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BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL,

BEING THE

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JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

EDITED FOR THE ASSOCIATION BY

ANDREW WYNTER, M.D.

VOLUME FOR 1859.

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M.DCCC.LIX.

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REPORTS FROM THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS HAVE APPEARED UNDER THE HEAD OF ILLUSTRATIONS OF HOSPITAL PRACTICE.

CENTRAL LONDON OPHTHALMIC HOSPITAL  
 CHARING CROSS HOSPITAL  
 GUY'S HOSPITAL  
 HOSPITAL FOR SICK CHILDREN  
 KING'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL  
 MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL  
 ROYAL FREE HOSPITAL  
 ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL  
 ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL  
 ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL  
 ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL  
 SAMARITAN HOSPITAL  
 SOUTH LONDON OPHTHALMIC HOSPITAL  
 UNIVERSITY COLLEGE HOSPITAL  
 WESTERN GENERAL DISPENSARY  
 WESTMINSTER HOSPITAL

ADDENBROOKE'S HOSPITAL, CAMBRIDGE  
 BIRMINGHAM GENERAL HOSPITAL  
 CHORLTON UNION HOSPITAL  
 HULL GENERAL INFIRMARY  
 KENT AND CANTERBURY HOSPITAL  
 LEICESTER INFIRMARY  
 LIVERPOOL NORTHERN HOSPITAL  
 LIVERPOOL ROYAL INFIRMARY  
 ROYAL BERKSHIRE HOSPITAL  
 SALOP INFIRMARY  
 TISBURY UNION INFIRMARY  
 WEST DERBY UNION HOSPITAL  
 WORCESTER GENERAL INFIRMARY

## MEDICAL REGISTRATION.

### NOTE FROM THE REGISTRAR.

DR. FRANCIS HAWKINS would be greatly obliged if the Editor of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL would have the kindness to make known, that the number of applications for Registration is now so exceedingly large, that some time must necessarily elapse before they can be acknowledged; and a much longer time before they can be examined and entered, and receipts returned.

18, Bolton Street, December 29th, 1858.

### LIVERPOOL MEDICAL REGISTRATION ASSOCIATION.

THE Registrar under the new Medical Act having requested the Registration Societies to receive the applications and fees of all qualified members of the profession desirous of being registered,—NOTICE is hereby given that the Sub-Committee of the above Association will ATTEND daily at the Medical Institution, Mount Pleasant, between the hours of 12 and 1, from this day to the 8th of January next inclusive, for the purpose of receiving such applications, etc., and transmitting them to the Registrar. Forms of application for registration will be supplied. A. T. H. WATERS, *Honorary Secretary*.

December 30th, 1858.

## THE MEDICAL COUNCIL.

### BRANCH COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND.

Royal College of Physicians, London, November 27th, 1858.

*Sederunt*—Sir B. C. BRODIE, *President*; Dr. Alexander Wood, Dr. Andrew Wood, Dr. Lawrie, Dr. Watson, Mr. Syme, and Dr. Christison.

Moved by Dr. CHRISTISON, and seconded by Dr. LAWRIE—

“That Dr. William Robertson be elected Registrar for Scotland.”

Moved by Dr. ANDREW WOOD, and seconded by Dr. WATSON—

“That Dr. John Gairdner be elected Registrar for Scotland.”

Votes taken, and Dr. William Robertson declared elected.

(*Confirmed*), JAMES SYME.

2, Rutland Street, Edinburgh, December 7th, 1858.

*Sederunt*—Mr. SYME, *Chairman*; Dr. Christison, Dr. Watson, Dr. Lawrie, Dr. Alexander Wood, Dr. Andrew Wood, and Dr. William Robertson, *Registrar*.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

Moved by Dr. ANDREW WOOD, seconded by Dr. LAWRIE, and agreed to—

“That Dr. William Robertson leave the room.”

Moved by Dr. ALEXANDER WOOD, seconded by Dr. WATSON, and agreed—

“That Dr. William Robertson be also Secretary to the Scottish Branch Council.”

Moved by Dr. ANDREW WOOD, seconded by Dr. LAWRIE, and agreed to—

“That the salary of the Registrar and Secretary be £150 per annum; and that he be allowed to employ such assistance from a clerk as may be necessary during the first year.”

Moved by Dr. ALEXANDER WOOD, seconded by Dr. WATSON, and agreed—

“That the Registrar be authorised to procure the books and stationery and other appliances necessary for conducting his business.”

Moved by Mr. SYME, seconded by Dr. CHRISTISON, and agreed—

“That the Registrar be instructed to write in the name of the Scottish Branch Council to the Lords of the Treasury, requesting that apartments may be furnished by Government

for the carrying out the provisions of the Medical Act; and further, that it be remitted to Dr. Alexander Wood and the Registrar to make arrangements for accommodation in the meantime.”

Moved by Dr. ALEXANDER WOOD, seconded by Dr. LAWRIE, and agreed to—

“That Mr. Syme and Dr. Christison be appointed Treasurers, and that an account be opened with the Bank of Scotland. That all cheques on the bank shall be signed by one of the Treasurers, in addition to the Registrar. That the Registrar shall not retain in his hands more than £100; but shall lodge all moneys as they accumulate in the bank, to the credit of the Scottish Branch of the General Council of Medical Education and Registration.”

Resolved, on the motion of Dr. ANDREW WOOD, and seconded by Dr. WATSON—

“That three be a quorum at meetings of the Scottish Branch Council; and that the Registrar be authorised to issue summonses for meetings, on the requisition of the President, or of two of the members of the Branch Council.”

Resolved, on the motion of Dr. LAWRIE, and seconded by Dr. WATSON—

“That Dr. Christison and Dr. Andrew Wood be appointed to cooperate with the Registrar in the business of the Registration.”

Resolved on the motion of Dr. ANDREW WOOD, and seconded by Dr. WATSON—

“That the Registrar grant a stamped receipt for all fees received from applicants for registration; and that he shall note on such receipts the qualifications of the applicants.”

Dr. Christison produced a draught of an advertisement in regard to the provisions of the Act. The Council returned thanks to Dr. Christison, and approved generally of the draught. It was remitted to Dr. Christison and Dr. Andrew Wood to revise and prepare the advertisement for publication.

It was remitted to Dr. Alexander Wood and the Registrar to arrange regarding the papers in which the advertisement should appear. (*Confirmed*), JAMES SYME.

### BRANCH COUNCIL FOR IRELAND.

December 2nd, 1858.

In the Hall of the King and Queen's College of Physicians. Present:—Drs. A. Smith, J. Apjohn, R. C. Williams, D. J. Corrigan, C. H. Leet, and W. Stokes.

On the motion of Dr. STOKES, and seconded by Dr. LEET, it was resolved—

“That Dr. Corrigan do take the chair.”

It was then moved by Dr. STOKES, seconded by Dr. APJOHN, and resolved—

“That the salary of the Registrar and Secretary to the Branch Council for Ireland, shall be £300 per annum.”

On the motion of Dr. SMITH, seconded by Dr. LEET, it was further resolved—

“That the offices of Secretary and Treasurer shall not be combined in the same person.”

On the motion of Dr. APJOHN, seconded by Dr. LEET, it was further resolved—

“That the Registrar shall pay all moneys received by him into the Bank of Ireland, to the credit of the Branch Medical Council of Ireland, not retaining in his hands at any time more than £50; and that all cheques for drawing money be signed by the Chairman of the day and two other members.”

Henry Maunsell, M.D., was then appointed Registrar to the Branch Medical Council for Ireland; and, on the motion of Dr. STOKES, seconded by Dr. LEET—Dr. Williams was requested to inform Dr. Maunsell that he had been appointed Registrar, at a salary of £300 a-year.

The Council then adjourned to Monday, the 6th instant, at Four o'clock.

December 6th, 1858.

Present:—Dr. Smith in the chair; Drs. Williams, Corrigan, Leet, Apjohn, and Stokes; Dr. Maunsell, *Registrar*.

The minutes of last meeting were approved and signed.

On the motion of Dr. WILLIAMS, seconded by Dr. APJOHN, it was resolved—

“That application be made to the Governors of the Bank of Ireland for permission to open an account for the ‘Branch Medical Council for Ireland’, in the names of the six Council-

lors of the Branch; and that the resolution adopted on the 2nd inst. be modified, so as to provide that all cheques for drawing money shall be signed by the Chairman of the day and one other Councillor, and countersigned by the Secretary. Also, that Dr. Smith and Dr. Stokes be joint Treasurers."

On the motion of Dr. CORRIGAN, and seconded by Dr. LEET, it was resolved—

"That the Secretary be directed to ascertain if temporary accommodation can be afforded in the College of Surgeons, pending the procuring of a permanent office."

On the motion of Dr. STOKES, and by Dr. WILLIAMS, a form of notice of the commencement of registration was adopted; and it was resolved—

"That it be inserted once in each of the following journals, viz.: *Saunders' News Letter, Freeman's Journal, Dublin Evening Mail, Dublin Evening Post, Dublin Medical Press, Dublin Hospital Gazette, Limerick Chronicle, Cork Southern Reporter, Waterford Mail, Leinster Express, Belfast Northern Whig, and Galway Vindicator.*"

On the motion of Dr. CORRIGAN, and seconded by Dr. STOKES, it was resolved—

"That the Registrar do apply to the several bodies enumerated in Schedule (A) of the Medical Act, asking for certified lists of persons who are entitled to be registered in respect to qualifications granted by such bodies respectively."

Adjourned to Monday, the 13th December.

December 13th, 1858.

The Branch Council met at the temporary office in the College of Surgeons.

Present:—Dr. Smith in the chair; Drs. Corrigan, Williams, Leet, Apjohn, Stokes; Dr. Maunsell, Registrar.

The minutes of last meeting were approved and signed.

On the motion of Dr. CORRIGAN, and seconded by Dr. APJOHN, it was resolved—

"That the salary of the Clerk be £80 a year, that he be required to give security for £50; and that an advertisement be inserted in *Saunders' News-Letter* and the *Freeman's Journal*, appointing the 20th instant for the election."

Ordered—That one hundred copies of the minutes of the Branch Council be printed and transmitted to councillors and registrars, in accordance with order of General Council.

On the motion of Dr. WILLIAMS, and seconded by Dr. APJOHN, it was resolved—

"That the Licence in Midwifery of the King and Queen's College of Physicians, and of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, be registered, if the holders of such licences shall so require."

Ordered—That minor qualifications, as that of Licentiate, when the person is a Fellow of the same College, be registered if required.

Letter read from John Moore Neligan, M.D., Fellow of the King and Queen's College of Physicians, requiring to be registered, and to have the words "Physician and Doctor of Medicine" inserted in the title column of the register, opposite his name.

Ordered—That a copy of the order of the General Council, directing that the title column shall not be filled up, be sent to Dr. Neligan, and that he be informed that the registration will be conducted in accordance therewith.

Ordered—That a short notice, calling attention to the necessity of persons who desire their names to appear in the register for the ensuing year, registering before the 1st of January, be published in twenty Irish journals.

On the motion of Dr. CORRIGAN, seconded by Dr. LEET, it was resolved—

"That a meeting of the Branch Council may be summoned at any time by the Registrar, upon requisition to him signed by two Councillors; notice of two days being given of such meeting."

On the motion of Dr. STOKES, seconded by Dr. WILLIAMS, it was resolved—

"That three Councillors shall form a quorum."

On the motion of Dr. CORRIGAN, seconded by Dr. APJOHN, it was resolved—

"That the Chair shall be taken by the third Councillor entering the room at the time of meeting."

On the motion of Dr. WILLIAMS, seconded by Dr. LEET, it was resolved—

"That the Chairman shall have a vote; and in cases of equality, also a casting vote."

The Council then adjourned to Monday, the 20th December.

## Association Intelligence.

### LETTERS AND COMMUNICATIONS.

Letters or communications for the JOURNAL should be addressed to Dr. WYTER, Coleherne Court, Old Brompton, S.W.

Letters regarding the business department of the JOURNAL, and corrected proofs, should be sent to 37, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C.

### READING BRANCH: SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING.

A SPECIAL general meeting of the Reading Branch of the British Medical Association was held at the Royal Berks Hospital, on December 15th; GEORGE MAY, Esq., President, in the chair. There were also present: T. A. Blomfield, Esq. (Reading); G. D. Brown, Esq. (Henley); C. M. Burnett, M.D. (Alton); J. Breach, Esq. (Aston); F. A. Bulley, Esq. (Reading); J. H. Brooks, Esq. (Henley); R. Colbourne, Esq. (Marlow); N. Crisp, Esq. (Swallowfield); C. Cowan, M.D. (Reading); J. W. Dryland, Esq. (Reading); A. Fernie, Esq. (Reading); F. G. Harcourt, Esq. (Binfield); — Haynes, Esq. (Reading); I. Harrinson, Esq. (Reading); T. Jeston, Esq. (Henley); S. Kidgell, Esq. (Pangbourne); A. Lamb, Esq. (Hampstead Norreys); J. J. Luce, Esq. (Swallowfield); G. May, jun., Esq. (Reading); J. McIntyre, M.D. (Odiham); W. W. Moxhay, Esq. (Reading); H. H. Mugeridge, Esq. (Reading); A. J. Moore, Esq. (Reading); S. Plumbe, M.D. (Maidenhead); G. Pound, Esq. (Odiham); — Phelps, Esq. (Reading); W. Scott, M.D. (Odiham); J. Taylor, Esq. (Burghfield); J. Taylor, Esq. (Wargrave); C. Vines, Esq. (Reading); E. Wells, M.D. (Reading); H. Waldron, Esq. (Theale); J. W. Workman, Esq. (Reading); T. L. Walford, Esq. (Reading); W. B. Young, Esq. (Reading).

#### NEW MEMBERS.

The following gentlemen were unanimously elected members: A. J. Moore, Esq. (Reading); A. Lamb, Esq. (Hampstead Norreys); S. Plumbe, M.D. (Maidenhead).

#### MEDICAL REGISTRATION.

Dr. BURNETT moved—

"That the Council of the Reading Branch of the British Medical Association be requested to take measures to assist the Registrar to carry out efficiently the new Medical Act."

Dr. COWAN seconded this resolution; and it was carried unanimously.

#### ASSURANCE OFFICE FEES.

Mr. WALFORD proposed—

"That the members of the Reading Branch be recommended not to give information respecting the health of any private patient except on the receipt of a fee from the office."

This was seconded by Dr. COWAN, and carried unanimously.

Mr. BROOKS proposed that the fee should never be less than one guinea; for policies above £500, two guineas; and for those above £1,000, three guineas.

This resolution gave rise to an animated discussion, and several amendments were proposed. Ultimately it was decided that the amount of the fee should be left to the discretion of each medical man.

### SOUTH-EASTERN BRANCH:

SOCIAL AND SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERS RESIDENT IN ROCHESTER, MAIDSTONE, GRAVESEND, DARTFORD, AND THEIR VICINITIES.

Social and scientific meetings of members of the South-Eastern Branch resident in Rochester, Maidstone, Gravesend, Dartford, and their vicinities, will be held on the undermentioned days:—

Friday, March 25th, 1859, at 3.30, at the Town Hall, Gravesend.

Friday, April 29th, 1859, at 3.30, at the Town Hall, Dartford.

The members resident in this district will be gratified by the attendance and assistance of any of the members of the British Medical Association.

JAMES DULVEY, *Honorary Secretary.*

Brompton, Chatham.

### ADMISSION OF MEMBERS, AND PAYMENT OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

THE General Secretary of the British Medical Association begs to call attention to the Laws regarding the ADMISSION OF MEMBERS, and the PAYMENT of their SUBSCRIPTIONS.

"*Admission of Members.* Any qualified medical practitioner, not disqualified by any bye-law, who shall be recommended as eligible by any *three* members, shall be admitted a member at any time by the Committee of Council, or by the Council of any Branch."

"*Subscriptions.* The subscription to the Association shall be One Guinea annually; and each member, on paying his subscription, shall be entitled to receive the publications of the Association for the current year. The subscription shall date from the 1st January in each year, and shall be considered as due unless notice of withdrawal be given in writing to the Secretary on or before the 25th of December previous."

Either of the following modes of payment may be adopted:—

1. Payment by Post-Office Order to the Treasurer (Sir C. Hastings, M.D., Worcester), or to the undersigned.

2. Payment to the Secretary of the Branch to which the member belongs.

3. Members residing in the Metropolis and vicinity can make their payments through the publisher of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, Mr. Thomas John Honeyman, 37, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C.

PHILIP H. WILLIAMS, M.D., *General Secretary.*

Worcester, December 1858.

## Reports of Societies.

### MEDICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

MONDAY, DEC. 6TH, 1858.

W. H. WILSHIRE, M.D., President, in the Chair.

MOLLITIES OSSIIUM; CÆSAREAN SECTION.

BY E. W. MURPHY, M.D.

MRS. N—, aged 30, had been married about sixteen years, and had given birth to seven children, all born at the full time, without any difficulty in the labour. Three or four months previous to the birth of her last child (May 29th, 1856), she complained of constant weariness and dull aching pain in the lower part of the back and down the thighs, slightly increased on walking. She continued to go about, however, up to within an hour or two of that confinement. Dr. Fraser, of Torrington Square, her medical attendant, had not seen her for several days before, but, calling in accidentally, found her in labour, and just about to send for him. The labour was quite natural, and terminated in less than two hours. Her subsequent recovery was slow, but at the end of three weeks Dr. Fraser ceased to attend her. She was then able to go about, but complained of weakness and slight pain, or rather uneasiness, in the loins and thighs. Dr. Fraser did not see her again professionally until July 1858, two months previous to her last confinement. She had never lost the sense of weariness in the loins and thighs since the birth of her last child; but in October, 1857, when she again became pregnant, the pain and difficulty in walking gradually increased. She was able to go to chapel January 1st, 1858, but afterwards was unable to leave the house. Dr. Fraser was engaged to attend her in April of the present year, and found her sitting at her work-table in the parlour. She had then only complained of sickness of the stomach, which was relieved by appropriate remedies. Each time Dr. Fraser saw her, she was dressed and sitting in her chair, and after his fourth visit he ceased to attend her until sent for on July 10th, when the pains of labour, which began on the 8th, assumed a decided character. Being engaged at the time, his partner, Dr. Andrews, saw her, who, on making an examination, was surprised at the extreme narrowness of the outlet of the pelvis. Dr. Fraser saw her in the afternoon, and observed the same peculiarity. The pains were feeble, and the patient somewhat exhausted. An anodyne was ordered, in the hope that, if sleep were procured, more vigorous pains would advance the presentation. On July 11th, Dr. Fraser, finding no alteration, requested the assistance of Dr. Murphy, who saw the patient about two P.M., and, having made an examination, found it impossible to introduce two fingers between the pubic rami; by pressing back, however, against the coccyx,

and using the left hand, he was able to get two fingers within the brim of the pelvis, bending them upwards and forwards, to avoid the strongly-projecting promontory of the sacrum. The pubic bones were doubled back so much that the space in the brim seemed hardly two inches in the antero-posterior measurement. On the left side it was diminished to half an inch, on the right it was open to about two inches and a half. Passing the finger round the brim, the space seemed to be hardly larger than a florin, through which protruded the os uteri and membranes: the head could just be touched. The nature of the difficulty being thus revealed, Dr. Murphy felt satisfied that it was totally impossible to attempt perforation; in fact, no instrument could be used for that purpose. The patient, however, had no pains for some hours previously, and he was anxious to ascertain what the uterus might do if it were possible to get the head within reach of instrument. It was agreed, therefore, to see her at five P.M. There was no change in the action of the uterus.

Nine P.M.: The pains had returned for a short time, but made no difference in the position. An anodyne was ordered, and she was left in the charge of Dr. Andrews for the night.

July 12th. She slept a good deal during the night; the pains returned in the morning, and continued stronger than before. Dr. Murphy saw her at twelve o'clock. The membranes were ruptured, the funis had descended and ceased to pulsate; there was no alteration in the pelvis. The necessity for the Cæsarean section was decided. Dr. Murphy wished to have Dr. West's opinion, who made a most careful examination, and arrived at the same conclusion. She was at once taken into University College Hospital, and placed in a ward prepared for the purpose. She was placed under the influence of chloroform; and Mr. Quain, who kindly rendered his assistance, performed the operation. An incision was made in the line of the linea alba, the uterus exposed, and its parietes divided. The placenta protruded and was immediately extracted; and the child removed. The hæmorrhage, which was considerable, was controlled by the contraction of the uterus. The intestines, which had slightly protruded, were replaced, the edges of the wound united by the hair-lip suture, and a space left below for the escape of the discharges. She was bandaged and placed in bed, and twenty-five minims of Battley's sedative were given in beef-tea.

July 13th. The patient slept at intervals during the night; pulse 120; tongue dry; skin hot, but moist. Towards evening she complained of sickness and pain in her bowels, and suffered great thirst; she had taken five minims of black drops every second hour during the day. At night the pain and sickness were relieved, but symptoms of exhaustion were setting in; pulse 160, rapid and feeble. She was restless, and not inclined to sleep; this increased during the night so as to amount to jactitation, with hiccup and blowing respiration.

July 14th. Exhaustion extreme; pulse scarcely felt. She died at twelve o'clock.

July 15th. Twenty-four hours after death the *post mortem* examination was made. The abdomen was much distended and resonant; no attempt at union in the line of the incision. On opening the abdomen, a quantity of bloody serum escaped; the intestines were distended with flatus, especially the stomach, which occupied the whole upper part of the abdomen; some lymph was found on the peritoneum. The uterus presented a dark-red surface, its divided edges being widely separated. When the stomach was laid open, and the flatus escaped, some undigested currants and a small quantity of feculent matter were found in it. The head and lungs were healthy. The pelvis was found to be brittle throughout; all the articulations loose, and even the pubic and ischiatic portions of the coxal bones moved on each other, much more, however, on the left than on the right side; both iliac bones were much distorted and very carious, being perforated in several places, and as thin as tissue paper. The horizontal rami of the os pubis were parallel, the pectineal eminence on the left almost touching the promontory of the sacrum; the space, by measurement, was half an inch, but the bones were very easily pressed together; the descending rami were also closed in, the left being carious and eaten through at the pubic and ischiatic junction; the acetabula were also eaten through, and the head of the femur was in a similar condition. The brittleness of the bones was such that a plaster of Paris cast could not be made of them. There was no observable difference in the stature of the patient. The child's head was well ossified.

Dr. MURPHY regretted the delay in the performance of this operation, and quoted from Mauriceau, Hamilton, and others, several cases to prove the evil consequences of delay and hesi-

tation in such instances; in some, the patients died undelivered; in others, the operation failed because performed too late. In mollities ossium, he was aware that the chances were greatly against the patient's recovery, not only because of the difficulty of reunion in the uterine wound—because of the process of disintegration in its tissues then going forwards, as Dr. West has well pointed out; but also because the existing disease is one of disintegration. Nevertheless, he argued that the safety of the patient is not more secured by any other operation; that in some cases, as the present one, craniotomy is impossible; in others, when performed, death has been the result. As an illustration of his argument, he quoted from Dr. R. Lee's *Clinical Midwifery* the only case of mollities ossium that came under Dr. Lee's notice, in which craniotomy was with great difficulty performed, and the uterus was ruptured. In such cases, therefore, where the risk to the mother is equally great whatever operation be performed, Dr. Murphy laid it down as a principle, that no practitioner is justified in taking away human life, even from an unborn child, unless he is nearly certain that it will be the means of saving the parent, and in cases where the mortality from craniotomy is as great as from the Cæsarean section, he is bound to adopt the operation that may save the child.

## Editor's Letter Box.

### POOR-LAW MEDICAL REFORM ASSOCIATION.

LETTER FROM R. GRIFFIN, ESQ.

SIR,—I shall feel obliged by your allowing me, through the medium of your JOURNAL, to beg the Poor-law Medical Officers to refrain from replying to the "Heads of a scheme for a suggested new arrangement of medical relief", issued by the President of the Poor-law Board, until I have time to address them more fully on the subject. I have only this day received a copy of the draft. There are some points in it exceedingly good; and others that will require amendment. The salary is made up of three different items, and not of a single 1s. 6d., as some gentlemen have, on a cursory glance, imagined.

I am, etc., RICHARD GRIFFIN.

12, Royal Terrace, Weymouth, 29th December, 1858.

## Medical News.

### BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS, AND APPOINTMENTS.

\* In these lists, an asterisk is prefixed to the names of Members of the Association.

#### BIRTHS.

- CHRISTIAN. On December 20th, 1858, at Ovington Terrace, Brompton, the wife of J. S. Christian, M.D., of a daughter.  
 GODRICH. On December 23rd, 1858, at 12, Sydney Place, Brompton, the wife of Francis Godrich, Esq., Surgeon, of a son.  
 RICHARDSON. On December 23rd, 1858, at 12, Hinde Street, Manchester Square, the wife of \*Benjamin W. Richardson, M.D., of a son.

#### MARRIAGES.

- ANDREWS—FORD. Andrews, Charles G., Esq., Surgeon Bengal Army, to Georgiana Louisa, youngest daughter of the late John Ford, Esq., H.E.I.C.S., at St. Paul's Cathedral, Calcutta, on November 6th, 1858.  
 COOPER—WORLD. Cooper, John, Esq., of Burghfield Mills, Reading, to Susannah, eldest daughter of R. R. World, Esq., Surgeon, City Road, London.

#### DEATHS.

- BIRKBECK. On December 25th, 1858, Frances Georgina, youngest daughter of the late George Birkbeck, M.D.  
 BROWNFIELD, John Hayden, Esq., Surgeon, Superintendent of the Government Emigration ship *Alfred*, aged 33, at sea, on September 7th, 1858, aged 33.  
 COWAN, Thomas, M.D., Surgeon of H.M.'s 94th Regiment, at Peshawar, on November 7th, 1858.

CRUIKSHANK, William, M.D., Deputy Inspector-General of Hospitals, at Simla, on November 5th, 1858.

\* DANIELL, J. G., Esq., Surgeon, of Nayland, Suffolk, lately.

\* DRURY, Thomas J., M.D., Physician to the Salop Infirmary, at Shrewsbury, of sloughing-sore-throat, after a few days illness, on December 19th, 1858. Dr. T. J. Drury was a member of the Shropshire Branch of the BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION from its formation, and for many years zealously discharged the duties of Honorary Secretary to the Branch. At the time of his death, he was a member of the Committee of Council of the Association. His loss is deeply regretted by his colleagues and brother associates.

EARLE, John Henry, Esq., Surgeon, at Cromer, Norfolk, on December 11th, 1858.

FRANCE. On December 21st, 1858, in Bloomsbury Square, Bernard Owen Beckwith, son of John F. France, Esq., Surgeon.

\* GREEN, John, M.D., J.P., at Newton-in-Makerfield, Lancashire, aged 56, on December 22nd, 1858.

HAWKINS. On December 22nd, 1858, in Grosvenor Street, Caroline, wife of Cæsar H. Hawkins, Esq., Surgeon.

LEVER, John C. W., M.D., Physician-Accoucheur to Guy's Hospital, at 12, Wellington Street, London Bridge, aged 47, on December 20th, 1858.

MORRIS. On December 20th, 1858, at Brixworth, Northamptonshire, Emma Harriet, wife of \*Robert R. Morris, Esq., Surgeon, aged 55.

SHORLAND. On December 10th, 1858, at Winchester, aged 65, Charlotte, wife of James Shorland, Esq., formerly Surgeon 96th Regiment.

WHITE, Andrew, M.D., Deputy Inspector-General of Army Hospitals, at Teddington Weir, suddenly, on December 18th, 1858.

### APPOINTMENTS.

CLOUET, M. Jules, has been elected Vice-President of the Academy of Medicine in Paris for 1859.

CRUVEILHIER, M., has been elected President of the Academy of Medicine in Paris for the ensuing year.

FORD, James, Esq., appointed Resident Medical Officer to the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple.

RENDELE, Charles B., Esq., late Assistant Demonstrator of Anatomy at King's College, London, has been appointed House Surgeon of the Devon and Exeter Hospital, in the room of Dr. J. S. Biggs, resigned.

### PASS LISTS.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS. MEMBERS admitted at the meeting of the Court of Examiners, on Thursday, December 23rd, 1858:—

- ABBAY, Walter, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire  
 AIKINS, Moses Henry, Toronto  
 BANKART, James, Humberstone Road, Leicester  
 BIRD, Curtis James, Red River Settlement, Hudson's Bay  
 FITZPATRICK, Bernard, Clones, co. Monaghan, Ireland  
 GASQUET, Joseph Raymond, Westbourne Grove North, Bayswater  
 HEATH, William Ravenscraft, Manchester  
 HELLICAR, Charles Joseph, Clifton, Bristol  
 HEWITT, Thomas, Tipperary  
 HORE, William, Shoreham, Sussex  
 INGLE, Robert Nicholas, Melbourne, Derby  
 LACKERSTEEN, Mark Henry, Calcutta  
 MARR, James, Tynemouth, Northumberland  
 METCALFE, Robert, Epsom  
 ROGERS, Joseph, Hanover Square

APOTHECARIES' HALL. Members admitted on Thursday, December 23rd, 1858:—

- BENNETT, Charles Vaughan Simmons, Haverfordwest  
 BRABANT, Herbert, Bath  
 BRAITHWAITE, James, Leeds  
 CARRUTHERS, Joseph, Melbourne  
 CULVERWELL, Charles, Calcutta  
 DEAN, Thomas Nainby, Manchester  
 HARLE, Thomas William, Bishop's Stortford  
 HARPER, Frederick Luther, Aldenham Street  
 HARRISON, George Morley, Manchester  
 HINDLE, George, Over Darwen, Lancashire  
 HOOPER, John Turton, Gateshead  
 HOUSLEY, John, Mansfield Woodhouse, Notts.  
 JOHNSTON, Robert, Newry, Ireland

JONES, Evan, Aberdare, Glamorganshire  
 JONES, William Allen, Foxley, Bewdley  
 LAMB, Robert, 205, Fleet Street  
 MASON, Frederick John, Wisbeach, Cambridgeshire  
 MERRYWEATHER, James, Lofthouse, Yorkshire  
 MORGAN, Walter, Bridgend, Glamorganshire  
 OLDEHAM, Riton, West Hartlepool  
 PARKER, Thomas Didymus, Sevenoaks, Kent  
 READ, Reginald Bligh, 41, Jewin Street, City  
 THELWALL, William, Farndon  
 TURNER, Thomas, Lake Lock, Wakefield  
 WALSH, John, Manchester  
 WARD, Henry Debord, Blyth, Northumberland  
 WHEELER, Charles, Wantage  
 WILDBORE, Samuel, 74, Wimpole Street  
 WOOLLEY, George, Kentish Town

#### HEALTH OF LONDON:—WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 25TH, 1858.

[From the Registrar-General's Report.]

THE London returns give satisfactory indications of an improved state of the public health. The deaths which in the week ending December 4th were 1738, and in the two following weeks were 1531 and 1442, have still further declined, and in the week ending last Saturday they were 1240. The mean temperature of the air last week was 44.5°, which is 9° higher than it was in the third week of November.

In the ten years 1848-57 the average number of deaths in the weeks corresponding with last week was 1142; but as the deaths in the present return occurred in an increased population, they should be compared with the average after the latter is raised proportionally to the increase, a correction which will make it 1256. It appears, therefore, that though the difference is small, the actual return for last week is less than the result obtained by calculation.

If the deaths in London last week had been according to "the healthy rate" of mortality derived from certain selected English districts in the last quarter of the year, they would have been 765; and the excess above this point which the true number exhibits is 475, and represents what may be termed the *unnatural* part of the mortality.

The deaths referred in the present return to zymotic diseases amount to 320, the corrected average being 280; those ascribed to pulmonary complaints (not including phthisis or whooping-cough) are 307, the corrected average being 264. The deaths that arose from phthisis (or consumption) are 126, whilst the average is 135. The mortality from scarlatina continues to decrease slowly; it numbered 106, which, however, is still double the average. Measles was fatal in 40 cases; it carried off five children in the sub-district of Whitecross Street. Sixteen fatal cases of scarlatina occurred in Pancras, many of these in Somers Town, where it appears to be very prevalent. Twelve deaths from the same complaint occurred in the Poplar district; and 6 in the sub-district of St. Peter, Walworth.

Last week the births of 703 boys and 709 girls, in all 1412 children, were registered in London. In the ten corresponding weeks of the years 1848-57 the average number was 1489.

At the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, the mean height of the barometer in the week was 29.438 in. The barometrical readings varied from 29.09 in. to 29.68 in. The mean temperature of the week was 44.5°, which is 6.5° above the average of the same week in 43 years (as determined by Mr. Glaisher). The mean daily temperature was above the average throughout the week, and on three days, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, this excess was from 7° to 10°. The thermometer in the shade fell to its *lowest* point, 34.9°, on Monday, and rose to its *highest*, 53.5°, on the following day. The extreme range was therefore 18.6°. The mean range of the week was 10.2°. The difference between the mean dew-point temperature and air temperature was 3.6°. The mean degree of humidity was 87. On two days the humidity of the air was 95, approximating to complete saturation. The mean temperature of the water of the Thames was 42.2°. The wind blew from the south-west. Thursday night was very wild and stormy. Rain fell to the amount of 0.79 in. in the week.

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SOCIETY. On Monday, January 3, 1859, a paper will be read, entitled, "Practical Remarks on Cholera Morbus, its origin, nature, and treatment." By H. Cameron, Esq., Surgeon 1st Battalion Artillery H.M. Indian Forces.

#### OBSTETRICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

THE inaugural meeting of this Society took place on December 16th at the Freemasons' Tavern. A large number of metropolitan obstetric teachers and practitioners were present. The chair was taken by EDWARD RIGBY, M.D.

Dr. RIGBY briefly explained the objects for which the meeting had been called together. They were there assembled for the purpose of inaugurating a society to be devoted to the advancement of the knowledge of obstetrics and the diseases of women and children. It had long been a matter of exceeding surprise to him that no society had been instituted in the metropolis for this purpose. There could be no question as to the fact, that a very large amount of experience was wasted and lost, owing to the circumstance that no machinery for the systematic collection of facts relating to midwifery could be said to be in operation. The new society would be eminently useful to general practitioners, most of whom have daily brought before their notice facts which the Society might be the means of registering. The Society could be made a depository for general heads of important cases in midwifery throughout the country, and it would, he trusted, be largely supported by country as well as town practitioners. The foundation of the Society would, he was convinced, be attended with advantages of extreme importance to science and to the community at large. Before calling on Dr. Tyler Smith to propose the first resolution, he could not abstain from remarking, that the energy and perseverance which that gentleman had exhibited in promoting so successfully the foundation of the Society, entitled him to the deepest thanks of all interested in the undertaking.

Dr. TYLER SMITH moved the first resolution:—

"That it is expedient to institute a society for the promotion of knowledge in all that relates to obstetrics and the diseases of women and children, in which practitioners resident in the metropolis and the provinces shall be invited to take an active part; and that such a society be now founded, under the name of the Obstetrical Society of London."

He detailed the steps taken for the formation of the Society, and which had resulted in the present meeting. There was no other city in the world in which equal scope for such an association existed. London contained thirteen obstetric schools, all well appointed and in full activity. There were between thirty and forty practitioners who either were or had been obstetric teachers, besides others engaged in special obstetric practice. Nearly 2,000 gentlemen were engaged in general practice in the metropolitan districts, upon whom the responsibilities of midwifery fell even more heavily than the responsibilities of medicine or surgery. No cases equally urgent with *placenta prævia* and *post partum* floodings, or those in which craniotomy or turning might be thought necessary, occurred in medicine or surgery under conditions of equal urgency to the general practitioner. In medical or surgical cases assistance could generally be obtained; but in obstetric cases dangerous emergencies were often so sudden as to throw the whole responsibility on the individual practitioner. The number of labours occurring in the metropolis annually amounted to about eighty thousand. In this great field, and with so many workers, a rich harvest of knowledge might be brought in through the agency of an Obstetrical Society. But they were not limited to London alone. Already the principal teachers in the provinces had joined themselves to the undertaking. We might get something like a fair idea of the importance of obstetric practice in this country from the fact, that of all the women delivered in England and Wales, no fewer than one in each one hundred and eighty-nine died in child-birth. The number of still-born children was over twenty-two thousand a year. The chief business of an obstetrical society would be to diminish this mortality, and the task was one of the highest importance. It seemed to him a positive duty, from which obstetricians could not escape, that they should unite together, and promote the scientific and social interests of the branch of practice in which they were engaged. In the course of the proceedings which it had been necessary to take, he had met with various objections to the institution of an obstetrical society, which he would notice and endeavour to refute. It was said—why have a special society for obstetrics when no special surgical or medical societies were considered necessary? The answer to this was, that the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons were in reality great institutions for the special advancement of medicine and surgery. Those engaged in obstetric practice had no public body to which their allegiance was due, and upon which they could depend for the

promotion of their department of the art of healing. This had always acted as a discouragement; but it would, to a great extent be removed by the operation of a successful obstetrical society. Other objectors were loud in their warnings against the evils of everything like a separation from the colleges of physis and surgery. No wish existed for any such separation; but it was felt by many, that we had too long leant upon others; that we were now able to walk alone; and that we should be all the more respected in the colleges to which we belonged, if we could show ourselves possessed of something like an independent power of action. Some, who opposed our proceedings, argued that the Society would only increase talk and talkers, and that reticence was more to be desired than publicity. He wished to speak with every respect of those who differed from him; but he thought this dictum was somewhat out of joint with the age in which we lived; silence was not progress. As iron sharpeneth iron, so in the collision of mind with mind, true doctrines were brought out and sustained. Discussion had well been said to be the very life and soul of science. There were others who acknowledged that science and practice would be advanced by the proposed Society; but were fearful that obstetrists would suffer, in a social point of view, from placing themselves in any degree apart from the physicians and surgeons engaged in what was called "pure practice." This he did not believe. At all events, it was their plain duty, first and foremost, without thinking of consequences, to advance the science and art in which they were engaged. They certainly need not dread the results of such a course of proceeding. It was an idle fear to imagine that they could lower themselves in the social scale by raising themselves in knowledge. Union ought not to excite jealousy. These were not the times in which improvements were made by individual efforts alone, but in which numbers of men engaged in the same pursuit, by uniting together, have produced some of the greatest results of modern civilisation. On every ground, therefore, having reference to their scientific and social position, he had the greatest satisfaction in moving the resolution to found the Obstetrical Society of London.

Dr. GRANVILLE, F.R.S., seconded the resolution. He stated that he attended with pleasure this second attempt to establish an Obstetrical Society in London. He was grieved to notice that he could claim the privilege of being the oldest veteran in the room; a whole generation of obstetrical practitioners had passed away, who knew of his earnestness in promoting their art and science. He hoped that this endeavour to establish such a Society would prove more permanently successful than the first. The book which he held in his hand would shew that, in November 1825, a meeting was held at his house, attended by the *élite* of the obstetrical practitioners of that time. A Society was then formed, over which Sir Charles M. Clarke presided. The plan originally laid down by himself was considered too vast; and, as it embraced two distinct parts, the majority of the members enrolled resolved to adopt one only; viz., the political or *state* part of the question. Dr. Granville next alluded to the condition of the practice of midwifery in this country at a former period. At his return from Paris in 1817, this condition was a most anomalous one. Not only any one might practise midwifery without let or hindrance, and indeed without any medical qualification whatever (there being no repressive laws in existence to prevent it), but this very license was made the means of enabling quacks to do their work with impunity, defying judge and jury, when summoned before a Court of law, by setting up as a defence, that they did not pretend to be doctors, surgeons, or apothecaries, but only man-midwives. The degraded state of the profession of the art was such that the College of Physicians considered a Licentiate practising midwifery as unworthy of a Fellowship; while a Member of the College of Surgeons was deemed ineligible to be on the list of Council or Court of Examiners, if he practised as an accoucheur; and the Apothecaries' Company, which had been pressed to institute an examination in midwifery, long resisted the "soft persuasion". This being the case, the Society brought together in 1825 applied themselves to the removal of all such indignities, and to raise to a proper and dignified station the practitioners in midwifery. By memorials and letters to the corporate bodies, and through the then Secretary of State for the Home Department, this was accomplished. He had the task of replying to the many cavils and the bold sophistry of the late Sir H. Halford, who fought hard to perpetuate their exclusion from the College. Sir H. Halford's contemptuous (to his mind infamatory) expression, made use of in a letter to Sir R. Peel, that "midwifery was an unfit occupation for gentlemen of academical education", was

well known. After exertions continued during three years, that Society succeeded in obtaining the following points:—  
 1. A recognition of the honourable position of obstetricians among the medical practitioners of the three corporate bodies.  
 2. An examination in midwifery by the Apothecaries' Company.  
 3. The admission of persons practising midwifery (being members of the College of Surgeons) to be eligible for a post in the Council.  
 4. The concession by the College of Physicians, that Licentiates practising midwifery shall not be ineligible for the Fellowship of the College. At present these reforms had gone farther; the corporate bodies examined in midwifery; one of them delivered diplomas in obstetrics. Accoucheurs were made Fellows of the College of Physicians, and accoucheurs were on the Court of Examiners of the College of Surgeons. Thus the first attempt of an English Obstetrical Society had not been altogether barren of results. All state or political difficulties have been removed: and there is left for the Society it is now proposed to establish, the much more congenial task of promoting the purely scientific part of the great questions which such an extensive field as the practice of midwifery, the treatment of children, and the study and management of female diseases, offers to the attention of the highly educated physician, surgeon, or general practitioner of our days. Though having long ceased, after nearly thirty years of actual midwifery, to attend labours, he was happy to have an opportunity of joining his feeble efforts in promoting the welfare of the proposed Society.

Dr. BARNES moved the second resolution—

"That all legally qualified medical practitioners be eligible for election as ordinary Fellows of the Society."  
 He hailed with satisfaction the establishment of a Society in the metropolis for the cultivation of obstetrics. He considered it a reproach to us that, in consequence of the absence of a Society devoted to the promotion of this department of medicine, we were not in the same position as the obstetricians of towns on the continent of considerably less magnitude than London, from which authorities on particular questions emanated, and derived that weight which a Society is always capable of imparting. If, as he believed to be the case, the practice of midwifery was, notwithstanding, more successful in London than on the continent, there was the more reason that our practice and opinions should be disseminated. It belonged to obstetrics to teach as well as to learn. He felt confident as to the future of the Society.

Dr. METCALFE BABINGTON, who seconded the resolution, dwelt on the many and great opportunities in the metropolis for obtaining and collecting statistics and other valuable information on that very important branch of our profession, the obstetrical art. He was much surprised that the former Society, the history of which had been detailed to them by Dr. Granville, had not thought fit to continue its efforts. He agreed most entirely with Dr. Tyler Smith, and thought that any objections likely to arise to the formation of such a Society had been most completely answered by him. Not many years ago, certainly, the obstetric practitioners occupied a position by no means flattering. We were considered unworthy to take a place in a scientific brotherhood. Not long since, an eminent physician said derisively of the obstetrician, that his *métier* was to undertake everything; and that the witty saying of a late divine in regard to Lord John Russell applied equally to him, "that he would deliver a woman with child, cut a man for the stone, or take the command of the Channel fleet". Now he believed that the obstetrician would, in the practice of his art, undertake and accomplish anything that required boldness, energy, talent, and presence of mind. He had great pleasure in seconding the resolution.

Mr. FEROUSSON, in proposing the third resolution, said it might seem curious that one in that department of the profession to which he had chiefly devoted his attention should come to such a meeting. At one time in his own history he should have had such a feeling; but years, which bring experience, had led him to think differently on such matters than he did formerly, and he was now convinced there was no man more useful in his walk in life than such as practised that department in which the generality of those present were so much interested. He could not let the opportunity pass without congratulating the gentlemen present on the objects of the meeting. He thought the proposed Society highly desirable, particularly in London. If it were desirable to have specialities, there was no place like London for such professional divisions; and if such societies as that contemplated flourished in smaller communities, it was certainly needful that this metropolis should be thus represented. There were already so-

cieties for physicians and surgeons, but he thought the department of medicine to which most of the gentlemen present were devoted, deserved a higher representation than that hitherto accorded to it. In the progress of time, obstetric medicine had acquired a high position, and in his opinion this was a strong mark of the progress of civilisation. Should the talented author of the work devoted to that subject require a new theme for his pen, he would humbly suggest this one as worthy of his attention. As civilisation advanced, the attentions of the masculine sex to the female became more marked. In savage life, the female was left almost to her own resources. He would not enter upon the question of mortality in civilised or savage life on such occasions, but he would not hesitate to affirm that attention to the female in her hour of trouble and peril was a strong characteristic of civilisation. No department in medicine had made such rapid strides in modern times as that in which they were interested; and it was gratifying to perceive how, in the progress of time, the position of the obstetrical practitioner had at last been recognised by the Colleges of Physicians and of Surgeons in London. The youngest man in that room might perhaps know of the frightful results attendant upon the practice of the midwives of former times; and all the gentlemen present, with the numerous body of their contemporaries in the same department, might congratulate themselves that the step now about to be taken would go far to shake off all such dangers in time to come. He moved—

“That the following gentlemen be elected officers of the Society for the year 1859.—*Honorary President*: Sir Charles Locock, Bart., M.D. *President*: Edward Rigby, M.D. *Vice-Presidents*: Robert Barnes, M.D.; Samuel Berry, F.R.C.S.E. (Birmingham); Lawson Cape, M.D.; A. B. Granville, M.D.; J. C. W. Lever, M.D.; Edward W. Murphy, M.D.; Henry Oldham, M.D.; Thomas Radford, M.D. (Manchester); W. Tyler Smith, M.D.; C. Waller, M.D. *Council*: James Allen, Esq. (York); E. Batty, Esq. (Liverpool); Edgar Barker, F.R.C.S.E.; C. Metcalfe Babington, M.D.; I. B. Brown, F.R.C.S.E.; W. J. Bryant, F.R.C.S.E.; John Butler, Esq. (Woolwich); Jos. Cholmondeley, Esq.; J. Hall Davis, M.D.; G. D. Gibb, M.D.; S. W. J. Merriman, M.D.; F. W. Mackenzie, M.D.; J. T. Musgrave, Esq.; W. O. Priestley, M.D.; C. H. F. Routh, M.D.; Spencer Wells, F.R.C.S.E.; R. U. West, M.D. (Alford, Lincolnshire); James Whitehead, M.D. (Manchester); with power to add to their number. *Treasurer*: W. Tyler Smith, M.D. *Honorary Secretaries*: Graily Hewitt, M.D.; T. H. Tanner, M.D.”

Dr. ROUTH, in seconding the resolution, gave his cordial support to the Society. To none did woman in the time of trial allotted by the Creator owe more than to the accoucheur. Every man might not have a wife, but most had sisters; surely, then, that midwifery should be well understood and practised was greatly to be desired. Many in the room he felt had obligations to other accoucheurs which nothing would repay. He hoped that in the new society the political element would not be entirely lost sight of. How many lives of young and interesting children were daily sacrificed by prescribing chemists and druggists! By pointing out the difficulties in the treatment of children's diseases, this source of evil might be removed. With regard to midwives, again, he considered that, as on the continent, it should be obligatory on them to go through a regular course of study, and that the state was guilty in allowing them to practise midwifery without such education. There was therefore still much room for political intervention. If the society not only sought to advance the science of the art, but also endeavoured to extend the knowledge thereof amongst those who practised it, a great service would indeed be performed and immense good would be derived by all classes.

The next resolution, empowering the Council to frame laws and to draw up and circulate a prospectus setting forth the objects of the Society, was proposed by Mr. SPENCER WELLS and seconded by Dr. MACKENZIE.

On the proposition of Dr. TANNER, seconded by Dr. GRAILY HEWITT, a vote of thanks to Dr. Rigby for his kindness in presiding and for his able conduct in the chair was carried by acclamation, and the proceedings terminated.

THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND AND THE MEDICAL COUNCIL.

On Monday, December 20th, 1858, a conference of Members and Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons was held at the Freemasons' Tavern, for the purpose of considering the recent act of the Council of the said College in electing (to the exclusion of the members and fellows) a member to the General Council of Medical Education and Registration, and to take

such steps as may be necessary to secure the corporate rights of the members and fellows. Among the gentlemen present were Mr. Brady, M.P., Mr. Wakley, Mr. G. Bottomley, F.R.C.S., Mr. Spencer Wells, F.R.C.S., Mr. Luke, Dr. Tunnalley, Dr. Macgregor, Mr. J. F. Clarke, Mr. Chatto, Mr. George Ross, Mr. Lobb, Mr. Day, Mr. Gant, Dr. Burford Carlisle, Dr. Fowler, Dr. Kidd, Dr. O'Connor, Mr. McAndrew, Mr. Beattie, Dr. Dillon, Mr. Hutchinson, etc.

The chair was taken by J. LAVIES, Esq. The following resolutions were passed.

1. Proposed by Mr. BOTTOMLEY, of Croydon, and seconded by Dr. J. H. WILLIAMS:—

“That, in the opinion of this conference, the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, having excluded the members and fellows of the College from a voice in the election of their representative to the General Council of Medical Education and Registration, under the Medical Act, have thereby invaded the corporate rights of the members and fellows, and infringed the provisions of the said Act; and, further, that in the opinion of the conference a principle is involved in the said election which would subvert the representative rights granted to the members and fellows by the legislature in that Act.”

2. Proposed by Dr. LADD, and seconded by Mr. POCOCK:—

“That this conference cordially approves the proceedings, up to this time, taken by the committee which has acted on behalf of the members and fellows of the College; and, further, this conference empowers the committee to name another day to hold a public meeting, or to take such other steps as may be necessary to ascertain the views of the members and fellows in respect to the exercise of their corporate rights and the provisions of the new Medical Act.”

CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE INSANE.

THE following letter has been addressed to the *Times* by Dr. Mayo, the President of the Royal College of Physicians of London.

“SIR,—The report of the trial of James Atkinson at York, for the murder of Mary Scaife, in the *Times* of the 18th ult., deserves consideration on grounds which apply to a large number of similar cases, not without important bearings on the interests of society. The plea of mental unsoundness was successfully urged in favour of the criminal. Without any disposition to question its appropriateness,—indeed, with a strong conviction of difficulty attending such criticism on the part of any one not present at the trial,—I would still call your attention to consequences indirectly, but certainly, appertaining to this class of cases upon our present system—a class of cases in which the immediate act is resolvable into normal principles of action, while the context of character affords some grounds for a suspicion of mental unsoundness. Whether James Atkinson was, or was not, insane in that sense of the word in which the plea is exculpatory in the eye of the law, there is, I imagine, no doubt that he was not insane in that sense of the word in which he would have been consigned to a lunatic asylum previously to having qualified himself for such detention by a criminal act. The argument of Dr. Forbes Winslow would not, I imagine, have satisfied the Commissioners in Lunacy that vice, cruelty, intemperate passionateness, defective memory, feeble moral qualities, and limited intellect, inadequate notions of the nature of the Deity, even accompanied by a goitre, would warrant their depriving Atkinson of his liberty. Now, this consideration, which applies, I say, to a large group of cases, is fraught with very perilous interest as far as the public is concerned. The interests of the public and the prisoner are mischievously at variance in our present mode of applying the plea of intellectual deficiency or perversion. So far as it protects the one, it places the other in jeopardy. Until he has committed a frightful crime the delinquent is a vicious brute, subject to all the minor penalties of the law. Let him only murder the woman whom he has ruined, and he becomes the subject of a metaphysical exculpation, and is maintained for the rest of his life at the public expense. Such is English law—at one period of our history a sanguinary code, protective of the public at the expense of the delinquent; at another period protective of the delinquent at the expense of the public safety.

“But how is this state of things to be remedied? Not, as I have already observed, by making all such persons as James Atkinson subject to detention lest they should commit murders

—a principle of most dangerous application to the public liberty, if thus extended; but by a more careful and philosophical application of the laws of moral responsibility to such cases,—by its being borne in mind that this class of brutes—for such in truth they are, rather than madmen—can be influenced by motives, can be restrained by their fears, and are susceptible of the effect of examples. The most unquestionable lunatics can be influenced by motives—a fact well recognised and applied by all judicious managers of asylums. Let those who must not be incarcerated in such places benefit by prevention thus carried out. I do not believe that we shall be emancipated from the social dangers which this letter is intended to avert until we have emancipated ourselves from our present theory of moral responsibility, and learnt that unsoundness of the moral principle gives many elements of character closely resembling those of the insane, but differing in one all-important element—namely, the capacity of appreciating the risks attendant on crime, and thus of being influenced by fear of punishment.

"I remain, sir, yours faithfully,

"THOMAS MAYO.

"Dec. 24th, 1858."

In reply, Dr. Forbes Winslow has also addressed a letter to the *Times*. It is too long for us to insert entire; but we extract the principal points. He says:

"During the several anxious and prolonged consultations I had with the three medical gentlemen at York (previously to the trial) respecting the alleged insanity of James Atkinson, the question suggested by Dr. Mayo was, in fact, put by myself on more than one occasion to Dr. C. Williams and Messrs. Kitching and North. 'Is this a case,' I asked, 'supposing we had known James Atkinson's antecedents, but were ignorant of the fact that he had committed murder, in which we could conscientiously have certified to his mental unsoundness?' The answer to that question was an emphatic 'Yes.' We arrived at this conclusion . . . principally on account of the prisoner's obvious and palpable condition of imbecile mind at the time of our interview.

"During the lengthened examination that I instituted of the prisoner's state, in the presence of the medical gentlemen previously mentioned, I discovered that he had not the intelligence and knowledge of a child of eight years of age. He was utterly incapable of understanding the most simple question; his powers of apprehension were of the lowest order; the memory, faculty of judgment, and comparison were little, if at all developed. Apart from these symptoms of stunted mind and mental imbecility, I found the prisoner entirely unconscious of the awful position in which he stood. . . .

"It is true, as Dr. Mayo suggests, that mere 'vice,' 'defective memory,' 'limited intellect,' etc., when viewed by themselves, are not safe *data* upon which to found (exclusively) a theory of insanity and moral irresponsibility; but are not these states of mind the elements that enter into the constitution of that condition of mental disorder known by the term 'imbecility'?

"This type of insanity is not a metaphysical abstraction. It is a condition of mind recognised by certain negations; in other words, by the absence of those manifestations of intellect generally considered to represent what we term the average standard of mental health.

"Defective memory,' 'limited intellect,' may exist respectively of insanity and imbecility, but I would ask Dr. Mayo whether the latter state can be present without such symptoms; in other words, whether they are not essential ingredients in all such cases.

"An imbecile has little or no memory, is dull of apprehension, is incapable of grasping the most simple questions, has no power of comparison, exhibits no interest, or interest of a most feeble character, in surrounding circumstances, and has no rational and sane appreciation of his social duties of position.

"If these symptoms were considered individually, they would be unsafe and dangerous evidences upon which to form a conclusion as to the state of any mind; but when viewed in the aggregate, they constitute valid and satisfactory *data* to guide the medical jurist to a right result.

"Dr. Mayo has taken this opportunity of reviving an opinion which he has previously advanced, respecting the responsibility of persons in a partial state of insanity. He says, 'Madmen can be influenced by motives, can be restrained by their fears, and are susceptible of the effect of examples. The most unquestionable lunatics can be influenced by motives,—a fact well recognised and applied by all judicious managers of

asylums.' There can be no doubt as to the truth of Dr. Mayo's general proposition. 'Unquestionable lunatics and madmen' can be 'influenced by motives' and 'restrained by fears.' What class of the insane are not so influenced, except those reduced to positive idiocy? Let me ask Dr. Mayo whether the insane can be influenced (under circumstances similar to those in which Atkinson was placed) by rational motives,—I mean motives addressed to their reason, and not to their instinct. . . .

"Dr. Mayo asserts that 'unquestionable lunatics and madmen' can be 'restrained by their fears.' This is an admitted axiom. But the fear of the lunatic and madman is not a reasonable and rational, but an instinctive fear, such as animals exhibit when influenced by the dread of punishment.

"Would it not be perfectly monstrous to consider the 'unquestionable lunatic' as responsible as a man in full possession of his reason, merely because he is when under conditions of moral restraint and control 'influenced by motives,' and 'restrained by fear'?

"If this doctrine were to be acquiesced in by our judges and juries, we should soon have a general lunatic asylum delivery, and Dr. Mayo and those who agree with him in opinion, would be able with impunity to indulge their fancy and gratify their taste, by witnessing many a poor irresponsible lunatic strangled publicly to death upon the gallows! God forbid that such a demoralising, degrading, and brutalising spectacle should ever be witnessed in a civilised and Christian country!"

HEALTH OF POLICEMEN IN HULL. Mr. Munroe, Surgeon to the Hull Police, has lately published a report on the medical statistics of the force from November 19, 1857, to November 19, 1858. He observes that the sickness experienced by the police force is more than double the amount of sickness experienced by operatives living in large towns. The number of days' sickness in one year experienced by persons of various trades in large towns, calculated for the ages of our policemen, amount to 806. The number of days sickness during last year of the Hull police force was 1,761, being 955 days more than the average sickness of our working classes in towns. The average age of the policemen in the Hull force is 33; and, according to the tables of Neison and Ratcliffe, they should experience six days six hours of sickness in the year; but the policemen have actually experienced each fourteen days thirteen hours sickness. The inspectors have been peculiarly healthy. The sergeants, with one exception, have also had much below the average amount of sickness occurring to other persons in towns; so that the great amount of sickness has been experienced by the constables. It should be mentioned also that out of the 121 policemen composing the force 17 have had no day's sickness. The average amount of sickness has been four and three quarters men *per diem*. Those policemen who have been labourers, especially those from country districts, are the healthiest subjects, and do their duty with the least amount of inconvenience; whilst, on the other hand, those who have been engaged in indoor employment suffer more in health, and do their duty with more inconvenience.

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