devoted their time and energy to the alleviation of suffering, and the restoration of the sick to their families."

A prayer was then read by the Bishop of Winchester. His Royal Highness afterwards proceeded to the dining-hall of the College, where the company passed before him, and numerous ladies availed themselves of the opportunity of becoming Life Governors, by presenting donations of five guineas. The sum realised from this source, during the week, amounted to 3,000 guineas.

At the especial request of Mr. Propert (who is a Welshman), the Prince of Wales was present at the ceremony.

Many of the company afterwards sat down to a splendid *déjeuner*, presided over by Earl Manvers. The band of the Royal Marines attended. The healths of the Queen, Prince Albert, the Prince of Wales, Earl Manvers, Mr. Propert, the Ladies, etc., were drank with much applause; and the proceedings of the day passed off in the most satisfactory manner.

The building is constructed in the pointed style of the fourteenth century. The entrance porch is paved with Minton tiles, and the corridors run the whole length of the building. To the left is the house of the Warden, who has the superintendence of the whole department. Immediately to the right of the porch is a magnificent staircase, which is formed entirely of stone, with perforated balustrades. To the right are four class rooms and a school-room, with an infirmary, lavatories, bath-rooms, etc. Other portions of the first and second floor are occupied with dormitories, capable of accommodating one hundred boys; the master's and teachers' apartments, and sleeping rooms for the servants. The basement floor contains the kitchen, washhouses, and the usual domestic offices of an extensive establishment. Externally, the building is faced with red brick, with stone dressings. The principal entrance porch is composed entirely of Caen stone. In front of the second floor are the Royal Arms of Her Majesty, this being an addition since the Queen became the Patroness of the Institution. Lower down on the right are the arms of Mr. Propert, and on the left those of the Earl Manvers. A well-executed bust of the founder also adorns the corridor end of the entrance porch.

The objects of the Royal Medical Benevolent College are—

" 1. An asylum for duly qualified medical men and their widows in reduced circumstances.

" 2. A school for the sons of duly qualified medical men.

" 3. Annuities, or occasional pecuniary assistance, to duly qualified medical men in distressed circumstances, or to their families."

It is intended, however, that no such annuities or assistance shall be granted until the asylum and school are carried into effect. The first election of pensioners and foundation scholars will take place on the 19th July. The schoolmaster appointed is the Rev. Robinson Thornton, of St. John's College, Oxford.

In reviewing the rapid progress of the Royal Medical Benevolent College, we see much reason to congratulate its founders on the success of their plans, and the profession generally on having well vindicated their character for benevolence. The aid afforded by the bishops and clergy, who have ably and successfully advocated the cause of the Institution, and the substantial support given by numerous individuals among the public, have all promoted its success. None, however, must think that enough has been done. Great and unwearyed exertions will be required to carry out successfully what has been so auspiciously commenced. To use the words of Mr. Propert, in returning thanks when his health was proposed at the *déjeuner*:

" You have all done your duty—and I hope and trust that our building will endure and be a blessing to generations yet to come. But let me intreat you to bear in mind that the expenses will be considerable, and I trust you will continue to stir up your friends in its behalf. I think we are warranted in making this appeal; for apart from its being our profession to relieve the sufferings of humanity, is there one medical man present who does not know that there are circumstances continually occurring where he feels called upon to render assistance beyond the professional aid for which he is called in, and which has been necessary through domestic matters, of which he is almost the sole confidant? If there is one of us here who has not felt that, I should almost blush for my profession. But there is not one of us who has not experienced it, and therefore I say we are justified in stirring up our friends."

We trust and we believe that the appeals of Mr. Propert and his coadjutors will be responded to in future with the same readiness with which they have hitherto been always met.

Such of our readers as may wish to peruse what we have previously said regarding the Medical Benevolent College, are referred to the JOURNAL for Feb. 11th, 1853, p. 116; May 12th, 1854, p. 405; and Nov. 17th, 1854, p. 1030. An admirable letter from Dr. Barker, of Bedford, on the relative positions of the Royal Medical Benevolent College and the Benevolent Fund of the Association, was also published at p. 23 of the JOURNAL for Jan. 7th, 1853.

MODERN SURGEONS.

I. LOUIS STROMEYER.

For the last twenty-five years, Dr. STROMEYER has contributed more than any man living towards the advance of the science and art of surgery, by the promulgation of principles which, in their application to practice, have been attended by results so important and so uniform that they now constitute a main part of the laws by which surgical proceedings are regulated. These principles, at first applied to the surgery of civil life, have been extended by their originator to the surgery of the field of battle; and, strengthened by the proofs of their correctness derived from the experience of three campaigns, they have just been presented to the world, along with the facts from