

Association Intelligence.

SOUTH WESTERN BRANCH: ANNUAL MEETING.

THE annual meeting of this Branch was held at the Devon and Exeter Hospital on Thursday, July 8, under the presidency of JOHN EDYE, Esq. There were also present; J. B. Bartlett, Esq. (Teignmouth); P. C. de la Garde, Esq. (Exeter); E. Empson, Esq. (Crediton); C. Radclyffe Hall, M.D. (Torquay); Lewis Harris, Esq. (Totnes); — Hedger, M.D. (Torquay); J. H. James, Esq. (Exeter); C. B. Nankivell, M.D. (Torquay); George Paterson, M.D. (Tiverton); W. Pollard, jun., Esq. (Torquay); E. P. Pridham, Esq. (Exeter); T. L. Pridham, Esq. (Bideford); C. H. Roper, Esq. (Exeter); Thomas Shapter, M.D. (Exeter); W. J. Square, Esq. (Plymouth); P. W. Swain, Esq. (Devonport); etc.

In the unavoidable absence of Dr. COOKWORTHY, of Plymouth, the retiring President, Mr. SQUARE, was called to the chair. He apologised for the temporary absence of Dr. Cookworthy, who would, however, he believed, be enabled to join them in the evening, and who had expressed a great desire to be present, the more so as he (Dr. Cookworthy) took an active part in reference to the Medical Bill now before Parliament, a meeting having been held at Plymouth, under his supervision, in reference to it. In Dr. Cookworthy's absence the pleasing duty devolved on him (Mr. Square), to request that the President-elect, Mr. John Edey, would now assume the chair, which he begged to vacate on Dr. Cookworthy's behalf.

Mr. EDEY then took the chair.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

The President said he should have had some hesitation in taking the chair in the somewhat informal manner he had done, had it not been the general wish of the gentlemen present—and especially of the gentlemen from Plymouth—that he should do so, as he wished to pay every possible respect to Dr. Cookworthy, who stood so deservedly high, not only in his professional reputation, but was beloved by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance. [*Hear, hear.*] Having, however, taken the chair, it was his first and pleasing duty to thank the Branch for the honour they had done him in placing him there: for he considered it a very high honour indeed to be selected to preside over a body of gentlemen of such intelligence and intellectual acquirements as compose the members of this Branch Association. He would not follow the stereotyped observations by remarking upon the many gentlemen who were better qualified than himself for the office—however much he felt its truth in his own case—but would rather take it for granted that when they elected him they considered him in some measure worthy of the office; and for him, therefore, to plead excuses now would be to derogate from the choice of the members themselves. Suffice it to say, that he felt proud to succeed Dr. Cookworthy in the presidency; and though his would be a *vivâ voce* address, rather than an elaborately prepared *resumé* of the past year's transactions, his first duty was, on behalf of himself and colleagues, to welcome the members of the Association to the ancient city.

Though he should not now dwell on its antiquities, yet these would be found in abundance in the Cathedral, at Rougemont Castle, the Guildhall, and elsewhere, though he could not pretend to say whether Exeter was in existence before London, Rougemont before the Norman conquest, or the Cathedral erected before the time of Athelstan. These grave points he (the President) should leave to those gentlemen who were fond of antiquarian researches. Again, though the city had no museums of art and science, yet nature had been very bountiful, and in taking a survey in the immediate neighbourhood, the hills of Marypole head or Waddlesdown could not fail, for panoramic effects, to gratify any true lover of nature. If, however, there was no museum there was a fine collection at the Institution in the Cathedral-Yard; and there, after dinner, the Committee had kindly permitted him (the President) to assemble the members of the Association for conversation on subjects in harmony with scientific pursuits, but where, of course, they would carefully eschew all controversial allusions bearing on medical science. [*Hear, hear, and laughter.*]

But besides the public buildings already mentioned, he might name the Hospital, in which they were then assembled, of which they might indeed feel justly proud, in consequence of the munificent bequest made to it by the daughter of the

old gentleman whose portrait hung at the bottom of the room. By her timely aid the governors had been enabled to erect a very large additional wing, and those gentlemen who had not inspected it, would, he (the President) hoped, do so before they left the city, for it reflected credit on the architect, building committee, and all connected with its arrangement. There were also the Institution for the Blind, the Eye Infirmary, and other similar institutions; while those who were fond of nature's productions would find them cultivated to perfection in the gardens of Messrs. Pince and Veitch, and where they could not fail to be delighted with the orchids and coniferæ, which were scarcely to be equalled by any collections in the kingdom. These gardens would be readily thrown open to the members, as also Rougemont, by the kind permission of Mr. Gard, M.P., who had, by letter, expressed his regret that his parliamentary duties would prevent him having the pleasure of personally entertaining the members of the Association. Their thanks were especially due to Mr. Gard. Mr. J. C. Wilcocks, who had a gallery of pictures which had no mean claims on the lovers of works of art, had also kindly intimated that he should have pleasure in showing it to the visitors connected with the Association. [*Hear, hear.*]

To the honour of Exeter, too, though perhaps not to their personal advantage as medical men, in the last statistical return issued the city stood only second in a sanitary point of view among all the towns of the kingdom, which was, no doubt, in a great measure owing to the facility with which the public streets could be flushed and kept clean.

There was one point which damped the pleasure he (the President) should otherwise feel in filling that chair; and that arose from the absence of two gentlemen from illness, who had long taken a great interest in the proceedings of the city—gentlemen to whom the profession in the city had long looked up with respect and veneration and esteem, as well as with love and admiration—of course he alluded to the absence of Dr. Blackall and Mr. Barnes. [*Hear, hear.*] He (the President) had known them a great number of years as kind friends as well as professional instructors, and he, therefore, could not allude to their absence without considerable emotion; and he felt sure all present, in common with himself, deeply regretted the cause of that absence.

After alluding to the immediate business which would occupy the Association, and enumerating the chief distinguished members of the profession who had been removed by death during the past year, the President concluded by calling on the gentlemen present to proceed with the customary business of the day.

VOTES OF THANKS.

Dr. SHAPTER moved, in terms of warm eulogy, a vote of thanks to Dr. Cookworthy, the retiring President.

Mr. BARTLETT (Teignmouth) seconded the vote, which was carried with acclamation.

Mr. SQUARE, in the absence of Dr. Cookworthy, acknowledged the vote, and moved a vote of thanks to the new President for the able address with which he had just favoured them.

Mr. SWAIN (Devonport) seconded the motion, which was carried with acclamation, and briefly responded to by the President.

PLACE OF MEETING IN 1859.

Dr. PATERSON proposed that the annual meeting in 1859 be held at Torquay, where, he knew from former experience, the members of the Branch would meet with a hearty welcome.

Dr. NANKIVELL seconded the motion; and, as one of the medical men of Torquay, said he felt sure he should express the feelings of the medical men of the town, when he said they would do everything they could to make the meeting of the Branch there agreeable.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

Mr. SWAIN felt certain the proposition that C. Radclyffe Hall, M.D., of Torquay, be the President of the Branch for 1859, would be carried with unanimity; for he believed no gentleman could be found better qualified for the discharge of the duties of the office.

Mr. WILLIAM POLLARD (Torquay) briefly seconded the motion.

The PRESIDENT felt highly gratified at finding that he should be succeeded by Dr. Hall, and at having been preceded by Dr. Cookworthy.

The resolution was put from the chair, and carried with acclamation.

Dr. R. HALL briefly acknowledged the compliment, and said he would do all in his power to show the members the chief features of Torquay, when the Branch paid their promised visit to the town next summer.

Mr. E. P. PRIDHAM proposed the re-election of Mr. Roper as Secretary, which was seconded by Mr. E. EMPSON, (Creditor), warmly supported by the President, and carried by acclamation.

Mr. ROPER briefly acknowledged the compliment.

The following gentlemen were next elected to represent the Branch in the General Council of the British Medical Association for the year ensuing:—J. C. Cookworthy, M.D., Plymouth; C. R. Hall, M.D. Torquay; J. Edye, Esq., Exeter; and E. Empson, Esq., Creditor.

THE DEVONSHIRE BENEVOLENT FUND SOCIETY.

Dr. SHAPTER, Secretary to the Fund, explained that the subject was one of the highest importance to the medical men of the county. The Fund was founded some fifty years ago on the principle of mutual insurance, the subscription being a guinea a year; but no money could be disbursed till the sum accumulated had reached £1,000, and then the Council had the power to give what sum they considered right to needy medical men, being subscribers, or to their widows or children. But it so happened that at one time this fund languished, and no person, in fact, knew anything about it until one day Dr. Blackall, in looking over the lapsed fund book of the Bank of England, found there some £800 or £900 deposited to the credit of the Exeter Medical Provident Benevolent Fund Society. The doctor took a great deal of interest in the matter, as did also Mr. Collins, late of Kenton, and they found that there was only one trustee remaining—Mr. Francis Frederick Milford, and with his assistance the Fund was re-established. It now amounted to more than £1,000, and they were now in a position that if any medical man who subscribed a guinea a year to it fell into difficulties, the managers of this fund could relieve him or his family substantially. It was absolutely necessary, according to the terms of the trust, that the recipient should first be a guinea subscriber; but owing to the few members of the profession in the county who subscribed they had really no persons they could give the money to, and it was found, also, on inquiry, that being a strictly county fund they could not transfer it, as was contemplated, to the Epsom College, but were compelled to retain its distribution in their own hands. Therefore he (Dr. Shapter) would urge on those medical men of the county who were not well off that they might make a provision for sickness or for their families in case of casualty, by becoming subscribers of a guinea a year to this Fund.

Mr. JAMES confirmed the statement of Dr. Shapter, but said he had always opposed the transfer of the Fund to any college, where it might be converted, perhaps, into bricks and mortar. He also thought the House of Commons had the power to add a clause to their Act, which would give the power to this or any similar society to relieve itself, and apply the Fund in a way they now proposed to do. The speaker suggested that though they were not a large meeting, yet inasmuch as they might be considered as representing the profession in the county, they should record it as their opinion that they would support any proposition which might offer itself to relieve the society from its legal difficulties, either by an application to Parliament or otherwise. [*Hear, hear.*]

Mr. E. P. PRIDHAM believed that when, some few years ago, they found themselves in this legal difficulty, Mr. Kempe addressed some 400 circular letters to medical men of the county, explaining the circumstances, and soliciting them to subscribe, but he did not receive a single answer from any medical man in the county. He mentioned this in the hope that the observations which had now been made would not be lost sight of by the medical men generally of the county. [*Hear, hear.*]

Dr. NANKIVELL would be happy to subscribe his guinea; but it occurred to him that it would be well that gentlemen should subscribe not in an eleemosynary sense, but on the same principle as that which regulated an ordinary insurance society, or what was called among the lower classes friendly societies, so as to secure assistance in sickness, or annuities after a certain time of life. If the society could be modified in that way it would meet his (the speaker's) views better than by making it a charitable society, the tendencies of which he thought were at least questionable. He also wished to know if the money was regulated in its distribution by any fixed laws, or according to the whim of any individual body.

Dr. SHAPTER explained that there were fixed allowances under the rules—to a widow the amount was some £30 a-year, and a certain proportionate rate for children in addition. These amounts could not be exceeded, but the Fund had so much increased that if a subscriber of a guinea should be overtaken by difficulties, they could afford to advance him as much as £50 to help him out of that difficulty. If, however, after what had been said, it was the feeling of the meeting that an effort should be made to work up the Society, he (Dr. Shapter,) was willing to try what could be done; but in answer to the remark of Dr. Nankivell, he reminded his professional brethren present that by subscribing a guinea a-year, they become entitled to aid, should they require it, not as a matter of charity, but as a right. [*Hear, hear.*]

Mr. SQUARE thought they would all very much strengthen Dr. Shapter's hands by subscribing their guinea at once, and he therefore begged to tender his own yearly subscription of a guinea.

Ultimately a resolution was agreed to, on the motion of Mr. Swain, to the effect that Dr. Shapter's kind offer be accepted, and that he be respectfully solicited to furnish the members of the profession throughout the county with the necessary information in respect to the Fund, in order that the Branch may take the matter into further consideration at the Torquay meeting next year.

THE MEDICAL BILL.

The PRESIDENT and Mr. J. H. JAMES explained the opposition offered by the Council of the Branch to the Medical Bill, on the ground that the whole of the members of the medical Council under that proposed Bill were to have been drawn from the metropolis, the Universities, or from Edinburgh, Glasgow, or Dublin, thus depriving the profession in the provinces of all voice at the council board. To that proposal this Branch had offered a decided opposition, and had been supported by the two members for the city, and three of the county members, in a clause by way of amendment, by which the provinces would be eligible to be represented in the medical board under the Bill. However, the Bill was not now to be passed in the present session; but when it was again brought forward he (Mr. James) was of opinion that they should try for some absolute representation in the Council. In the meantime he had great pleasure in moving that the thanks of the Branch be presented to those members for the city and county who promised to support such an alteration by way of amendment on the original Bill.

The motion having been seconded, was carried unanimously.

HOMŒOPATHIC AND IRREGULAR PRACTITIONERS.

Dr. RADCLIFFE HALL (Torquay) said—In proposing the resolution of which I have given notice, I wish to make no reflections on such of the public as choose to patronise homœopathy. The public are free agents in medical as in all other matters. When wrong, time alone can set them right. It is vain to combat their wishes, or to appeal against their prejudices, and generally unwise to make the attempt. And I can imagine many reasons which might induce persons of acute intellect and correct judgement on subjects with which they are better acquainted, to adopt homœopathy at least as readily as any other specious form of medical sophistry. Not possessing the requisite preliminary knowledge, the public are no more in a position to judge correctly respecting medical doctrines, than they are to decide a profound question of law or of natural science. What should we think of any one who, without special study of the subject, dogmatically decided whether the material or the undulatory theory of light, for instance, were the more tenable view?

But if it is neither fair nor judicious to criticise the choice of non-medical patrons of homœopathy, the question is very different when it concerns our own demeanour towards those who have received a medical education, and who are therefore presumed to be competent to form a correct opinion. The question then becomes one of medical ethics; it concerns ourselves, and not the public, and as such we ought to discuss it. When a man has learned the various facts on which medical science is built, and witnessed for himself at the bed-side the observations on which the practice of medicine is founded, has seen how impossible it is to reduce all the phenomena of disease to any one class, to explain them by any one doctrine, or system of doctrines,—that he should be content to take up as his sole system of medicine such a theory as that of homœopathy is strange. For what does that theory consist of? Its essential tenets are brief and few:—That almost all diseases proceed from the poison of the itch—the little insect which

really occasions that complaint not having been discovered in Hahnemann's days; that all diseases are to be cured by small doses of a drug, which in large doses would cause them; that the smaller you make your dose, the more powerful you make your remedy; that by rubbings and shakings (the so-called dynamisation) you may increase the power of billionths and quintillionths indefinitely. For any one who has gone through a medical education to see in such a system as this—or in any one system whatever—an elucidation of the difficulties of medicine, argues either that the individual has never known enough of the truths of medicine to enable him to form a correct opinion at all; or, if he has, that he is labouring under intellectual delusion. This is the most charitable supposition. I fear it is not the one which is most generally applicable.

Had homœopathy in practice been restricted to the carrying out of its own doctrines, it would before this have passed into the limbo of unfashionable follies. Homœopathy at the present time is assuming a new phase; if indeed it be a new phase. It is ceasing to be homœopathy in anything but the name. It retains the name because the name signifies to the public something which has the charm of mystery and unintelligibility; and the promise of using remedies so minute as not to be felt by the patient, but only by the disease. Ailments thus treated are expected to prove very "luxuries of woe." To pretend to believe a certain creed, which in its nature must be an exclusive creed, and to profess to practise only in accordance with it, and then in reality to depart from it in every instance of difficulty and emergency; to profess to believe in it as the one only true doctrine, and yet to adopt any other as occasion serves, provided it do not too openly contradict the pretension; what is this, but to act under false pretences? What is this less than a wilful deception? A double treason; a treason to the profession in the adopting of the charlatanism; a treason to the public in the non-practice of it when professed—deception both ways? What fellowship is possible between those who deem a high standard of moral integrity essential to the medical character and such men?

"And why," asks the homœopathist, "may I not with perfect propriety adopt homœopathic treatment for suitable cases, and any other kind of treatment for other cases, for which at present we have not discovered the homœopathic remedy? I give up the theory of the itch; I give up the infinitesimal doses; I give up all but the law of *similia similibus*. I allow that there is not a single book on the subject to which I could refer as a truthful exposition of what homœopaths now believe; I admit that the books published on homœopathy contain much disgusting charlatanism. Why, then, should I be held aloof by medical men?" This is plausible enough; but the reply is obvious. It matters not what hairs you split to satisfy yourself. By professing to the public that you are a homœopathic practitioner, you profess to have assumed what the public understand by homœopathy; you have deliberately disclaimed your connexion with all that we consider to be true in medicine, and proclaimed your adhesion to that which we consider absurd. You have seceded from us. If you are right, we must be wrong. It is in vain to try to grasp the gilded bauble of pretence with the one hand, and to retain a firm hold on the respect of the profession with the other. In all professional matters, the homœopaths can have nothing in common with us. They have seceded, and let them keep to themselves. In this matter, there is no grey in this individual or in that; the thing is either black or white. I could as soon admit gradations in veracity and in honesty, as believe that a man really believes that homœopathy is true in one case, and not in another. It is true that medical science loses nothing by the secession of those who had not power to resist the temptation of joining the fashion of the moment; for whether it be that the tone of mind which fits a man for scientific pursuits is irreconcilable with the adoption of what is not believed, as it assuredly is with the believing of such unreasonable dogmas as those of Hahnemann, or whether there be some other explanation, the fact is so, that not a single individual who has distinguished himself by adding to the science of medicine in any way, has ever espoused homœopathy.

But are the public, it is asked, to suffer because of your medical etiquette? The public choose for themselves. We are their servants in all that is conducive to their welfare, but not in all that proceeds from their caprice. When—as constantly happens—we see patients who have been under homœopathic care, whose case demanded a form of treatment which could not disguisedly be adopted, and who suffer from the omission, we know how this suffering might have been prevented, but are we responsible? Let any one who chooses be attended by a

charlatan of any colour, and when tired let him be attended by a medical practitioner, if he so wishes. Let him go and come as he pleases, or as he considers best for his welfare; but it can never happen that it is desirable for his own good that he should be attended at one time by the charlatan and the medical practitioner in conjunction. All that is really conducive to the welfare of the public is consonant with all that is required by our own self-respect. The decision rests with the patient, which he will have. He cannot complain that we do not consent to meet professionally those with whom professionally we believe nothing in common.

We will, then, leave the homœopathist to the patronage of those who advocate free trade in medicine. Free trade in medicine! Free trade in the church! Free trade in the law, in the army, in the navy! How it would work! Keep free trade for trade; but, for all professions, the utmost discrimination and strictness of judgment, on the part of those who have to decide upon competency, are compatible with entire freedom of choice on the part of the public afterwards. We will leave the homœopathist to the exclusive patronage also of such members of a higher profession as the reverend gentleman near Penzance, who, apparently unable to find in his own vocation sufficient matter for serious thought, must needs dictate to his parishioners what they shall do in medical matters, with a comprehensiveness of knowledge, and freedom of judgment which, doubtless, he would greatly applaud if exercised by one of them in settling any knotty point of clerical theology. As a contrast to the ignorance in medical matters of this gentleman, I may mention the instance of a clergyman of very different stamp, which occurred in my own practice this winter. The following extracts from his letters to me will speak for themselves. I may premise that the case is one of phthisis, sent to Torquay by Professor Walshe of London, and Dr. Turnbull of Coldstream. After I had attended him for some time, he writes:—"I have for months had a strong wish to put homœopathy to the test, and I should like for one month to give it a fair trial. I cannot believe in the system in its theory, but as the 'proof of the pudding is in the eating,' and as I cannot suppose that the practitioners are all charlatans, I have nearly resolved, at the instigation of my friends and acquaintances here who have tried homœopathy, to know its truth or falsehood, as we know other truth, by observation and experiment." Two months later, he writes:—"Without relating my experience under homœopathy, I will content myself with stating, that I am very strongly inclined to believe, as a system, that homœopathy is false, and that the administration of its medicines is almost always without effect. I say, almost always, for of the great variety of medicines which I have taken, I am bound in honesty to say that none have had any perceptible effect except *nux vomica*. I think it right to add, that, when I took globules of *nux* from the box of a homœopathic friend in regular doses, they never had any effect, but when I took *nux* in powders, prescribed by the doctor, they never failed to have effect on the bowels. This excited my suspicion, I confess, that the powders must have been very strong, not infinitesimal. Still I would not rush to the conclusion hastily. I believe *ignatia amara* and *calcarea carbonica* were on the point of being tried, when I grew tired of running from one specific to another." I resumed my attendance on this gentleman, and was informed by him that the homœopathist, after examining his chest, had expressed his doubt whether he had any disease of the lungs, or was suffering from anything more than the effects of medical treatment!

Let homœopaths, in all professional matters, keep to themselves. And let us also on our side be true to ourselves. I feel very strongly that the scepticism in the powers of medicine, avowed in the writings of certain mere literary physicians, however eminent in social position, and sometimes in the conversation of mere operating surgeons, has done much injury to the profession at large, by feeding that desire for novelty, and that distaste for what is simply reasonable, which are ever rife in invalids, until danger stares them in the face. A stamp of authority appears thus to be given to that want of confidence in simple truth, which needs no augmentation on any subject at the present day. When we find our remedies fail to do all that we anticipated, to refer our want of success to inefficiency of medicine is only a loophole for inattention, an excuse for idleness, or a blind for ignorance. Our ignorance may be unavoidable, arising from facts beyond our reach, or it may be such as the exercise of closer discrimination would have avoided; but in any case, the fault is in the man rather than in the art. Of gentlemen who are daily called upon to grapple with disease in an active form, who are obliged to see too fre-

quently what harm nature left to herself can do, and does, in such cases, before the case comes under the observation of the medical man; who, constantly see, on the other hand, the benefit which nature, guided by their art, judiciously employed, confers, to inquire—Do you believe in your profession? is to ask, Do you believe in your senses? or do you admit that all which you know is foolishness, all which you observe erroneous, and all your reflection vain? Whoever heard a dexterous and successful medical practitioner of extensive appearance sceptical as to the value of his art? Would Watson, or Bright, or Burrows, Williams, Budd, Walshe, or Jenner, disbelieve in the efficiency of medicine? Would Brodie, or Bowman, or Paget? Would, in short, any of the members whose names occur to one's mind, whose skill and excellence of practice, the profession as well as the public alike attest? Then let us esteem and foster the sentiment of loyalty to our noble profession. Let that sentiment actuate us in all our professional intercourse. Let it not be allowed to go forth to society uncontradicted that we practise that which we only half believe. Medicine in that case would be but like homœopathy, a delusion, or an hypocrisy, unworthy of men of honour. But let us say, as well as feel, that we not only firmly believe, but glory in our art, as full of truth, the most influential for good to our fellow-men of any that science has yet given to the world.

Dr. Hall concluded by asking the medical gentlemen present to confirm the following resolution by their unanimous vote:—

"That the members of this Branch considering the practice of homœopathy in all instances to be either a delusion or a deception, pledge themselves neither to meet in consultation, nor to attend in conjunction with homœopathic practitioners, and that the members of this Branch will avoid meeting in consultation or referring their patients to any member of the profession who knowingly violates the spirit of this resolution."

Mr. T. L. PRIDHAM (Bideford) had much pleasure in seconding so important a resolution, which had for its object the interest and honour of the medical profession. In doing so, he would state to the meeting a circumstance which bore immediately on the point in question, and would tend to show more clearly than any other which had yet come to light, how completely the homœopathist deceived a deluded public, and to what lengths he would go in order to obtain success in his so called homœopathic practice, which had justly been termed the greatest delusion that has prevailed in modern times. A clergyman, from the north of England, came under Mr. Pridham's medical care for a disease which had disabled him from performing his duties for ten or twelve years. He (Mr. Pridham) was fortunate enough to relieve the patient; so much so, that he returned to his home, in the neighbourhood of Norwich, free from the complaint from which he had suffered. Some months afterwards, Mr. Pridham received a letter from a person in the city of Norwich, which letter purported to come from a regular practitioner, as would be seen from the following passage in it. "Mr. — is a patient of mine, and suffers from repeated attacks of asthma. He is desirous of having the prescription for the remedies which you administered. May I take the liberty of asking you to send it to me?" By the next post, Mr. Pridham received a note from the patient, who, after speaking of his continued good health, said:—"I am quite vexed to find that Mr. — has been writing concerning me and my medicines; it is altogether without my knowledge. The facts are simply these:—A near relation of mine is a patient of his; and, in the course of conversation, mentioned my case, and of course stated how much I had been relieved by your prescription. It appears that he took upon himself to write to you without ever consulting her or me. I have never been his patient." Mr. Pridham, on referring to the *Medical Directory*, found the name of the individual in question as practising homœopathy; and, it would appear, in some repute. Mr. Pridham concluded by remarking, that he hoped the circumstance alluded to would have some influence in exposing the deceit which is now being practised upon a credulous and deluded public.

Mr. J. H. JAMES did not think they could possibly strengthen the first part of this resolution, as no regular practitioner who was a man of honour could by possibility meet an homœopathic practitioner; but it might be a question whether, under peculiar circumstances, they might not meet a regular practitioner who had, possibly, met an homœopathist. He believed that in some cases, men eminent in the profession had met irregular practitioners in an emergency, and the same circumstances might arise again; but with regard to the homœopathic practitioner, he (Mr. James) believed that they had nothing with him in common, and ought to decline to meet him. He there-

fore suggested that the meeting should not be pledged to the literal interpretation of the latter part of the resolution; and as he had never met any homœopathic practitioner, the suggestion would not be open to suspicion as coming from himself, for he had always looked upon homœopathy as irreconcilable with true medical science, and opposed to common sense and reason; and it was just because people could not reason upon it that its practitioners were the more able to influence the minds of their patients. These things would, however, ultimately right themselves, as all former delusions had done; but it was the duty of the regular practitioners not to lend themselves to its perpetuation; and he was only anxious to guard himself and others in such cases of emergency as he had before alluded to.

Dr. HALL said the resolution was only intended to go the length indicated by Mr. James; and in the course of a very general conversation, it was agreed that it was one thing to meet an irregular practitioner, and another thing for them to refuse to meet a regular practitioner who had in some case of emergency previously met one of those irregular practitioners.

Dr. NANKIVELL was of opinion that they should, in the language of the resolution, "avoid" meeting members of their own profession who were in the habit of meeting in consultation with homœopathic practitioners. [*Hear, hear.*]

Mr. SQUARE concurred in this view.

Mr. DE LA GARDE felt very much disposed to support Dr. Hall's resolution in its entirety, for he thought the time had now arrived when every medical man of ordinary capacity was in a position to make up his mind as to the homœopathic mode of treatment. [*Hear, hear.*]

In answer to questions put by Mr. Empson and others, Dr. Hall and Mr. Square explained that the resolution did not go the length of saying that they would absolutely avoid regular practitioners who had met homœopaths in the past, but that as a general rule they would discountenance, and, if they saw fit, decline to meet in consultation with regular practitioners who were in the habit of meeting homœopaths in consultation.

Dr. SHAPTEY might possibly have had his doubts, had he been consulted before-hand, as to the propriety of discussing the matter at that meeting; yet, it having been discussed, he must say that he agreed with the resolution in the sense in which it had been interpreted. In his view, homœopathy was one thing; but the member of their Association who would meet an homœopath was the worst of the two, for the homœopath might be a mistaken man, but the regular practitioner who met him could not be a mistaken man [*hear, hear*]; and therefore, of the two, his conduct was in his (Dr. Shapter's) opinion by far the more censurable.

After some further discussion, in which Mr. Empson, Dr. Hall, and Dr. Nankivell, took part, the resolution, in the form given above, was put from the chair, and carried unanimously.

CASES AND COMMUNICATIONS.

The following cases, etc., were read:—

1. Calculus of the Bladder. By P. W. SWAIN, Esq.
2. Operation on the Knee-Joint of a Child. By A. J. CUMMING, Esq.
3. Mr. SQUARE and the PRESIDENT explained some surgical cases which had lately come under their care.

The members then adjourned to the New London Inn, where they dined together under the presidency of John Edye, Esq.

At eight o'clock, they adjourned to the rooms of the Devon and Exeter Institution, where, at the invitation of the President, they were joined by upwards of one hundred and twenty gentlemen connected with various professions and pursuits, and a highly interesting evening was spent. A number of microscopes and a varied collection of philosophical instruments were exhibited; and a party of glee-singers added to the completeness of the arrangements.

BATH AND BRISTOL BRANCH: ANNUAL MEETING.

THE Annual Meeting of this Branch was held on July 15th, at the Bath General Hospital; under the Presidency of JAMES CRANG, Esq. There were also present: J. S. Bartrum, Esq. (Bath); E. Boulton, Esq. (Bath); W. Bush, Esq. (Bath); W. J. Church, Esq. (Bath); Chas. Collins, Esq. (Chew Magna); E. Crossman, Esq. (Hambrook); J. G. Davey, M.D. (Northwoods); Wm. Davies, M.D. (Bath); G. W. Dyke, M.D. (Chippendale); F. Flower, Esq. (Chilcompton); R. S. Fowler, Esq. (Bath); Jas. Godfrey, Esq. (Bristol); Thos. Green, Esq. (Bristol); C. Harper, Esq. (Bathaston); J. Hinton, Esq. (Charterhouse Hinton); R. C. Holland, Esq. (Bath); W.

Hutchins, Esq. (Keynsham); G. King, Esq. (Bath); J. Lawrence, Esq. (Bath); C. Leonard, Esq. (Bristol); S. Martyn, M.D. (Bristol); F. Mason, Esq. (Bath); E. S. May, Esq. (Bristol); G. Norman, Esq. (Bath); G. Ogilvie, Esq. (Bristol); A. Prichard, Esq. (Bristol); John Soden, Esq. (Bath); J. Smith Soden, Esq. (Bath); J. K. Spender, Esq. (Bath); J. Tunstall, M.D. (Bath); G. Vicary, Esq. (Warminster).

The notice of the meeting and the minutes of the last anniversary were read by the Secretary.

The retiring President, A. PRICHARD, Esq., having thanked the members for the honour conferred on him by their selection of him as their President, and for the kind consideration he had received from them during his year of office, resigned the chair to JAMES CRANG, Esq., who delivered an address which is published at p. 630.

Mr. BARTRUM, the Bath Secretary, read the

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL.

"The recurrence of another anniversary enables your Council to review the proceedings of the past year, which they trust has not been less successful in its results, nor less pleasant in its reminiscences, than any of its predecessors; the incidents have, however, been so few as to afford but meagre materials for a report.

"The meetings of the Branch have been held at the usual periods, and have been numerous attended: indeed, no greater proof can be shown of the interest felt in these meetings by some of the rural members, than by the labour and self-denial they incur to be present at them.

"To those members who have kindly contributed papers and cases the Association is much indebted. The following is the list of the papers and cases read during the past year.

"1. Sugar as an Article of Diet in Diabetes. This subject was brought before you by Dr. Budd, at three meetings.

"2. The Treatment of Cholera by Purgatives. By J. G. Davey, M.D.

"3. A Case of Impassable Obstruction of the Bowels. By J. C. S. Jennings, Esq.; who also favoured the Society with his views on—

"4. The Recovery of Persons from Drowning.

"5. Dr. Symonds introduced M. Groux, the subject of congenital fissure of the sternum.

"6. Dr. Davies, at two meetings, read his Notes on Medical Practice.

"7. A case of Aneurism of the Aorta. By F. Brittan, M.D.

"8. A Case of Disease of the Suprarenal Capsules. By F. Brittan, M.D.

"9. Sea-Sickness. By J. C. Neild, M.D.

"10. History of a Death from Chloroform. By A. Prichard, Esq.

"11. Mr. Parsons exhibited to the Association some Remarkable Bodies removed from the Orbits of Mummified Corpses found in Mexico.

"12. Series of Cases of Lithotomy. By A. Prichard, Esq.

"13. History of Four Cases of Scarlatina occurring in One Family. By W. Davies, M.D.

"14. Cases of Fat occurring in Urine. By W. Henderson, M.D.

"15. Ulceration of the Os Uteri, illustrated by many Drawings. By J. G. Swayne, M.D.

"Most of these papers have been published in the JOURNAL.

"Since the subject of Medical Reform has occupied the attention of the profession, never did there appear such a probability of this oft debated subject being settled as was the case some weeks ago. Various parties deeply interested in it introduced their Bills into the House of Commons. By mutual agreement and compromise, Mr. Cowper, aided by the Government, succeeded in getting his Bill through the House of Commons. The state of public business has, however, prevented its being brought forward till a late period of the session, whereby the fate of the Bill is rendered very uncertain, and the profession is probably doomed to another season of doubt as to its future government.

"It is a source of great satisfaction to observe that the benevolent societies in which most of the members of the Association are interested are yearly increasing in usefulness and means. Your Council would urge upon all members of the profession, who can spare even a trifle for their less favoured brethren, to help in extending the benefits of the Medical Benevolent Fund to those who are sick or in want. Since the last meeting, one of the members of the Branch, Mr. Little of Corsham, has very suddenly been removed by death. He was much liked in his neighbourhood, especially by the poor.

"From various circumstances, there has been a slight diminution in the number of members of the Branch, notwithstanding the earnest endeavours of your Secretaries to enlist the co-operation of all the medical practitioners within their influence. Your Council would urge the members of the Branch to further these endeavours, which can best be done by laying the merits of the Association before those not already connected with it. Your Council feel assured that it will not be needful to appeal more strongly to those accustomed to attend the meetings of the Branch, which are so desirable, from the interchange of valuable information, and the reunion of professional friends. This subject is one of importance to the profession as a body; for, while the Association ought to embrace the majority of the provincial practitioners, affording them, as it does in its various Branches, so many centres of union, it has only about two thousand names enrolled on its list. Were the means of the Association increased, more could be accomplished towards carrying out the objects of medical science than is possible with its limited resources.

"The members elected to fill the vacancies in the Local Council are, Dr. Swayne, and Messrs. H. Clark, T. Green, and W. F. Morgan, for the Bristol District; and Dr. Davies, and Messrs. Boulton, Bush, Church, and Colborne, for the Bath District.

"The receipts and expenditure of the Branch have been as follows:—

	Cr.	£	s.	d.
By 129 subscriptions, at 2s. 6d. each.		15	17	6
	Dr.			
Printing		2	4	0
Rooms		4	17	0
Postages, etc.		2	14	6
		9	15	6
Balance in favour of the Branch		6	2	0
		15	17	6

The Report of the Council was adopted.

VOTES OF THANKS.

Mr. NORMAN moved, and Mr. GREEN seconded, the following resolution:—

"That the best thanks of this Branch be rendered to Augustin Prichard, Esq., the retiring President, for his attention to the duties of his office, as well as for his constant and zealous endeavours to promote the interest of this Branch."

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Thanks were also rendered to the Council and the Secretaries, for their services; and to the Committee of the Hospital, for the use of their board-room.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

J. G. DAVEY, M.D., of Northwoods, was appointed President-elect; and Messrs. Leonard and Bartrum were requested to continue their services as Honorary Secretaries.

REPRESENTATIVES IN THE GENERAL COUNCIL.

A ballot was taken for the appointment of representative members to the General Council, when W. Budd, M.D.; W. Davies, M.D.; F. Flower, Esq.; G. Norman, Esq.; A. Prichard, Esq.; and J. S. Soden, Esq., having the highest number of votes, were declared duly elected.

MEDICAL REFORM.

A letter from Dr. Henry, the Secretary of the Reform Committee, to the President, was read; and the Secretaries were directed to prepare, without delay, petitions for presentation to the House of Lords.

THE CASE OF DR. ROLPH OF PORTSMOUTH.

Dr. DAVIES was desirous of bringing under the notice of the meeting a matter which he thought came properly within the functions of the Association. They would probably remember the circumstances of a case which occurred at Portsmouth in October last. Dr. Rolph, an upright man, and an experienced and good practitioner, was called upon to attend a woman named Mary Berry in her seventh confinement. There was an adherent placenta. Dr. Rolph removed as much of it as he could without undue violence, and the rest remained. There was a low fever prevalent in Portsmouth at the time; the case went on favourably for a few days; but the woman then went into a low fever, and died. Dissatisfaction was felt by her friends, which he was afraid had been fostered by a member or members of their profession. A coroner's inquest was the consequence, and the jury returned a verdict that the woman died

of puerperal fever, imputing also blame to Dr. Rolph for neglect. This, however, was not sufficient for Dr. Rolph's persecutors; but, by what he would term almost an infernal refinement of cruelty, the parties erected over the woman's grave a tombstone upon which was recorded the verdict of the jury, in which her death was largely attributed to Dr. Rolph's neglect! He spoke now in the presence of accomplished accoucheurs, and he had no hesitation in saying that Dr. Rolph's treatment of the case was correct. When an adhesion of the placenta was presented, if it could not be removed easily, it was better to leave Nature to throw it off; and, as far as he could judge, no blame was to be attached to Dr. Rolph in this case. On the day when, passing through the churchyard, he saw the engraved tombstone, he was so affected that he went home and died in a few hours, in direct sequence to this affair. He (Dr. Davies) had a double object in the course he was now taking. One object was to pass a resolution of sympathy with Mrs. Rolph, and of concurrence in her late husband's treatment of the case; and the next was to ask those present who concurred with him for a small subscription to be forwarded to the widow. He had already a small sum in hand for this purpose, and he should be glad to have it increased by the contributions of the gentlemen present. Dr. Davies then read a resolution he had prepared, expressing the warm and sincere sympathy of the meeting with the widow of the late Dr. Rolph, and declaring that his treatment of the case of Mary Berry was regulated by sound principles, and that the verdict of the coroner's jury was consequently contrary to the truth, and the imputation upon Dr. Rolph undeserved.

Dr. DAVEY said he happened to be at Portsmouth at the time this untoward event occurred. They must all, of course, sympathise with the widow, and with the case in a general way; but he would put it to the meeting whether, if they passed Dr. Davies' resolution in its present form, a question might not be raised as to their opinion of the treatment of the case, which might lead to a very unpleasant discussion. [Hear.] He had himself asked medical men at Portsmouth, Did Dr. Rolph introduce his hand into the uterus, and attempt to remove the after-birth? and the reply was, that he did no such thing. It was a very painful thing for him to state this; and, in doing so, he had not the slightest intention of intercepting the sympathy of the meeting; but if Dr. Rolph did not attempt the removal by introducing his hand, they would be placing themselves in a false position by declaring their full concurrence in his treatment of the case. He thought the meeting should consider before they passed the resolution; because, if they expressed an opinion that Dr. Rolph did all that science would dictate or an experienced accoucheur would perform, they might place themselves in a very awkward position.

Mr. J. SOLEN asked if there was any published medical account of the case, upon which they could form an opinion of the treatment?

Dr. DAVIES said the proceedings and evidence at the inquest had been published, and had been abundantly commented on in the public journals, every one of which had sustained the part of Dr. Rolph. How it could be known that Dr. Rolph did not introduce his hand into the uterus, he could not conceive. It was certainly not so stated at the inquest, and the presumption was that he had done so. With regard to the amount of skill and science brought to bear upon the case, he contended that they had no right to expect extraordinary skill. If a man brought ordinary talent, ordinary experience, and ordinary judgment, to a case, that was all the public could expect; they must not look to everyone for extraordinary skill. Unless, therefore, it could be shown that there had been a neglect of that which an ordinary man should know, no medical man ought to be held responsible. [Hear.]

Mr. FLOWER presumed, from what Dr. Davies had said, that the matter had received considerable attention at Portsmouth; and, if it was unequivocally said there that Dr. Rolph had not introduced his hand, he should be sorry to commit himself to the resolution, which might lead to future discussion, and their own skill and judgment be compromised, unless they had further evidence before them. At present, the evidence seemed to be, that Dr. Rolph had not done all that might be reasonably expected from an experienced accoucheur.

Mr. J. S. BARTRUM said, on the other view of this painful case was the hardship with which Dr. Rolph had been treated. [Hear.] Perhaps he had not brought to the case the highest skill; but all the subsequent steps were such as must command their sympathies with him and his widow. A grosser case of cruelty and persecution he had never heard of. [Hear.]

Mr. GREEN said there could be no doubt that Dr. Rolph had

been hunted to death, and that they ought to show their abhorrence of the treatment he had received from other members of the profession; but he thought they should keep clear of giving any professional opinion.

Mr. NORMAN considered the treatment Dr. Rolph had received unpardonable. If a man of ordinary skill did his best, he ought not to be blamed. The jury did not find a verdict of manslaughter, so as to put Dr. Rolph upon his trial; and yet the parties had put upon a tombstone that which made it appear that the woman had died from his treatment. Such conduct should meet with the reprobation of the profession.

Dr. DAVIES, in accordance with the views of the meeting, altered his resolution, and proposed it as follows:—

"That the Bath and Bristol Branch of the British Medical Association desire to convey to the widow of the late Dr. Rolph, of Portsmouth, their warm and sincere sympathy with her in her recent bereavement. They at the same time cannot but strongly condemn the very cruel treatment to which Dr. Rolph was subjected, and which seems to have been the immediate cause of his death."

Mr. GREEN seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

THE SMALL-POX.

Mr. MASON rose, in response to an invitation from the chair, and narrated a few facts illustrative of the late epidemic of small-pox, and relating to the districts on the north side of the river, leaving to Mr. Lawrence to state the facts relating to the south side of the river. Since the commencement of the present year, there had been in the borough parishes north of the Avon, with a population of nearly 40,000, fifty-five deaths from small-pox. Of these, thirty-nine were unvaccinated; six unknown, in all probability never vaccinated; nine reported to have been vaccinated; and one twice vaccinated without effect. He thought this spoke strongly in favour of vaccination, and that it should go before the public that most of the deaths were of unvaccinated children. In the Walcot District, the first death occurred on November 30th; then there was a lapse of three months, when two children in one family died—one on the 20th, and the other on the 26th of February; and the next was in June. The deaths ranged from infancy up to one man. Measles, small-pox, and scarlet fever, were found frequently raging in the same family; and one disease commenced when the other ceased. The small-pox seemed to attack indiscriminately the vaccinated and the unvaccinated, but in the vaccinated cases it was very light. It began with febrile symptoms and the head disturbed, which lasted about three days; then came an appearance like the measles; the capillary stage was wanting; and the eruptions, after seven or eight days, dried up and dropped off. There were some other particulars he should have liked to have referred to, had not the time for dinner been so near; but he would now give place to others.

Mr. LAWRENCE said he had collected a few facts relating to the late epidemic upon the other side of the river. He thought there had been about 300 cases of small-pox during the last six or seven months, and that the facts he had traced respecting them were exceedingly favourable to vaccination. Of eighteen deaths, fifteen were unvaccinated, and all children. Of the other three, one was an infant about fourteen months old; small-pox was in the family, and he vaccinated the child. On the eighth day, however, although the arm rose, small-pox came out; and the child died from it in seven or eight days, having evidently taken the pox before being vaccinated. Of the others, one was a young woman 24 years of age, who had been vaccinated when young; but the vaccination was disturbed on the seventh or eighth day, and did not run its proper course. So that, in seventeen out of the eighteen cases of death, it could not be said that vaccination had taken place. In the other case, the mother had the small-pox in her confinement; and the child was vaccinated at two days, and died. In another similar case, the child had small-pox, and survived. He had met with no case in which the vaccination was undoubted, where small-pox had appeared under seven or eight years; nor any case where revaccination had taken place within a few years. He had revaccinated about 200 persons in his districts, and none of them had taken the small-pox. He should like to hear the opinion of the meeting upon revaccination. He believed it was successful, but he had heard other opinions in this town—that it was of no use after a few years.

In answer to a question by Mr. FLOWER, Mr. Lawrence stated that, in cases of revaccination, the arm took, but not the same as at the first vaccination. The arm is more inflamed in the first stage. In reply to another question, Mr. Lawrence said the patients who died seemed in most cases to die from

the mere irritation of the small-pox; but he had one case in which a child died after having apparently got well.

Mr. FOWLER stated that at the commencement of the year they had a considerable number of cases at the Bath United Hospital, and it was thought advisable by the authorities of the hospital to open a separate establishment for them. They had received 71 cases of small-pox, of which only 20 were confluent. These cases generally came from localities not within the Dispensary districts. Eleven of them were unvaccinated, of whom three died; six were vaccinated and one died; three were previously inoculated for small-pox, and had it worse than any of the others, except the cases of death. Of the 51 distinct cases, 7 were unvaccinated and 44 vaccinated. The largest number of cases was during April and May; in June also there was a large number, and during the first week of the present month. In the Dispensary district, or City parishes, he had met with 340 exanthematic cases during the present year, and most of them were young persons. Out of 168 cases of confirmed small-pox, 90 were unvaccinated, and 20 were adults who had never been vaccinated, and who had it more severe than any others. He had only 11 deaths out of the 168 cases, 10 of whom had not been vaccinated, and the other had had the small-pox previously. During April they had a large number of cases of measles, and after running through the whole course small-pox appeared, and the epidemic often attacked the whole house. So also with scarlatina; after the patient had gone through all the stages and began to scale, the small-pox appeared. He should like to hear this worked out, and the question considered whether these were distinct diseases, or whether vaccination had not so modified the disease of small-pox as to cause it to appear in the form of measles.

Mr. MASON said, in his cases of secondary small-pox, the parties had been vaccinated in infancy, but the small-pox did not appear until they were fourteen or fifteen years of age. Among the poor, it was very difficult to obtain correct information as to vaccination.

Mr. FOWLER said he had several cases of small-pox under seven years of age, after vaccination; one was only two months old; but they were very slight.

Mr. R. N. STONE said he had never seen a child which had been undoubtedly vaccinated take the small-pox under eight years old; which coincided with Mr. Lawrence's experience.

The members subsequently dined at the York House, under the presidency of Mr. Crang. The Mayor, R. W. Falconer, M.D., was present, and expressed his desire to join the Association.

Editor's Letter Box.

THE EDINBURGH MEDICAL SCHOOL.

LETTER FROM J. STRUTHERS, ESQ.

SIR,—In your leading article of June 26th, entitled, "Ought Universities to Monopolise the Teaching of their Graduates," allegations regarding the Edinburgh Medical School and Lecturers are quoted, to the effect "that it has fallen off in numbers since university students were permitted to attend one-third of their classes under the lecturers; and also that these lecturers are self-appointed." I was requested, at a meeting of my colleagues to-day, to correct these statements, and can readily do so from my long experience as secretary to this school, and my familiarity with all the statistics and facts bearing on these matters.

If the writer means, as his words imply, that the "Edinburgh Medical School" has fallen off, he is mistaken. It would be absurd to expect the Edinburgh School to have as great an overflow of students as when there were almost no schools in the provinces in England and Ireland, and comparatively few in London itself. But take the last ten years, a sufficient time for competition, after most of the numerous other schools had been established, and, so far from a diminution having occurred, it will be found that there has been a decided increase, whether we take the returns of the anatomical rooms, or of our great general hospital, the Royal Infirmary, which is common to the whole school; or the returns of those attending the University classes and at Surgeons Hall. And not only has the Edinburgh school, as a whole, risen in numbers during that time, but it has, to my certain knowledge, greatly increased in efficiency, especially in its practical department.

If the author means only that the University school has de-

creased, and the others increased, since 1854, when the new law opened it up to competition; and granting, merely for the sake of argument, that he is right as to cause and effect, it may well be asked, Whether such a result, following a *permissive* regulation, should form a legitimate subject of regret? Would it not merely show that the students, having their choice, preferred to attend elsewhere, and be a circumstance to be concealed rather than paraded?

But I do not believe that the new law had anything more to do with the diminution, than free trade in corn had with the potato rot. Ups and downs, which it is not easy to account for, occur in all schools. Thus in 1844, why should the students at the University have increased twenty-five, and next year decreased forty? or why should they have increased forty-seven in 1848, and only three in the following year? and, again, seventy-eight in 1852, a year before the prospect of the Russian war? which, however, would readily account for the high numbers from 1853 to 1855. These few unusually high years, without as well as within the University, and, I have no doubt, in other schools as well, were sure to be followed, as usual, by a reaction; and we have every reason to congratulate our University on the fact that this reaction has been so moderate; that its numbers are greater now than during any of the ten years preceding the commencement of these few years of plethora. I do not believe that this new law diminishes the total number within the University, whatever effect it may have on any particular class, but that it is rather a safety-valve law. In the first year of the new law, following two unusually high years, there was a decrease of fifteen, while the second year there was an increase of twenty-five, so that it might be equally argued that its effect was to increase the number, and, indeed, with more truth; for, as is well understood, this law is a means by which students are now enabled to escape any particular university teacher without being lost to the others, and has been, in reality, as beneficial in practice as it looks in reason, and not only so to the true interests of the University, but even to the interests of its college professors. Witness, in proof of this, the decreasing numbers of the University list down to 1845-6, when the whole college suffered, and the classes of our most distinguished professors were kept down by the drag of a worse than inefficient anatomical department, from which there was then no such escape; and the increase, steady and rapid, which followed the advent of the present distinguished professor of that important department of a medical school.

But by far the most important cause influencing the attendance in our University, is one which seems to be overlooked by the various one-idea writers and speakers on this question. It is, that many of the students attending lectures in the University, as in other universities, are not intending graduates at all, but look forward to the diploma of the College of Surgeons, and who accordingly attend, either within or without, just according to the lights and attractions either school may present. And so it has been, and now is, in Edinburgh. While the school with which I am connected has shared the fortunes of the war period, and various minor ups and downs, it has certainly much increased in efficiency of late years, after a previous period of lesser efficiency occasioned by the transference of several of its lecturers into the University. The numbers fell, and then rose accordingly, and this simply by its lesser or greater efficiency attracting a lesser or greater number of the students who do not care for university degrees, and are, therefore, free to attend where and whom they choose.

These remarks will serve to show how much knowledge of the circumstances affecting medical schools generally, and how much local information is necessary, to enable anyone to draw sound conclusions on these matters. Statements such as those by the author you quote, serve only to show either the ignorance or uncandid disposition of the writer, and in reality damage the true interests of our University, in the prosperity of which the whole Medical School of Edinburgh has an interest. These pseudo-friends need be in no alarm for the interests of our College professors, who are secure at all times of an easy prosperity; or for the Edinburgh School, which, in its position and constitution, has within itself the inherent elements of continued success; but they should avoid the vain attempt to disparage a school which has furnished the University with most and the best of its professors, and to which no higher compliment could be paid than that it is said to be competing successfully with such famous men as our University professors.

2. As to the lecturers being "self-appointed". It may have been so in your writer's day, when any Fellow of the College of

Physicians or Surgeons was entitled to lecture, and under that old system one or two erratic, though harmless, persons may have advertised themselves as lecturers; but in 1847, a constitution was given to the School by a series of regulations, drawn up by the Colleges of Surgeons and Physicians, of which it will suffice to quote the first and last.

"That no Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, or of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, shall be recognised by the college to which he belongs, as a public lecturer or teacher of any of the medical sciences, until his qualifications shall have been tried in the particular branch which he professes, by examination before a board appointed by the royal college of which he is a member."

"That for every ticket of a lecturer, recognised in terms of these regulations, to be ultimately presented as evidence of attendance with a view to graduation, there shall be paid a fee of the same amount with that eligible by the medical professors in the University."

No system could be more fair, or offer a better security to the student or encouragement to merit, and no constitution could so much ensure the prosperity of the school. A would-be professor applies for a vacancy, and may be appointed by a board, or by a crown minister. A would-be lecturer applies to his college, and, if found competent, his ability is certified, and he is not only a qualifying but a qualified lecturer. No one would risk presenting himself before such a board, unless well qualified; and the examination will not be more of a form to him than every college or university examination is to the well qualified candidate. Then he must show that he has sufficient museum or teaching apparatus; and after all, has no class provided him, by exclusive laws or the support of colleagues, but is merely allowed to lift up his voice in a lecture room of his own providing and attract students if he can.

I am not aware of any such security or check in the case of the London or Dublin Schools. When a vacancy occurs in a valuable lectureship, there will be several applicants, and in other cases some pressing may be necessary to enlist a lecturer. An appointing process, in fact, is gone through, similar to that in the school of associated lecturers of which I am one, with this difference in favour of Edinburgh, that we can choose only from already qualified lecturers. So far, then, from the Edinburgh lecturers being inferior in *status* to those of London and Dublin, it would be well if the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons of these cities would copy the Edinburgh system, as I trust they will do either voluntarily or under the direction of the coming medical council.

I am, etc., JOHN STRUTHERS.

College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, July 20th, 1858.

IS LIME A DEODORISER OF SEWAGE?

LETTER FROM D. CARMICHAEL, M.D.

SIR,—I see that Government and the Metropolitan Board of Works have been putting large quantities of lime into the Thames and sewers as a deodoriser. I beg to ask, Has this plan received medical sanction? Is lime a deodoriser? Is it stated to be so by any medical authority whatever? The deodorisers we are best acquainted with are the acids, fixed and volatile, such as the acetic, nitric, hydrochloric, sulphuric, and carbonic; burning charcoal, straw, paper, etc.; roasted or burned coffee; chlorine gas; and chloride of lime. These act by neutralising and fixing the ammonia and other volatile alkaline vapours always discharged from putrid animal and vegetable matters. The nitrates and chlorides of lead and zinc operate by the bases attracting and fixing the sulphuretted and phosphoretted hydrogen gases; and the acids, when disengaged, fixing the volatile alkalis.

But how does lime operate on putrid animal and vegetable substances? The experiment can be easily tried by mixing it with manure, sewage, mud, or sooty matters. The olfactory nerves will soon testify to the result. It hastens decomposition; and there is immediately disengaged a quantity of stinking and acrid gaseous matters that were before fixed and inert. So copious is the evolution of gases, that they are discharged with effervescence. At the same time, like all the strong alkalis, the lime and disengaged ammonia darken the colour of water holding vegetable matter in suspension or solution.

This being the case, I cannot see how lime can help in any way the disagreeable state of matters occasioned by the putrid state of the Thames and sewers. On the contrary, it will greatly aggravate them. I do not think that the fetid ammoniacal and other vapours disengaged by the lime will cause

diarrhoea or typhus fever; they are, however, hurtful to the lungs, and must, no doubt, add greatly to the nauseous state of the atmosphere.

I am, etc., D. CARMICHAEL.

Buckie, Banffshire, July 13th, 1858.

Parliamentary Intelligence.

HOUSE OF LORDS.—Monday, July 26th, 1858.

MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS BILL.

This Bill was read a third time, and passed.

VACCINATION (IRELAND) BILL.

This Bill was read a third time, and passed.

PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.

This Bill was read a third time, and passed.

LUNATICS (SCOTLAND) ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The report of amendments on this Bill was agreed to.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.—Thursday, July 22nd, 1858.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

In reply to Mr. FITZROY,

Mr. WALPOLE said that, after making inquiry, he could not find that the Commissioners of Lunacy had discovered in a private provincial lunatic asylum a concealed cell, in which a man, stated to be in full possession of his faculties, had been for many years confined.

Monday, July 26th.

MEDICAL OFFICERS OF THE ARMY.

Mr. SEYMOUR asked the Secretary of State for War when the warrant augmenting the pay of the Medical Officers of the Army would be promulgated?

General PEEL replied that the subject was now under the consideration of the Treasury.

Tuesday, July 27th.

MILITARY HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL SCHOOL.

Sir H. VERNEY asked, the Royal Commission having shown the necessity for a general Military Hospital and Medical School, and a new Hospital being about to be erected at Aldershot, if Her Majesty's Government would take into consideration whether this Hospital might not be used for the purpose contemplated by the Royal Commission?

General PEEL.—As the honourable member had stated, the question of erecting a general Military Hospital and Medical School was now under the consideration of the Government; and at some future period, no doubt, it would be necessary to erect a Hospital at Aldershot, to which he thought a Medical School might very properly be annexed. But no money had been taken for the purpose in the estimates, and the matter was still under consideration.

Medical News.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS, AND APPOINTMENTS.

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

BIRTHS.

BUTLER. On July 23rd, at Fransham Lodge, Lower Norwood, the wife of J. H. Butler, Esq., Surgeon H.E.I.C.S., Bengal Presidency, of a son.

STRETTON. On July 25th, at Kidderminster, the wife of Samuel Stretton, Esq., Surgeon, of a son.

MARRIAGES.

BRANDT—ELLICOTT. Brandt, George Henry, M.D., to Annie, only daughter of Edmund Ellicott, Esq., of the Island of Madeira, at St. George's Chapel, Lisbon, on July 14th.

DEATHS.

GRAVELY. On July 20th, at Newick, Frederick, son of *Richard Gravelly, Esq., Surgeon, aged 7.
 MEGGET. On July 21st, at Ayton, Scarborough, Elizabeth, youngest daughter of A. Megget, M.D., aged 21.
 WALES. On July 23rd, at Downham Market, of Consumption, William Hebgin, third surviving son of *Thomas G. Wales, Esq., Surgeon, aged 22.

APPOINTMENT.

LEDWICH, T. Hawkesworth, Esq., elected Surgeon to the Meath Hospital and County of Dublin Infirmary, in the room of the late Sir Philip Crampton, Bart.

PASS LISTS.

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

ACEY, Thomas, Hull
 ANDERSON, James, Liverpool
 ASHENDEN, Charles, Sittingbourne, Kent
 BOND, Florio St. Quintin, Brighton
 BOWLING, Thomas, Waterloo Street, Birmingham
 DAY, William White, Clifton Vale, Bristol
 GARDINER, George, Bristol
 HARRISON, Garland William Langdon, Royal Navy
 HOOPER, Thomas Robert Limbery, Cape of Good Hope
 KNAGGS, Sydney Henry, Brompton
 MACKENZIE, Morell, Woodford, Essex
 SECCOMBE, John Thomas, Hackney
 SQUIRE, Charles Farran, Army

At the same meeting of the Court—

COWAN, Michael Waistell, of H.M.S. *Victory*, passed his examination for naval surgeon. This gentleman had previously been admitted a member of the Edinburgh College of Surgeons: his diploma bearing date March 22nd, 1854.

Friday, July 23rd:—

BATE, Henry Francis, Trelawney, Jamaica
 BROWNRIDGE, Joseph, Hull
 CLUCAS, Walter Daniel, Ramsey, Isle of Man
 GOODALL, John, Market Drayton
 HAYWARD, Henry, Army
 HICKS, George Borlase, Old Street Road
 JORDAN, Wm. Ross, Birmingham
 LEDWICH, Richard, Dublin
 MASON, Francis, Bedford Place
 RIX, Wm. Howells, Tunbridge Wells
 STARLING, John, Bishop Stortford
 WILDERS, John Saint Swithin, Birmingham

Monday, July 26th:—

BICCARD, Carl Wilhelm Thalmar, Cape of Good Hope
 BRUMWELL, Joseph Cownley, Burnley, Lancashire
 BYAS, Edward Hegley, Grove Hall, Bow
 CHAMBERS, Thomas, Lingwell, Yorkshire
 CURTIS, Wm., jun., Alton, Hants
 GRIFFITH, Ailcius John, Dublin
 HILL, Matthew Berkeley, Stapleton, Bristol
 MCANDREW, Robert Joseph, co. Mayo
 WEBSTER, Thomas, Redland, Bristol

LICENTIATES IN MIDWIFERY admitted at a meeting of the Board, on July 21st:—

BENTLEY, George, Halstead
 BOGG, Edward Beverley, Louth, Lincolnshire
 CROUCHER, Alexander Richard, Shadwell
 DOW, John, Keith, Banffshire
 EWEN, Arthur Benjamin, Long Sutton
 FLEISCHMANN, Alfred, Leeds
 GRIFFITH, Hugh, Edern, near Pwllheli
 LOMAS, William, Guildford
 MOLINEUX, James, Manchester
 MORGAN, Walter, Bridgend
 SIMONS, Arnaud Jean Jacques Biesman, Cape of Good Hope
 SPENCE, Richard George Clark, Otley

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

BELCHER, Paul, Burton-on-Trent
 BRADEN, John George, Kelvedon, Essex
 CORBET, David, Orsett, Essex
 CROUCHER, Alexander Richard, High Street, Shadwell

FEATHERSTONE, John Tyler, Bristol
 FOOTNER, Edward, Romsey
 HARGOOD, Frederick Hezekiah, Highbury Place, Islington
 PICKEN, Samuel, Plymouth
 REYNOLDS, Robert, Bowondora, near Melbourne, Victoria
 SIMPSON, William, Lynn, Norfolk
 SLYMAN, William Daniel, St. German's
 STAFFORD, Stephen John Frederick, Beccles

HEALTH OF LONDON:—WEEK ENDING
JULY 24TH, 1858.

[From the Registrar-General's Report.]

In the last Weekly Report it was shown that the public health of London had undergone some improvement in consequence of the fall of temperature; and it will be seen from the present return that that favourable result was maintained, and was more decided, in the week ending last Saturday, July 24th. In the first week of the present month, the deaths were 1191; in the next, 1173; and last week they were 1132. The mean weekly temperatures were in the same periods 55.9°, 66.4°, and 62.9°, which are on the average less by 2.5° than those of the five weeks preceding.

In the ten years 1848-57, the average number of deaths in the weeks corresponding with last week was 1061; but as the deaths now returned occurred in a population which has annually increased, they can only be compared with the average after it has been raised in proportion to the increase, a correction which will make it 1167. The deaths of last week were, therefore, less by 35 than the estimated number.

The deaths referred to cholera in the third week of July 1849 were 678, in the corresponding week of 1854 they were 26, in that of last year 28, and in the week ending last Saturday 10. It will be evident that if the average mortality were derived from seasons as free as is the present from epidemic cholera, the present state of the public health would not appear relatively so good as might be inferred from the above comparison.

If the deaths of last week had been according to that which may be termed "the healthy rate", derived from those districts in England where the mortality is least, they would have been 799. The excess arising from circumstances that constitute the comparative insalubrity of London is 333.

The mortality from zymotic diseases in the aggregate shows no increase on that of the previous week, but rather a slight diminution; the deaths under this head were in the two weeks respectively 403 and 393. The mortality from diarrhoea has been remarkably constant for three weeks, the numbers having been 129, 126, and 127. This complaint was much more fatal at this period last year, when the number in the week rose to 259. Sixteen fatal cases of diarrhoea occurred in Marylebone, of which six were in the sub-district of Christchurch, and five in St. John. Of the ten deaths referred to cholera, only one occurred to an adult, a woman, in Newnham Street, Marylebone, who is stated to have died of "Asiatic cholera", on the 19th inst. The daughter of a stableman, aged 7 months, in May's Buildings, May Fair, died from the same disease. The death of a woman is recorded as having been caused by fever, which was directly attributed to the inhaling of the stench of the river during a short excursion between Pimlico and London Bridge.

Of five nonagenarians whose deaths are in the present return, the three oldest were a widow, aged 96 years; a widow in High Street, Clapham, 98; and a Greenwich pensioner, 97 years.

Last week the births of 804 boys and 851 girls, in all 1655 children, were registered in London. In the ten corresponding weeks of the years 1848-57, the average number was 1456.

At the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, the mean height of the barometer in the week was 29.782 in. The highest reading was 30 in., and was obtained on Monday. The mean temperature of the air in the week was 62.9°, which is 1.3° above the mean temperature of the same week on an average of 43 years (as determined by Mr. Glaisher). The thermometer fell to its lowest point on Thursday, when it was 49.3°, and it rose to its highest point on the next day, when it attained 79.2°. The range of the week was therefore 29.9°; the mean daily range was 22.8°. The difference between the mean dew-point temperature and air temperature was 9.4°; the mean degree of humidity of the air was 71. The mean temperature of the water of the Thames was 67.4°, which is nearly 5° higher than that of the air. The wind blew generally from the south-west; on Saturday it blew when strongest with a pressure of

4.5 lbs. on the square foot, and its horizontal movement on that day was 255 miles. Rain fell to the amount of 0.37 in., most of which fell on Saturday.

THE SERPENTINE. A public meeting of the inhabitants of the district in which the Serpentine is situated was held on July 22nd at the Cadogan Institute, Sloane Street. Mr. Heywood, late M.P. for North Lancashire, occupied the chair.

Dr. COPLAND, F.R.S., moved:—"That remembering the crowded meeting held in this building, under the presidency of Lord Harrowby, so far back as 1848, on the subject of the stagnant and dangerous state of the Serpentine, and knowing the various other measures that have since been adopted by the committee of physicians and others, appointed at that meeting, to urge the matter on the attention of the authorities, the present meeting cannot but express its strong disappointment that the necessary remedies have not been applied, the Serpentine still continuing in its former stagnant and dangerous condition." There was no doubt it was injurious to bathers, but he believed emanations injurious to health proceeded from the Serpentine river and its banks. Still a person affected by such emanations would not, perhaps, experience the effects for some time. He was convinced of the propriety of the Government taking up this question, especially as the banks of the Serpentine were frequented by the higher classes, and he believed the pallor of the countenance was caused as much by the Serpentine as by the dissipation of the London season.

Dr. LANKESTER seconded the motion. He regretted he should have to appear there to ask for that which was asked for ten years ago. If the number of persons killed by the Serpentine had been killed on a railway the people would have called upon the Government, and yet day by day the banks of the river were thronged by persons inhaling its deadly emanations. He desired not the Serpentine for drinking, but for bathing. It might be said that there were baths; but the people wished for free baths.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Mr. S. CARTER HALL moved:—"That this meeting would again urge upon the Government, on the double ground of increasing the salubrity and beauty of the park, and promoting the safety and healthful enjoyment of bathers, that the deep pits in the Serpentine should be filled up; that the bed of the river should be reduced to a depth varying from three to four feet at the western, to eight or ten feet at the eastern end; that it should be comparatively shallow and of graduated depth for some distance in all along either shore, and that the supply of water should be sufficiently increased to bring the cascade at the lower end of the lake into constant play.

Dr. TILT seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

Dr. W. V. PETTIGREW moved:—"That this meeting is of opinion that no better mode of cleansing and levelling the Serpentine, and of obtaining the necessary enlarged supply of water, could or need be devised than the plan adopted, and which has answered so admirably in St. James's Park, and that this meeting would be greatly obliged by the Committee requesting the Chief Commissioners of Woods and Forests to receive a deputation on an early day with respect to the opinions and wishes which have thus been so strongly and so unanimously expressed." It was a question entirely of health; and the enticements of the park were converted into a pest-house by the waters. He enlarged upon the necessity of free baths for the people, but the permission now given to bathe in the Serpentine was an invitation to a man-trap.

The resolution having been seconded by Mr. LITWALL, was carried unanimously; and, thanks having been voted to the Chairman, the meeting separated.

Dr. TURNBULL. We regret to say that Dr. Turnbull, R.N., who accompanied the expedition against an encampment of "Braves", near the White Cloud Mountains, a short distance from Canton, was captured, and his head and hands were cut off.

TESTIMONIAL TO JAMES SNOW, ESQ. On Thursday, July 15th, a testimonial was publicly presented to James Snow, Esq., a member of our Association, who has held the position of Surgeon to the Lincoln County Hospital for fifty-seven years. It consisted of a portrait of Mr. Snow, with the following inscription:—"Presented to James Snow, Esq., senior, Surgeon to the Lincoln County Hospital, by his medical brethren and friends, as a mark of their esteem and high ap-

preciation of his professional character and honourable demeanour among them for a period of fifty-five years and upwards." The presentation took place at the annual dinner of the Medical Benevolent Society of Lincolnshire. Dr. Cammack, of Spalding, presided; and a number of members of the medical profession, with the Mayor of Lincoln and several of the clergy, took part in the proceedings.

ILLNESS OF MR. KING OF BATH. We regret to hear that our old associate and correspondent, George King, Esq., of Bath, is suffering from paralysis.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

NOTICE.—Dr. WYNTER will feel obliged if the Associates will address all Post Office Orders in payment of Subscriptions, to the Publisher, Mr. THOMAS JOHN HONEYMAN, 37, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W. C., "Bloomsbury Branch"; and he would also feel obliged by their sending all communications respecting the non-receipt of the Journal, to the same address; as both these matters are out of the province of the Editor.

Communications have been received from:—Dr. G. GODDARD ROGERS; Mr. STONE; Dr. J. MILNER BARRY; Dr. P. H. WILLIAMS; Mr. G. POUND; Mr. J. S. BARTRUM; Mr. E. F. BROADBENT; Mr. PARRY (Chester); Mr. T. HOLMES; Dr. C. HANDFIELD JONES; Mr. THOMAS STILES; Dr. T. SKINNER; Mr. W. H. HOLE; Dr. HENRY T. L. ROOKE; Mr. REDFERN DAVIES; Dr. JAMES BIRD; Mr. T. H. WALTON; Mr. J. STRUTHERS; Dr. D. CARMICHAEL; and Mr. ROBERT L. BOWLES.

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