

## Association Intelligence.

### MEETING OF THE MEDICAL REFORM COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the Medical Reform Committee, for the purpose of agreeing on proposals to be submitted to the Conference Committee of the Medical Corporations with regard to the new Medical Bill, was holden at 3, Waterloo Place, Pall Mall, on Thursday last, at 12.30 P.M.

There were present: Sir Charles Hastings, M.D., in the chair; G. Bottomley, Esq., P. Cartwright, Esq., Mr. G. Hastings, Dr. Henry, Dr. Lankester, T. Nunneley, Esq., Dr. Sibson, G. Southam, Esq., J. Stedman, Esq., and Dr. G. Webster. Dr. Wynter also attended the meeting.

The following resolutions were agreed on, to be communicated to the Conference Committee of the Corporations.

1. Proposed by Dr. LANKESTER, and seconded by Dr. WEBSTER—

"That this Committee agree that the Medical Council under the proposed Bill should consist of representatives from the Medical Corporations and Universities of the United Kingdom, in such numbers and proportions as those bodies may determine, together with a certain number of members, not being members of the governing bodies of medical Corporations or Universities, nominated by the Crown, provided that such last mentioned members constitute one-third of the whole Council."

2. Moved by Mr. SOUTHAM, seconded by Mr. CARTWRIGHT—

"That the following preamble precede the resolution: That while the Committee strongly object to one of the present bye-laws of the College of Surgeons, which prevents the admission of any member into the Fellowship, unless he has been educated for three out of six years in the schools of London, so that consequently the Fellowship cannot be attained by every member of the College, yet, trusting that this great injustice will be remedied at an early period, the Committee beg to make the following proposal, etc."

3. Moved by Dr. SIBSON, seconded by Mr. BOTTOMLEY—

"That provided the proposed amendments be adopted by the Committee of Conference, the secretary shall at once write to all the Branches, requesting them, without delay, to call meetings to petition the Legislature and to influence the various local Members of Parliament in favour of the modified Bill."

ALEXANDER HENRY, M.D., *Secretary*.

### ADMISSION OF NEW MEMBERS.

THE LAWS OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, with regard to the admission of new members, are the following:—

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.

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 of the current year. The subscription shall date from the 1st January in each year.

The names of new members should be forwarded to the Secretary, Dr. P. H. WILLIAMS, Worcester; or to any of the Secretaries of the Branches.

## Reports of Societies.

### MEDICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10TH, 1856.

W. D. CHOWNE, M.D., President, in the Chair.

#### THE VAPOUR OF AMYLENE AS AN ANÆSTHETIC.

BY JOHN SNOW, M.D.

Amylene was discovered by M. Balard in 1844, the substance which M. Cahours had previously called by this name being now named paramylene. Amylene was made by distilling fusel oil with chloride of zinc. It was a simple carbo-hydrogen, containing ten atoms carbon and ten hydrogen. It was a clear, colourless, and very volatile liquid, of very low specific gravity. It boiled at 102° Fah., its specific gravity was 0.659 at 56°, and the specific gravity of its vapour was 2.45. It was soluble in all proportions in alcohol and ether, but was extremely insoluble in water; requiring, apparently, upwards of ten thousand parts of water for its solution. It had a smell something like naphtha: some persons thought the odour agreeable, whilst others objected to it. It had very little pungency, and was, on this account, much easier to inhale than chloroform or ether. It was necessary that there should be about fifteen per cent. of vapour of amylene in the air breathed by the patient, in order to make him quite insensible. In this way, from three to four fluid drachms were inhaled by the adult, and insensibility was induced in about three minutes. The pulse was increased in frequency and strength during the inhalation, and the respiration was usually accelerated. There had been very little struggling or rigidity of the muscles, previous to insensibility, in any of the cases in which he had exhibited the amylene; and absence of pain was induced with less coma than usually accompanied the use of chloroform and ether. The waking and complete recovery of the patient was also more prompt than with the other two agents. Dr. SNOW had administered amylene in twenty-one operations in King's College Hospital, and there had been no sickness or depression in any of the cases. He was of opinion that it would be free from danger if employed with ordinary care.

Sulphuric ether was extremely safe: he believed that no fatal accident had arisen from its use, although it had been blamed for causing death in a few cases. Its safety arose from the circumstance, that the quantity which it was necessary to inhale occupied a large volume in the form of vapour, and could only be inspired by degrees, and must produce its effects gradually, thus allowing plenty of time to observe them. With chloroform, on the other hand, some fatal accidents had occurred; and although they were few in number, when compared with the multitudes who had inhaled it, they were much to be regretted. A large dose of chloroform occupied but a very small space in the form of vapour, and, unless great care were taken to have it largely diluted with air, it might all be breathed in a few inspirations, and might act with dangerous rapidity. In fact, a very considerable amount of chloroform might be present in the lungs at one time, when the blood which was passing through these organs might become so charged with the vapour as, not only to paralyse the brain, and stop respiration, but also to narcotise the nerves of the heart, and suddenly stop the action of that organ. It was in this way that the accidents from chloroform had chiefly occurred. The amount of amylene which it was necessary to breathe occupied a considerable volume in the form of vapour, and in all the ordinary processes of inhalation must become mixed with a large amount of air: for these reasons, he believed that it would not be liable to cause accident; but, of course, it was advisable to use it with care.

The amylene Dr. SNOW had used was made for him by Mr. Bullock, of Hanover Street. He had administered it with his usual chloroform inhaler made a little larger, except during part of the time of two operations in the face, when it was applied on a sponge. He was not yet prepared to say to what extent it might supersede chloroform; but he considered the results hitherto obtained to be so favourable as to encourage its further use.

# Medical News.

## BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS, AND APPOINTMENTS.

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

### BIRTHS.

- \*BOODLE, Robert, H., Esq., Chilcompton, Somerset, the wife of—a daughter, on January 11th.  
BRADY, John, Esq., M.P., the wife of—a son, stillborn—at Warwick Terrace, on January 10th.  
BROXHOLOM, R. G., Esq., Sunbury, Middlesex, the wife of—a son—on January 11th.  
DE MORGAN, Campbell, Esq., Surgeon to the Middlesex Hospital, the wife of—a son—on January 11th.  
WHITNEY, W. U., Esq., Surgeon, the wife of—a daughter—at 12, Great College Street, Westminster, on July 12th.

### MARRIAGES.

- BRENT—HOUNSELL. BRENT, John, jun., Esq., of Canterbury, to Eliza Anne, eldest daughter of John Hounsell, Esq., Surgeon, of Bridport, on January 8th.  
DAVIDSON—MCGHEE. DAVIDSON, R. H., M.D., Bombay Medical Establishment, to Catharine W. J., only daughter of the late Captain Holland L. McGhee, 31st Regiment, at Stirling, on January 7th.  
FRANKLYN—GOBET. FRANKLYN, Edward James, M.D., Surgeon 77th Regiment, to Agnes Sophia Maria, daughter of the late John Moore Gobet, Esq., of Bermuda, at Stamford Hill, on January 3rd.  
PHILIPPS—GRAHAM. PHILIPPS, J. G. H., Esq., 41st Regiment Madras Native Infantry, to Blanche, youngest daughter of H. G. Graham, Esq., Superintending Surgeon, Saugor Division, at Saugor, Central India, on November 8th, 1856.  
SMITH—THOMSON. SMITH, Robert, Esq., Staff-Surgeon, to Annie Macdonald, eldest daughter of W. J. Thomson, Esq., Surgeon, at Arbroath, on January 7th.

### DEATHS.

- DAVIES. On January 8th, of bronchitis, John Joseph, infant son of \*John Davies, Esq., Surgeon, of Dudley Port, Tipton, aged 8 months.  
WHATELY. On January 10th, at Brighton, the wife of Edward Whately, Esq., Surgeon.

### APPOINTMENTS.

- \*TURNER, Richard, Esq., appointed Surgeon to the Tunbridge Wells Infirmary.

### PASS LISTS.

APOTHECARIES' HALL. Members admitted on Thursday, January 1st, 1857:—

CRESY, Theodore Grant, Her Majesty's Ship *Dreadnought*  
GOODALL, William Preston, Market Drayton, Salop  
KNOTT, Robert Charles, New Zealand  
SKIPPER, John, Dalston

Thursday, January 8th:—

ALLEN, John William, jun., London  
FARR, George Evan  
HIPPOLITE DE NICEVILLE, Charles Francis, Clifton  
MOORE, Edward Denniss, Birmingham  
RILEY, James, Birmingham

## HEALTH OF LONDON:—WEEK ENDING JANUARY 10TH, 1857.

[From the Registrar-General's Report.]

In the week that ended on Saturday, the deaths of 1135 persons, viz., 577 males and 558 females, were registered. The average number of deaths in the ten weeks corresponding with last week of the years 1857-56, was 1251; but as the deaths of last week occurred in an increased population, the average must be raised proportionally to the increase for the purpose of comparison; and in this case it will become 1376. The number of deaths recorded last week is less by 241 than would have been returned if the average rate of mortality had prevailed.

The deaths caused by diseases of the organs of respiration are not so numerous as they were about the end of November; 270 are referred to this class in the table for last week—the corrected average for corresponding weeks being 333. Bronchitis was fatal in 140 cases; pneumonia in 87. The former disease began to be in excess of the latter in November; and this excess is always maintained during the winter months, although bronchitis attacks principally persons more or less advanced in life, and is therefore restricted in its operations to a narrower field. Phthisis was fatal last week in 120 cases, nearly half of which occurred to persons between the ages of 20 and 40 years. By the average rate of mortality from this disease, the number would have been 153.

Whooping-cough was the most fatal last week of the diseases in the zymotic class, and carried off 55 children. Forty-nine persons died of typhus and common fever, 36 of scarlatina, 30 of measles, 4 of small-pox, and 11 of croup. Six children died of measles in the Pancras Workhouse, situated in the sub-district of Camden Town, between the 4th and 9th January inclusive. The aggregate mortality from diseases of this class was below the average.

Five persons are recorded as having died from the intemperate use of spiritous liquors. Last year, the number of deaths expressly stated as due to this cause, was 66, or rather more than one in a week; but at this festive season an increase in cases of this description is, unfortunately, to be expected.

On the 30th December a man, aged 74 years, was found dead in St. John's-square from want of the necessaries of life.

Five persons in the present returns, namely, four men and a woman, had arrived at the age of 90 years or upwards. The oldest died in Mile-end at the age of 96 years.

Last week the births of 846 boys and 817 girls, in all 1,663 children, were registered in London. In ten corresponding weeks of the years 1847-56 the average number was 1,517.

At the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, the mean height of the barometer in the week was 29.799 in. The mean daily reading was above 30 in. on three days of the week. The lowest reading was 28.97 in. on Sunday, and the highest 30.26 in. on Wednesday. The mean temperature of the week was 36.8°, which is 1° above the average of the same week in 43 years (as determined by Mr. Glaisher.) On Friday the excess above the average was 7°, on Saturday 9.6°. On Saturday the highest temperature in the week occurred, and was 49.2°; the lowest occurred on Wednesday, and was 28.1°; the range of the week was therefore 21.1°. The mean dew-point temperature was 34.5°, and the difference between this and the mean air temperature was 2.3°. The mean temperature of the water of the Thames was 40.4°. The wind blew generally from the north-east till the last three days, and then chiefly from the south-west. The daily horizontal movement of the air varied from 5 to 240. Rain fell to the amount of 1.20 in.; on Saturday the quantity was 0.69 in. Snow or rain fell on every day, except Wednesday.

MADNESS CURED BY FOLLY. Old Dr. Rush, of Philadelphia, used to relate a singular case of monomania in a patient in the Philadelphia Hospital. He took it into his head that he was a painter, and resolutely refused for a long time, though possessing fine organs of speech, to utter a word. The doctor one day entered his apartment, and found him sketching on a slip of paper a really beautiful rose; for he had by long practice acquired much skill in the art pictorial, and was very fond of the accomplishment. One day a thought struck Dr. Rush that he would surprise him into voice by dispraising his labours, and resolved to try. "You are painting a very handsome cabbage there, my friend," he observed to the maniac. "Cabbage!—good gracious, old gentleman, does that look like a cabbage? Why, sir, you are a fool! That's a rose, and it's a good one, too." It was not long before the patient was well. His train of silent thought was broken, and he returned home.

LONDON HOSPITALS. The varying expense per bed of some of the London Hospitals may be conceived by comparing some the large and small Hospitals. The expense per bed per annum of each department of St. George's is £46; St. Mark's Fistula Hospital (the most perfect of the smaller Hospitals), £35; while St. Bartholomew's is £53! The other Hospitals vary between these figures, from the latter high sum at the oldest and best Hospital down to the Royal Free, which is more a dispensary for out-patients, or the ophthalmic and others, where patients help to pay for themselves.

## THE CORONER'S COURT.

THE following correspondence appears in the *Gainsburgh News* for December 27th, 1856:—

"Caskgate Street, December 23rd, 1856.

"To the Editor of the 'News'.

"SIR,—In consequence of the appearance in your paper of the 6th instant, of a paragraph having reference to an inquest held on the body of a child named Leedham, of whom it is stated that 'from the evidence of the doctor, and the appearance of the body, the jury returned a verdict of—Died of Convulsions', I felt it incumbent on me, as the doctor alluded to, to enter into a correspondence with the coroner; and herewith send you copies of the letters that have passed between us; that your readers may form an opinion on the matter, and see what reason they have to congratulate themselves for living in an enlightened country, whose laws are especially framed to protect their *lives and property*.

"Yours faithfully, D. MACKINDER."

"Gainsburgh, December 5th, 1856.

"SIR,—You yesterday held an inquest at Gainsburgh, on the body of an infant named John Thomas Leedham, and recorded a verdict of 'Death from Convulsions'. Will you oblige me with the evidence on which that verdict was founded?

"I am, sir, yours obediently, D. MACKINDER, M.D.

"To C. H. Holgate, Esq., Coroner."

"Kirtton Lindsey, 8th December, 1856.

"SIR,—In the absence of any other evidence taken at the inquest on Thursday last, the mother of the child stated that you had seen the child after death, and gave it as your opinion that it died of convulsions.

"I remain yours obediently, C. H. HOLGATE.

"Dr. Mackinder, Gainsburgh."

"Gainsburgh, December 16th, 1856.

"SIR,—I am obliged to you for your letter, and beg to inform you that that portion of the depositions which has reference to the *medical opinion* of the cause of death of Leedham's infant, is untrue.

"Mrs. Leedham stated to my assistant, Mr. Capron, who went to see her child, that it gasped for breath two or three times after she awoke, and she wished to know from him whether it had died of convulsions; but instead of saying the child *had* died of convulsions, Mr. Capron asserted that it *had not*, and that he believed the cause of death could not be revealed without a *post mortem* examination.

"With all due deference to the opinion of yourself and the jury, I have no hesitation in saying, with Mr. Capron, that in this case a necropsy was imperatively called for, and that the cause of public justice has not been served by such an insufficient inquiry. If an inquest is necessary, a full and complete investigation should be instituted, or the verdict pronounced by your time-honoured court becomes virtually of no effect.

"I do not accuse any one of foul play in this case; but the fact of a child being in perfect health at four o'clock of the afternoon of the 1st, as asserted by its maternal grandmother, of its being poorly in the evening ('having the stomachache'), and taking a powder from the druggist, and then being found dead soon after seven on the following morning, is sufficient to awaken suspicion in anyone acquainted with the little value that is often put on infantile existence. To Godfrey's cordial and such soporific nostrums the table of infantile mortality is no mean debtor; and what can put a stop to such a diabolical system of slow poisoning, if the coroner's inquisition be not rigorously enforced? To record a verdict of 'Died of Convulsions', is tantamount to certifying that it is not known whether the death has been caused by natural or preternatural agency. Convulsion is the last symptom of many diseases, and frequently the last evidence of life in those unfortunate beings to whose existence a period has been put by the hand of a fellow-creature. The child with hydrocephalus, the man with lock-jaw, the drowned sailor, and the wretched culprit on the gallows, die of convulsions: yet how imperfect would be the record of such deaths were they to be registered simply 'Convulsions'.

"The greatest criminal of modern times would still have been perpetrating his horrid deeds had not an outraged public insisted on a thorough and searching inquiry as to the cause of the death of John Parsons Cook, whose last moments were spent in the agony of convulsions! Many other cases might be instanced; but it is, I am sure, quite unnecessary to remind you of them; nor should I have troubled you with this, had I

not considered it a duty I owed to my profession, and, what is of more importance, to the public.

"I am, sir, yours obediently, D. MACKINDER, M.D.

"C. H. Holgate, Coroner."

"P.S.—Since I received your letter, Mr. Capron has had an interview with Mrs. Leedham, who denies having deposed that the doctor said her child had died of convulsions; but, on the contrary, states that she said it was the doctor's opinion that her infant might possibly have had inflammation of the lungs. It is but justice to you, however, to say, that Wilson, the policeman, states that this is not a correct version of Mrs. Leedham's deposition. D. M."

"[I have received no reply to my last letter; but, by way of postscript, beg to inform you that, from the evidence which I have since obtained from various sources, it appears that the coroner did not arrive until an hour past the appointed time; that he then informed the jury he must depart by the next train, which only left twenty-nine minutes to empanel a jury, deliver his address, hear evidence, and sum up—an extraordinary feat, which was actually accomplished, much to the annoyance of the foreman of the jury, who did not hesitate to express his disapprobation.]"

SUICIDE BY STRYCHNINE. On December 30th an investigation was concluded before Mr. Wakley into the circumstances attending the death of Catherine Powell, a servant, aged 37, from a large dose of strychnine taken by the deceased with a suicidal intention. It appeared that the deceased, who had been in the service—prior to her last situation at 12, Harrington-square, Hampstead-road—of Lord Milford, Haverfordwest, Pembrokehire, frequently spoke to her acquaintances of the deadly effects of strychnine; said that Lord Milford had been in the habit of using it for poisoning foxes, rats, and other vermin; and that she had seen an animal expire immediately after taking a small quantity of it. Although she spoke so lightly of the dangerous qualities of strychnine, it was not supposed for a moment that she premeditated self-destruction, for she was a person of a very cheerful disposition and sober habits. On the day of her death she was found by her mistress lying on the floor of the kitchen as if she was in a fit. Mr. Hazell, a neighbouring medical gentleman, was immediately sent for, who found that the deceased was quite dead. There was nothing in the appearance of the body at the time to account for death—no *rigor mortis* such as is believed to follow death by strychnine, with the exception of a strong muscular action in the fingers. On the deceased's box being removed, a bottle of white powder marked "Poison," with the name of the chemist, "Mr. Phillips, chemist and druggist, Haverfordwest," was discovered; and on Mr. Hazell performing the *post mortem* examination, he found traces of poisoning in the stomach. This led to the adjournment of the inquiry in order that an analysis might be made of the contents of the stomach and bottle. Mr. Hazell, having made this further examination, was enabled to state that the bottle contained a compound of strychnine and French chalk, and that the deceased had taken some 12 or 15 grains of the poison, which fully accounted for her death. The coroner, in summing up, observed that the case was an exceedingly important and extraordinary one. It was generally believed that poisoning by strychnine resulted in violent contortions of the hands and convulsions, but here was a case that exploded the whole theory. The deceased, it appeared, was seen well at four o'clock in the afternoon; at a quarter to six she was found dead; but there were none of those convulsive actions about the body which usually were seen when death resulted from such a poison. On the contrary, she lay in an easy and recumbent position on the floor, the only thing peculiar being a slight convulsive action in the fingers. In poisoning by strychnine it had invariably occurred that the body was so rigid and contorted, and the back so bent, that the body could rest on the back of the head and the heels, but it was not the result in the present case. On the whole he considered the investigation one of the most important brought under his notice for some time past, and trusted that it would be duly recorded in medical jurisprudence; for besides its important features in a medico-legal point of view, it was really useful to know that a person might die from the effects of strychnine, and yet no external trace be left, nor even the slightest injury result to the coats of the stomach, which was the means of immediate detection in other poisons. In conclusion, he expressed his belief, from the large quantity found in the deceased's system, that she had taken it wilfully for the purpose of destroying life, and he left it with the jury, under the

circumstances, to consider the state of her mind at the time she committed the suicidal act. The jury, after a brief deliberation, recorded a verdict of suicide, leaving the condition of the deceased's mind an open question. The inquiry then terminated. (*Times*.)

**ODONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.** The first meeting of this society was held on Monday evening, January 5th, at 32A, George Street, Hanover Square, when a large muster of the leading practitioners of dental surgery, both in town and from the country, met together. Some preliminary business having been gone through, the president, Mr. Cartwright, delivered an address, in which, after glancing at the progress of dental surgery during the last century, he took a review of the present position and prospects of the profession, and strongly urged the necessity of a liberal education, in conjunction with the special qualification required for those who would practise this department of surgery with credit and success. He then referred to the circumstances connected with the presentation of a memorial to the Council of the College of Surgeons, by certain members of the profession (including himself), stating the reasons which led to the adoption of that proceeding. The advisability of maintaining the connexion of dental with general surgery, was strongly insisted upon; and it was held that a *voluntary* separation from the College of Surgeons could not but be disadvantageous to the body of dentists. The great need of a society formed on the model of other scientific societies, as a point of union amongst the practitioners of dental surgery, and as a medium for the communication of experience and the discussion of professional subjects, was pointed out; and the president concluded by expressing his conviction that these objects would be fully attained by the establishment of the Odontological Society. He then urged upon the members the necessity of cordial cooperation in furthering the purposes of the society, by the contribution of papers of interest, and by attendance at the meetings. Several preparations, illustrative of dental pathology, were exhibited; and there was a good display of instruments and appliances.

**CASE OF TOOTHACHE IN THE HORSE.** A rather unusual case occurred within the last week in the practice of Mr. Ferguson, Her Majesty's veterinary surgeon in Ireland. A horse, belonging to a person named Walker, living in Brunswick Street, had been condemned as glandered, and ordered to be destroyed, his owner having been prosecuted for allowing him on a public thoroughfare. The animal was wasted in condition, and had a profuse discharge from one nostril, similar to that of glanders. On making inquiries relative to the history of the case, Mr. Ferguson ascertained that the animal occasionally could scarcely masticate his food. This induced him to examine the horse's mouth, with a view of ascertaining the state of his teeth. Seeing one of the upper back teeth (the last but one) discoloured, he determined on extracting it, fancying it possible that it was affected with caries, and that an abscess had formed at its root, and burst into the nose, thus giving rise to the fetid discharge from the nostril at that side. On drawing the tooth, which was accomplished by a leviathan instrument, exactly resembling the key-tooth extractor for the human subject, Mr. Ferguson's surmises were found to be correct: there was not alone decided caries of the tooth, but also a large chronic abscess at the extremity of its socket, the contents of which had forced a passage for itself through the bones into the passage of the nose, profusely furnishing the nostril with a most offensive discharge, which had been mistaken for that of glanders, and well nigh was the cause of sealing the animal's fate. Since the extraction of the tooth, the discharge has ceased, and the horse masticates his food properly, and has evidently improved in health, strength, condition, and spirits, being now able to do ordinary work. Thus dental surgery is occasionally as requisite for the horse as for his master—man.

**SINGULAR CASE.** On Wednesday, January 7th, an inquest was held at the Calcutta Inn, Cheltenham, before Mr. J. Lovegrove, respecting the death of a young woman named Mary Ann Gilkes, and of a male child of which she had been delivered a short time before her death. The peculiarity of the case is that the birth of the child was not discovered until after the burial of the mother. A medical gentleman who attended the young woman, gave a certificate that she died from epilepsy produced by exhaustion; and the coroner, in the exercise of his discretion, had refused to hold an inquest until after the discovery of the body of the child. That circumstance, however, led to the exhumation of the body of the mother; and, after a long inquiry, the jury returned a verdict

that Mary Ann Brunsley Gilkes had died from epilepsy, arising from exhaustion through loss of blood and neglect in her confinement, and that the child had died through the wilful design or neglect of the mother, who was therefore guilty of "Wilful murder". After some remarks from the coroner, the foreman of the jury stated that they wished to make the following addition to the verdict:—"We, the jurymen empaneled to inquire into the cause of death of M. A. Gilkes, being ratepayers of the county of Gloucester, having noticed the discussions which have of late taken place in the Court of Quarter Sessions with regard to the holding of inquests, express our unanimous opinion that the tendency of the interference of the magistrates in controlling the discretion of the coroners, and which, in this instance, nearly caused a miscarriage of the course of justice, is calculated to diminish the safeguard which the full discharge of the duties of the ancient office of coroner had thrown around the lives of the people of this country."

**QUEEN'S HOSPITAL BALL, BIRMINGHAM.** The annual ball for the benefit of the Queen's Hospital, Birmingham, took place on Thursday last, and went off very successfully, there being nearly 1,000 persons present. The hall was tastefully decorated for the occasion. Major-General Windham attended, and his presence contributed much to the success of the ball.

**A NEW DODGE.** The following letter has appeared in a number of the *Times* this week:

"SIR,—The manoeuvres of rogues infesting London to obtain entry into private houses are really so Protean in their character that it becomes positively necessary to publish every fresh form for the sake of public security. I therefore send you these few lines to put the medical men of London on their guard against losing their time or any easily removed valuable articles lying about in their consulting rooms and surgeries.

"On last Saturday a respectably-dressed middle-aged woman called on me, and mentioning the name of a medical gentleman with whom I was slightly acquainted, asked me to attend a case for him during his absence from town. She gave me the name and address of the patient, and made an appointment for half-past four o'clock the same day. Although rather inconvenient, as I had several places to go to, I attended most punctually, and on arriving at the house indicated was told that no person of the name I inquired for lived there at all. Of course I felt a little annoyed. In the evening I looked through the *Court Guide*, and finding a person with a very similar name living at a house a little further on, in the same street, I again went out in the wet, and this time saw a gentleman who certainly was astonished to find a 'doctor coming to attend his wife,' when he happened to be a bachelor, and with every prospect of remaining so.

"I have since called on the gentleman who I supposed had recommended me, and I then discovered that not only there was no truth in the case at all, but also that he himself and four other medical gentlemen had been hoaxed in the same foolish manner, and by the same woman, the only purpose she could have in view being to lay her hands on anything in reach worth carrying off, or else to reconnoitre the premises for a more serious attack. In most of the cases, as in mine, she asked for and obtained the gentlemen's cards; your publishing this note may therefore prevent any other person being imposed upon by her for the future.

"I remain, sir, yours obediently,

"ALBERT S. PRESCOTT KNIGHT, Surgeon.

"20, James Street, Buckingham Palace, Jan. 12th."

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

TO CONTRIBUTORS. The Editor would feel glad if Members of the Association and others, would cooperate with him in establishing as a rule, that in future no paper for publication shall exceed two pages of the Journal in length. If the writers of long communications knew as well as the Editor does, that lengthy papers *always* deter the reader from commencing them, this great evil would never arise. Brevity is the soul of medical writing—still more than of wit.

MR. SOLOMON'S letter arrived too late for publication this week.

Communications have been received from:—MR. WYER; MR. W. T. BELL; MR. HENRY EWEN; DR. MACKINDER; MR. GRIFFIN; DR. THUDICHUM; MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY; MR. J. K. SPENDER; MR. ELLIS JONES; MR. S. HARRISON; MR. W. B. KESTEVEN; MR. A. G. FIELD; MR. ROBERT L. STEDMAN; MR. HENRY TERRY, JUN.; DR. SIEVEKING; DR. SNOW; DR. FORBES WINSLOW; DR. G. G. ROGERS; DR. BUCKNILL; DR. J. C. HALL; MR. FRANCIS WHITWELL; MR. GEORGE EVAN FARR; MR. J. V. SOLOMON; MR. RICHARD TURNER; DR. J. H. WEBSTER; DR. F. BRITTON; DR. EDWARD SMITH; MR. C. F. J. LORD; DR. JEAFFERSON; MR. T. HOLMES; MR. T. O'CONNOR; MR. JOHN DAVIES; MR. L. O. FOX; MR. W. STANWELL; H. M.; MR. EDWARD LISTER; MR. JOHN A. BOLTON; MR. JOHN C. BLOXAM; DR. WILLIAM DAVIES; MR. GEORGE HODSON; and SOCIUS.