

enough to see that it cannot be enhanced by an impertinent interference with the duties and rights of the physician.

THE WEEK.

We publish in our news columns a report of the proceedings in a Commission of Lunacy, lately held at the Gray's Inn Coffee House, for the purpose of drawing attention to the singularly divergent opinions of eminent medical psychologists upon matters which should ere this have been put beyond the possibility of dispute. Here we find a clergyman performing certain acts, and expressing certain opinions, which, in the opinion of Drs. Winslow, Sutherland, Southey, and Wood, were clearly indicative of madness; whilst, on the other hand, Drs. Conolly and George Johnson were of opinion that they only amounted to oddities, or to "singular", "extreme", or "eccentric" opinions. It is certainly very unfortunate that, from time to time, inquiries of this kind should expose to the public the very opposite manner in which two medical men will regard the same phenomena of mind. Would it not be possible to agree upon some common ground, upon which all medical psychologists may meet? Cannot we agree even upon first principles? To take the case in point, for instance: Mr. Leach states that he had "a direct command from the Deity to wear a long beard". Ought there to be any doubt about the state of mind such an expression indicates? We think not: and we feel certain that medical psychologists are heaping up in the public mind contempt for themselves, by their neglect to lay down any common principles of agreement. We know full well the difficulty of attempting to construct charts of the narrow—sometimes almost unseen—boundaries between sanity and insanity; but very much could be done, if psychologists were to set about the matter with a will, in the cool moments of philosophical discussion, instead of leaving matters until they face each other before the Commissioner, more in the spirit of intellectual gladiators than of calm inquirers after the truth. We recommend this question to the consideration of those gentlemen interested in medical psychology, who intend to be present at the Edinburgh Meeting.

We observe that petitions are daily being presented to the House of Commons from Medical Officers of Poor-Law Unions, the general prayer of which is for improved remuneration. This dropping fire is all very good in its way; but we trust that the profession are preparing themselves for "a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether," which shall lift the union surgeons into that position which is their right. Mr. Griffin, indefatigable as ever, has lately issued a statement of the grievances of the Poor-Law Medical Officers, together with a draft Bill drawn up by him. This pamphlet we recommend to the earnest attention of our Associates; it contains matter which ought to rouse even the most apathetic from his lethargy.

In the JOURNAL for April 10th, we noticed a statement made by the *Times*, that His Royal Highness the General Commanding-in-Chief had sanctioned the formation of a hospital in the camp at Colchester for the sick wives and children of the soldiers; and we joined our contemporary in expressing a hope that a similar hospital would be commenced at Aldershot. We

have now much pleasure in making a correction of the latter part of the above remarks. Our associate Dr. Tom Guy, who is attached to one of the militia regiments stationed at Aldershot, informs us that an institution of the kind to which we have referred was provided for that station in November 1856. The merit of its institution is due to Dr. Gibson, C.B., the principal medical officer at the camp, who established it with the sanction of his Royal Highness the General Commanding-in-Chief. It has conferred an immense amount of benefit on the wives and children of the men: and Dr. Guy informs us that numerous instances in confirmation of this have come under his notice within the last five months during which he has been stationed at Aldershot with his regiment.

M. Brachet, an eminent practitioner at Lyons, recently deceased, has performed two acts of liberality which will render permanent the honour in which his name is already held by the profession in his native country. He has bequeathed to the medical school of Lyons his library; which, from his well known reputation as a medical *littérateur*, is, in all probability, a most valuable gift. But more than this, he has further shown his practical benevolence by presenting to the Medical Association of the Rhone a country seat of his, with a large endowment, for the purpose of founding an asylum for medical men who have been reduced to poverty, or who have become, through age or infirmity, incapable of pursuing their profession.

Association Intelligence.

LETTERS AND COMMUNICATIONS.

Letters or communications for the JOURNAL should be addressed to Dr. WYNTER, 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.

ADMISSION OF MEMBERS, AND PAYMENT OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

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

Admission of Membes. 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, March 1858.

nouncement relative to the female pills, solely from a desire to benefit the afflicted of their own sex.

"I am, your obedient servant,
"HENRY HARRISS, *Surgeon*.

"(Dated) Redruth, 7th April, 1858."

DISCOURAGEMENT OF UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT.

LETTER FROM W. H. RANKING, M.D.

SIR,—I have observed with much satisfaction the resolutions of the Reading and neighbouring practitioners in reference to homœopathy. They have set an example which should be universally followed. The events of the past few weeks, in which we have had the melancholy spectacle of a London surgeon of repute linking himself to this imposture, and the senior surgeon of a provincial hospital "acting under" one of its apostles, prove forcibly that the time has arrived when those members of our profession who would preserve their character for honesty of principle must no longer forbear to speak out, and must, moreover, by their practice, show that they make no distinction, in the point of professional and moral rectitude, between the avowed practisers of quackery and those who, by meeting such at the bedside, tacitly countenance them, and are equally deserving of the scorn of honourable minds.

I am, etc., W. H. RANKING.

Norwich, April 18th, 1858.

TREATMENT OF CONTRACTED KNEE-JOINT.

LETTER FROM J. S. GAMGEE, Esq.

SIR,—Perusal of Mr. Vose Solomon's letter in the current number would have left me with regret on witnessing how completely he has misinterpreted me, did I not feel that to such misunderstanding the world is indebted for my fellow-townsmen's erudite communication. Even supposing that I stood in need of being informed of the fact that Dieffenbach is the author of a treatise on orthopædic surgery, it cannot have escaped the observation of most readers that, in the passage of Mr. Holmes Coote's paper on which I commented, the fullest justice is done to the great Prussian. What I alleged was simply that an undue share of merit had been attributed to Mr. Brodhurst for having introduced operative modifications, the merit of which is certainly for the most part due to my valued friend Palasciano of Naples, as, indeed, Mr. Brodhurst in great part admits in his recent memoir published in the *Medico-Chirurgical Transactions*. I should not trouble you with this note, did I not feel solicitous to prove my anxiety for the utmost accuracy, even on a point of little interest beyond that which attaches to the elimination of all errors, be they small or great.

I am, etc., J. SAMPSON GAMGEE.

18, Harbourn Road, Birmingham, April 19th, 1858.

CASES OF INJURY OF THE BRAIN.

LETTER FROM THOMAS SMITH, Esq.

SIR,—My patient with injury to the brain, referred to in the *JOURNAL* of April 10th, p. 299, died on the 13th instant, having survived the accident five weeks and twelve hours. I append a short sketch of the case.

G. S., aged 32, was engaged on March 21st in feeding a steam saw-mill, when he fell forwards in an epileptic fit upon the saw, which took off a piece of the skull on the right side, two inches and five-eighths in the longest and two inches and a quarter in the shortest diameter, and with it a slice of the brain about two inches in diameter. He was brought home a distance of three miles; he walked with slight assistance to his home, and was put to bed, where I found him rather depressed from loss of blood, but perfectly sensible, and with no symptom to mark the magnitude of the injury.

The treatment consisted in perfect quietude, the head supported in an elevated position, cold water dressings to the wound, and regulation of the bowels by injections. For a month he neither required nor took any medicine; there was no symptom to treat. He appeared in his usual health; the pulse and all the functions, bodily and mental, went on as in health.

There was, of course, a considerable hernia cerebri; but granulations shot out from it, from isolated spots of the denuded cranium, and from the scalp-wound, which coalesced at the circumference of the opening in the skull, and had com-

menced forming a tough membrane over the protruded portion of the brain.

On the 8th instant, the first symptoms of constitutional disturbance began. The pulse rose; the appetite slightly failed; and light delirium, with confusion of intellect, set in. On the 10th, paralysis of the left side was complete. On the 11th, he became quite unconscious, and gradually sank on April 13th.

The *post mortem* examination disclosed a diffused state of a portion of the posterior hemisphere close to the wound, bounded by a disorganised part of the brain, of a yellow colour. On the right ventricle was found a large clot of loose coagulum, floating in a quantity of serum. The left hemisphere and the whole of the dura mater were quite healthy, no inflammation of the latter having arisen from the injury. The disorganisation was confined to the substance of the brain.

I am, etc., THOMAS SMITH.

Crawley, Sussex, April 19th, 1858.

Parliamentary Intelligence.

HOUSE OF LORDS.—Monday, April 19th, 1858.

SALE OF POISONS.

In reply to Lord CAMPBELL—

The Earl of DERBY, who spoke with his back to the gallery in a low tone of voice, and exclusively addressed himself to the Lord Chief Justice, was understood to say that the subject had been under the consideration of the Home Secretary; and if a Bill could be prepared in a form likely to meet with the assent of Parliament, it would be introduced.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.—Friday, April 16th.

NETLEY HOSPITAL.

Mr. WEGUELIN asked the Secretary for War whether the Government had appointed a Committee to investigate the report made by the Barrack and Hospital Commissioners upon Netley Hospital; and, if so, whether they were prepared to present to the House the report of that Committee at the same time as they laid the report of the Barrack Commissioners upon the table of the House?

Mr. TITE inquired whether the works had been suspended; and if there was any objection to place in the library of the House the plan on which the Hospital was now to be proceeded with?

General PEEL was understood to say, that such contradictory reports had been made on this subject, that he had deemed it advisable to send down a Board of Medical Officers, who had hitherto given no opinion on the matter, to report upon the site and construction of Netley Hospital, and other matters connected with the establishment; that he had submitted the names of several medical gentlemen to a right honourable friend of his (Mr. S. Herbert), who had devoted much attention to the subject, requesting him to offer any suggestions he might think fit; and that when he received his right honourable friend's reply, he would immediately send down the Board. In answer to the honourable member for Bath (Mr. Tite), he begged to say that he would at once have suspended the works had it not been impossible to do so, as they were undertaken on contract; but he had no objection to lay the plans before the House.

Medical News.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS, AND APPOINTMENTS.

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

BIRTHS.

COOPER. On April 17th, at 8, Harley Place, Bow, the wife of J. P. Cooper, Esq., Surgeon, of a son.

FOULIS. On April 16th, in Edinburgh, the wife of Robert Foulis, M.D., of a daughter.

KEALY. On April 11th, the wife of John Robert Kealy, Esq., Surgeon, of a son.

LOWRY. On April 14th, at West Malling, Kent, the wife of Thomas Harvey Lowry, M.D., of a son.

MARSHALL. On April 20th, at Southampton, the wife of Joseph Marshall, M.D., of a daughter.
MILLER. At St. Leonard's-on-Sea, lately, the wife of — Miller, M.D., of Calcutta, of a daughter.
PEARCE. On April 19th, at Brighton, the wife of *Ravenhill Pearce, M.D., of a son.
PRIDHAM. On April 15th, at Paignton, Devon, the wife of *Charles Pridham, Esq., Surgeon, of a son.
PRIESTLEY. On April 18th, at 31, Somerset Street, Portman Square, the wife of W. O. Priestley, M.D., of a daughter.
WATSON. On April 10th, at Cullen, N.B., the wife of John Watson, Esq., Inspector of Hospitals and Fleets, of a son.

MARRIAGES.

COLE—DAWN. COLE, Rev. Robert E. G., rector of Barnston, Notts, to Frances Elizabeth Christiana, eldest daughter of the late James Dawn, Esq., Surgeon H.M. 2nd Dragoon Guards, at Bath, on April 20th.
RIDER—TENNANT. *RIDER, John, Esq., Surgeon, of Wellington, Salop, to Mary, only daughter of Edward Tennant, Esq., at Liverpool, on April 14th.
VINCENT—RAMSEY. VINCENT, Cyril G., Esq., Surgeon, of Oxford, to Emily Anne, eldest daughter of Thomas Ramsey, Esq., of New York, at Tattenhall, Staffordshire, on April 14.
WHITE—SEARLE. WHITE, James, Esq., to Agnes Frederica Jane, youngest daughter of C. Searle, M.D., of 55, York Terrace, London, at Bombay, on February 9th.

DEATHS.

BRACHET, M., Professor of General Pathology in the Medical School of Lyons, aged about 70, lately. M. Brachet was well known as the author of several medical works.
BURCH, Samuel Jesup, Esq., Resident Medical Officer to the London Hospital, of consumption, aged 41, on April 7th.
HANNATH, John, M.D., at Stamford, aged 60, on April 19th.
HYDE, James Cockburn, Esq., Surgeon R.N., at Battersea, aged 73, on April 18th.
JONES, William, M.D., late King's Dragoon Guards, at Glan Helen, Carnarvon, aged 81, on April 8th.
STEWART, James G., M.D., H.E.I.C.S., at Liberton Manse, near Edinburgh, aged 33, lately.
UNDERHILL. On April 13th, at Tipton, Staffordshire, Walter Frederick, son of *Thomas Underhill, Esq., Surgeon, aged 1 year and 8 months.

APPOINTMENTS.

ARNOTT, James Moncrieff, Esq., F.R.S., appointed Surgeon in Ordinary to His Royal Highness the Prince Consort, in the room of the late B. Travers, Esq.

PASS LISTS.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS. MEMBERS admitted at the meeting of the Court of Examiners, on Friday, April 16th, 1858:—

CALEY, James William, Market Rasen, Lincolnshire
 COLLYER, James, Playden, Sussex
 COUCH, William Oakley, Theberton Street, Islington
 HARRIS, George Harman, Army
 HINDLE, George, Over Darwen, Lancashire
 HOLMES, William, Stoke Newington
 MALONE, John George, Queenstown, Ireland
 ROSS, Frederick Dumaresq, Tunbridge Wells
 SMITH, Thomas Parker, Croydon
 TAYLOR, Charles, Worcester

Monday, April 19th:—

DEARDEN, John, Accrington, Lancashire
 EATON, James, Grantham, Lincolnshire
 GARNER, John, Birmingham
 GRACE, Henry, Kingswood Hill, Bristol
 HAYWARD, Henry Howard, Queen Anne Street, Cavendish Square
 MOULD, George William, Sudbury
 SADLER, Henry George, Wandsworth
 STOKOE, Paul Henry, Peckham Rye
 TURBER, George Henry, Torriano Avenue, Camden Road Villas
 VAUDREY, John Cosham, St. Agnes, Cornwall
 WEAVER, Frederick Poynton, Chester
 WILLEY, Josiah, Bristol

APOTHECARIES' HALL. Members admitted on Thursday, April 15th, 1858:—

SMITH, Thomas Parker, Croydon, Surrey
 STOKOE, Paul Henry
 WILLIAMS, Charles, Gloucester

HEALTH OF LONDON:—WEEK ENDING

APRIL 17TH, 1858.

[From the Registrar-General's Report.]

THE deaths in London registered in the week ending Saturday, April 17th, were 1207, being nearly the same as those of the previous week. In the ten years 1848-57, the average number of deaths in the weeks corresponding with last week was 1102; but as the deaths now returned occurred in an increased population, they should be compared with the average, after the latter is raised in proportion to the increase, a correction which will make it 1212. The number actually returned, therefore, agrees almost exactly with that obtained by calculation. Whooping-cough and measles still maintain a high mortality, the former having numbered 77 deaths in the week, the latter 55. Two widows died at the age of 96 years—one at Walham Green, another in Islington Workhouse.

Last week the births of 1009 boys and 956 girls, in all 1965 children, were registered in London. In the ten corresponding weeks of the years 1848-57, the average number was 1583.

At the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, the mean height of the barometer in the week was 29.821 in. The highest barometrical reading occurred on Wednesday, and was 30.04 in. The mean temperature of the week was 46.7°, which is 1.2° above the average of the same week in 43 years (as determined by Mr. Glaisher). On the first four days the mean daily temperature was below the average; on the two following days it was from 10° to 14° above it. On Sunday, the 11th, the thermometer fell to 27.9°, the lowest point in the week; on Friday it rose to 76° (the highest point); the entire range was therefore 48.1°. The mean daily range was 20.1°; the range of Sunday was 28.3°, that of the following day only 9.3°. The difference between the mean dew-point temperature and air temperature was 8.7°. The mean temperature of the water of the Thames was 45.5°. The mean degree of humidity was 72. The wind was generally north-east on the first three days; it then turned to south-east and south-west; and on Saturday was again in the north-east. A thunder-storm occurred on the evening of Friday, accompanied with rain, which fell to the depth of 0.15 in. in ten minutes.

MEDICAL REFORM: DEPUTATION TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

A DEPUTATION from the Medical Corporations of England, Scotland, and Ireland had an interview with Mr. Secretary Walpole, on Saturday, April 17th, at the Home Office. The deputation consisted of Dr. Mayo, president; Dr. Hawkins, registrar; and Dr. Burrows, from the College of Physicians, London: Mr. Stanley, president; and Mr. Lawrence, from the College of Surgeons of England: Mr. Simoons, master; Mr. Tegart, chairman of the Court of Examiners, from the Society of Apothecaries: Dr. Alex. Wood, from the College of Physicians of Edinburgh; Dr. Omond, president of the College of Surgeons of Edinburgh: Dr. Watson, president of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow: Dr. Neligan, censor of the King and Queen's College of Physicians in Ireland: Dr. Williams, Member of Council of the College of Surgeons in Ireland. The object of the deputation was to urge upon the government the desirability of taking up Mr. Headlam's Medical Bill and making it a government measure. The deputation expressed their strong disapproval of the Medical Bill brought in by Mr. Cowper, which would throw the entire power into the hands of the council to be appointed under the Bill, in respect of the medical profession, and would bring the profession down to a low level; whereas the Bill introduced by Mr. Headlam would, by raising the standard of instruction and information, exalt the profession to the position it ought to occupy. Mr. Walpole said that, from what he knew of these Medical Bills, he was afraid that if the government took up Mr. Headlam's measure, their doing so would only tend to raise up opposition to it rather than advance it. He could not, therefore, give any pledge on this subject. All he could say was, that he would take care to consider all the suggestions that had been made to him that day, and adopt such a course hereafter as he might deem desirable on the subject.

PUBLIC VACCINATION.

THE following petition has been presented by the President and Council of the Epidemiological Society of London.

To the Honourable the House of Commons in Parliament assembled,

The humble petition of the President and Council of the Epidemiological Society of London, sheweth—

That your petitioners represent a society, founded in 1850, for the Investigation of Epidemic Diseases, with a view to their mitigation or prevention.

That one of the subjects which has engaged the most earnest attention of your petitioners, has been the great annual mortality occurring in the United Kingdom from small-pox: a mortality which your petitioners believe might be almost, if not entirely, prevented; vaccination, if performed with the requisite care and precaution, being a safe and almost certain prophylactic against small-pox in its fatal form.

That your petitioners, therefore, attribute the mortality to which they now call your attention, first and chiefly to the neglect of vaccination; and secondly, to its inefficient performance. And they submit that ample proof of this has been laid before your Honourable House—first, in a report presented by themselves in 1853; and subsequently in papers collected by the Medical Officer of the General Board of Health.

That your petitioners, having investigated the Laws regulating Public Vaccination in these kingdoms, and the system of administration pursued, find that, while Scotland is destitute of any provision whatever for this purpose, the arrangements in England and Wales and in Ireland are most ineffective, neither providing the constant medical supervision which is indispensable for the proper diffusion of the blessings of vaccination and the avoidance or suppression of outbreaks of small-pox, nor giving the needful security for the efficiency of the vaccination supplied. These deficiencies your petitioners have considered in detail in a memorial printed by your Honourable House in 1855.

That the defects complained of, so far as they regard the system of administration pursued, were in no way removed by a Bill, passed in 1853, for extending and making compulsory, in England and Wales, the practice of vaccination: and that on this account, not only has this Bill (which has nevertheless had a striking and most beneficial effect on the mortality from small-pox) been much less operative than it otherwise would have been, and in some places indeed almost entirely inoperative; but also the benefit it did confer is on the decline—the infantile public vaccination having diminished from 65 per cent. of the births, which was the ratio in 1854, to 56 per cent. in 1855, and to 54 per cent. in 1856.

That it was, therefore, with the greatest satisfaction that your petitioners observed that a Bill was introduced to your Honourable House by Her Majesty's Government early in the Session of 1856, which would in their humble opinion have secured, or laid the foundation for securing, a good system of public vaccination in England and Wales: which Bill, however, having passed a second reading, has, to the great regret of your petitioners, not been further proceeded with.

That from the time this Bill was first introduced to your Honourable House to the present time, there have perished in England and Wales alone from small-pox between 4000 and 5000* persons at the least, chiefly young children: that nearly every one of these lives might have been saved by efficient vaccination: and that, while your petitioners are far from supposing that any change in administrative system would at once have reached all these cases, they can yet most confidently affirm that it would have reached a very large number of them, and that a great saving of life and human suffering might thus, in these two years only, have been effected.

That this loss of life which might be avoided, is still going on from day to day, and that on account of the decrease in the number of public vaccinations already pointed out, it will in all probability become more considerable: for which reasons your petitioners deprecate further delay, and earnestly pray your Honourable House to take *immediately* into your consideration this question of public vaccination. Your petitioners are fully aware of the numerous questions to which your attention is called each Session, and of the great importance of many of

them; but they humbly and respectfully submit that no questions can be more important, and that none can less admit of postponement, than those which would effect a saving of human life.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, etc.

(Signed) B. G. BABINGTON, M.D.,
President of the Epidemiological Society.

COMMISSION OF LUNACY.

AN inquiry, occupying the 12th, 13th, and 14th inst., has taken place at the Gray's Inn Coffee House, Holborn, into the mental soundness of the Rev. J. Leach, a clergyman of the Church of England. Mr. Montague Chambers, Q.C., appeared for the alleged lunatic, and Mr. Bovill, Q.C., was engaged in support of the commission. The facts deposed to were briefly as follows:—

Mr. Leach in 1841 had an undoubted attack of insanity, requiring to be placed under restraint; in 1852 he had another severe accession; in 1853 he had a third attack. In all these attacks Mr. Leach's mind appears to have been the subject of religious delusions. In 1853, Dr. Forbes Winslow was first called in; and Mr. Leach recovered in a few weeks from his attacks of insanity without being removed from home. Some time after this, and subsequently to the death of his wife, Mr. Leach removed to a furnished house near Hammersmith, where he continued to reside for some years, his mother, and occasionally his sister, living with him, and managing his domestic affairs. In the early part of 1857 his relations began again to be apprehensive that another attack of insanity was close at hand. It was again deemed prudent to obtain medical advice. Dr. Winslow a second time was requested to see Mr. Leach, and reported to the family that he was undoubtedly insane, advising, however, that he should not at that time be placed under restraint. He considered it, however, important that Mr. Leach's conduct should be carefully watched by the family, and if they were satisfied that he was going to act under the influence of his delusions, then closer supervision would be necessary. Such an event occurred in the course of a few weeks, and Mr. Leach, on a medical certificate, was placed under the care of Dr. Winslow, at Hammersmith. There Mr. Leach remained for six months, when he was deemed sufficiently improved to justify his being placed in a private family, but still under certificate and legal control. Mr. Leach having, as it was alleged, whilst in a state of insanity, entered into an engagement to marry one of his servants, it was considered necessary by his family, with the view to his protection, to petition the Lord Chancellor that a Commission *de Lunatico Inquirendo* should be issued to try his sanity. The prayer of the petition was complied with, and an inquiry took place at the Holland Arms, Kensington, some months ago, before Mr. Commissioner Barlow. At that inquiry six medical gentlemen gave evidence of Mr. Leach's insanity; one physician appeared on behalf of the alleged lunatic. Mr. Barlow, availing himself of a clause in the Lunacy Act, declined pronouncing judgment, and ordered the question to be submitted to a jury.

The following facts were deposed to by Dr. Forbes Winslow, as evidence of Mr. Leach's insanity—(Drs. Southey, Sutherland, and Wood; Messrs. Sidden, Bartlett, Halford, and Dewsnap gave evidence of a similar character.)

Dr. Winslow considered Mr. Leach to be in a state of insanity, associated with religious hallucinations. Mr. Leach represented that he had a mental vision of our Saviour on the cross whilst in the pulpit, and that He had led to his miraculous conversion; that he was under a delusion that he had a direct command from the Deity to wear a long beard, and that he should be committing an abomination against the Almighty if he were to cut it off; that he fancied he was the subject of an inward voice which directed him in everything he did; that he was under a delusion that he had prevented the abolition of capital punishment for murder by writing to the *Times*, and conversing with strangers in omnibuses; that he considered that the millennium had commenced, and that our Saviour had been seen on earth by an old woman in the country; that all social ranks and distinctions were abolished, and that servants should become our associates, if not our equals; that under this religious delusion Mr. Leach had for some time been in the habit of taking his meals with his two female servants, reading the Bible and praying with them, and immediately after prayer playing whist with them until three o'clock in the morning, reading, during the deals of cards, hymns to his servants. For so doing Mr. Leach represented that he had

* This petition was drawn up early in January; but its presentation has been delayed by various causes till the present time. The number of deaths now must be considerably over 5000.

scriptural authority. Mr. Leach was also in the habit of standing for several hours in an attitude of devotion, never uttering any vocal sound; and occasionally he would prostrate himself with his face to the ground, praying, as he alleged, for the restoration of miraculous gifts to the Church, believing that in answer to prayer he would have imparted to him the power of restoring sight to the blind, healing the sick, and raising the dead. He also, according to his own admission, as well as the evidence of others, was in the habit, not only of playing whist with his two servants, but of kissing them both, and having them to sit upon his knee; and this he did as a part of his religious course of life. He had also in his possession six pistols, and was in the habit of carrying powder in his waistcoat pocket. It was in consequence of his conduct with his servants, his having pistols in his possession, and his engaging himself to one of the maids, and of other singular acts of conduct under clearly manifested religious delusions, that led Dr. Winslow to advise Mr. Leach being placed under temporary restraint. Drs. Southey, Sutherland, and Wood, deposed to the same facts.

Mr. Leach was in the room during the whole of the proceedings, taking notes of the evidence, and conferring with his counsel.

In behalf of the alleged lunatic, Drs. Conolly and George Johnson gave testimony. Dr. Conolly was of opinion that Mr. Leach was of perfectly sound mind, and quite competent to manage himself and his affairs, and that his alleged delusions were nothing more than "singular", "odd", "extreme", and "eccentric" religious opinions.

Mr. Montague Chambers made an able speech in favour of Mr. Leach, and Mr. Bovill replied. After a few remarks from the Commissioner, the jury retired. They were nearly three hours absent from the court; they then declared that there was no chance of their agreeing to a verdict. It appeared that, out of the fifteen jurymen, nine were for the lunacy and six for the sanity; and, as it was necessary to have an unanimous verdict one way or the other, the Commissioner (as he saw no probability of obtaining a verdict) discharged the jury.

Mr. Leach has a reversionary interest in £20,000 on the death of his mother, an aged lady, which he has proposed to dispose of; and it was with the view of protecting this gentleman's property, as well as his person, by preserving him from the undue influence exercised over him by his domestic servants whilst in a state of mental derangement and incapacity, that these proceedings were instituted by his family.

ROYAL MEDICAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH.

On Thursday evening, March 18th, a *conversazione* was held at the Royal Medical Society of Edinburgh, when Dr. W. P. Alison, Emeritus Professor of the Practice of Physic, read a paper on the Science of Life. The President of the Society, Dr. Pow, occupied the Chair. The company present was very numerous.

Dr. ALISON commenced by reminding the members of the Royal Medical Society of the observation of the late Dr. Gregory, that the hall of their Society, and the free discussion there carried on a century ago, had been the seat and the instrument of the overthrow of the humoral pathology, previously taught by Boerhaave and all the great schools of medicine in Europe. He quoted also the words of Dr. Gregory, strongly condemning the manner in which the science of medicine had been cultivated and connected with its practice up to that time, but at the same time stating some of the chief causes of this imperfection, and expressing his confident expectation that, by the free and faithful application of those principles of inductive science, these difficulties would be gradually overcome, and "medicine make great and happy progress." He proposed to illustrate this observation by a review of the changes gradually effected in medical science, during the time when he had himself occupied the chairs of the Institutes and Practice of Medicine in this University, as sufficient to characterise the generation now passing away as one of interest and mark in the history of mankind; but was unable for the present to go further than the exposition of those first principles which were applicable to all sciences. He quoted the words of one of the first living philosophers of France, Victor Cousin, that the correct views of psychology, and the high rank assigned to that study in the Universities of Scotland, were what chiefly distinguished them "in the presence of the European public"; and, further, the confident expression of opinion by Humboldt, that "the reconciliation and cordial union of science with religion is the great problem of this age." With a view to this, he thought it important to observe, that he did not recommend

in general that the two studies should be prosecuted in combination, by which it seemed to him to be much easier to defend religious expressions than to sanctify the everyday details of science. This must be left to the habits and tastes of individuals; but of this he was confident, that when "we have done all that we have to do" in the study and practical application of the sciences connected with medicine, we shall often find the most pleasing and profitable reflections on what we have done to carry us back, with constantly increasing conviction, to those sublime feelings of adoration and gratitude which we share with the great body of mankind towards Him, of whom alone it could be said, that He called on things that "were not and they came." He was at pains to point out that the argument for the existence and attributes of the Deity, drawn from the science of life, and always thought the main foundation of natural theology is really, as Reid anticipated, "gaining strength with the progress of science, and more conclusive now than it was some centuries ago;" but that it is the very same argument as has been held by all the greatest philosophers of ancient and modern times, and that when the expression of it is confined to the simplicity which the principle of common sense or of intuitive evidence demands, it is of such cogency that we are entitled to hold the debate on it to be closed; whereby, as he believes, these studies will lose much of their formidable character, and gain much estimation in the eye of the world. He expressed his belief that the objections stated within these few years to the usual mode of stating that argument, by Mr. Baden Powell at Oxford, by Sir J. Herschel at Cambridge, by Principal Tulloch, and by Drs. McCosh and Dickie, might, as he thought, be distinctly and precisely traced to misapprehension of words not affecting the sense; and quoted with great satisfaction the words of Dr. Whewell of Cambridge, in his *Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences*, to the same effect. The illustrations which he had prepared of the advance of the sciences of physiology and natural history in particular, consequent on the use of the microscope, and of organic chemistry, and the foundations thus laid of a high pathology, he was obliged to postpone. In conclusion, he said that he should have wished to address the Royal Medical Society on several of those subjects, but thought he had said more than enough to show that the profession of medicine, at this period of its existence among mankind, is one of strenuous exertion, but of high promise, and to illustrate the expression of Humboldt which he had quoted before. He could not promise that the exercise of this profession would bring them wealth, or influence, or worldly honours; but he thought he could assure them that, if they devoted themselves with earnestness and sincerity to the investigation of truth and the practice of their profession, they will find that, even in this world, there are better things than any of those. Any man who had laboured, as he had, forty years and upwards as a practitioner of medicine among all ranks of society, must know that the diffusion of happiness takes place on a very different principle from that of worldly pomp or circumstances.

*Pallida mors equo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas,
Regumque turres.*

But, in so attaching themselves to their profession, they might consider that they had nailed their colours to the mast, and will never feel reason to repine at the dispensations of Providence.

At the conclusion of the lecture, Professor BLACKIE moved, and Professor GEORGE WILSON seconded, a vote of thanks to Dr. Alison, which was carried by acclamation. (*Edinburgh Medical Journal.*)

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Members should remember that corrections for the current week's JOURNAL should not arrive later than Wednesday.

ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENTS should always enclose their names to the Editor; not for publication, but in token of good faith. No attention can be paid to communications not thus authenticated.

ERRATUM. In last week's number, page 304, column 2, line 12 from bottom, for "valvular," read "valvula."

*Communications have been received from:—*MR. THOMAS SMITH; DR. RANKING; SIR CHARLES HASTINGS; MR. HUMPHREYS; MR. T. F. EDWARDS; MR. F. H. HARTSHORNE; MR. H. W. T. ELLIS; DR. R. U. WEST; MR. CROSBY LEONARD; DR. J. G. SWAYNE; MR. T. UNDERHILL; MR. J. S. GAMGEE; DR. BURKE RYAN; DR. E. C. SEATON; DR. ROUTH; MR. T. HOLMES; MR. W. MARTIN; DR. C. HANDFIELD JONES; MR. J. J. POPE; MR. T. M. STONE; MR. W. DAVIDSON; MEDICUS; DR. J. B. NEVINS; DR. R. PEARCE; MR. C. PRIDHAM; MR. J. WINDSOR; DR. TOM GUY; and MR. HAYNES WALTON.