

ROYAL MEDICAL BENEVOLENT COLLEGE.

SIR.—The thirty-first election of pensioners and foundation scholars, to this institution, took place on Thursday last; and, for certain reasons which I trust you will permit me to lay before your readers, it may be said to have been somewhat disappointing. To those who were at the pains and trouble of bringing about what was hoped would effect a considerable change for the better in the mode of election of candidates, it will appear disheartening. In 1879, it was resolved to constitute a committee of examination, "whose duty it shall be to carefully investigate the claims of those who have been admitted by the Council as candidates, and select a number equal to the number of vacancies, who, in the opinion of the Committee, best deserve election, and whose cases or claims are the most urgent." This rule in no way deprives any governor of his right of voting for any candidate; and no scheme can have been devised under the present by-laws of the College which seems, on the whole, better calculated to influence benevolent opinion towards the adoption of measures which shall more effectually secure the objects for which the charitable part of the institution exists.

No one, who has watched the results, will for a moment allow that the task assigned to the Committee of Examination, although a delicate and difficult one, has not been most faithfully and impartially performed. Nevertheless, it can hardly be denied that the recommendations of the Committee have not received the attention it was hoped they would receive, from the great body of subscribers; and whereby it was expected, by those who are well acquainted with the evils of the canvassing system, that the most necessitous would be less likely to be thrust aside by those who can afford a lavish expenditure, and secure the help of traffickers in votes. The result of this year's election is certainly less assuring on this point. There were no fewer than 23 candidates on the list for three vacant pensionerships, and 53 for eight foundation scholarships; and although the names of the three elected pensioners appear among those recommended by the Committee, one narrowly succeeded by a chance death-vacancy, after the list was sent out; otherwise, at the age of 69, and, on the fourth application, she would have been once more doomed to disappointment. Of the 23 candidates, only four had in any way subscribed or contributed to the College. The applicants for foundation scholarships recommended for election, were on this occasion less successful than on any previous occasion; only three were elected; one of the three having been subjected to the previous burden of an expensive canvass for five years, the others for four and three years. Of the fortunate five who displaced those recommended by the Committee, one was up for the third, three for the second, and one for the first time. Of the whole number of applicants, 53, only eight of their parents had contributed towards the support of the College, although it appears all had been in practice for a number of years, periods varying from 10 to 40 years. It would be very difficult to say why so large a majority of the votes of the governors should on this occasion have been secured by outsiders—those who, after the most careful consideration by a Committee of the Council, were reported as less urgent and deserving than those whose names appear in the printed list sent out with the voting papers. It is true that one of the more fortunate five was 14 years of age, and would, therefore, if not elected this year, have been ineligible by age; but this was only his second application, and his father had not subscribed a shilling to the College. Of the rest (one was a candidate for the first time), it may very fairly be said that their claims were in no way more urgent, nor stronger, than those especially recommended; and, what is somewhat more remarkable, not one of the eight orphans of those who in their life-time had contributed to the College, was on the successful list, or fared better for the self-denial and providence evinced by his parents.

The result of this election seems to imply that a large number of governors lend themselves to the importunities of professional canvassers and traffickers in votes, and in this way the action of the Committee of Examination is heavily handicapped by people who never contribute, or are likely to contribute, towards the support of the institution, and whose interest in it dates from the time they take up the cause of a candidate, and ceases as soon as his election is secured. In this matter it appears to me that the provident are made to suffer for the improvident and apathetic in the cause of charity; and is this not a burning question, and one which must affect the future prosperity of the College? Indeed, the Council appear to be alive to the fact, for in their annual report they lament the greatly increasing pressure for admission to the benefits of the institution; and who, on reading over the long list of applicants, can fail to sympathise with them? The list of names is, in truth, longer than usual, while the subscription-list is falling off, and by no means keeps pace with the bitter cry for help.

Something, surely, might be done to relieve the plethora of candidates. A change in the by-laws, enacting contributory qualification, as in other special charities, seems to be demanded. The benefits of the charity should be limited to subscribers, or those who have subscribed. I would suggest a by-law to the effect that in no case shall the name of an applicant for a pensionership or foundation-scholar be placed on the list, unless he or she (or the parents of the boy) shall have subscribed to the College for at least two years.—I remain, sir, your obedient servant,

1, Bedford Square.

A CAUTION.

MESSRS. BURROUGHS, WELLCOME, and Co., of Snow Hill Buildings, E.C., have asked us to state that a person calling himself Dr. Cecil H. Cook, and claiming to represent them, has no authority to do so, and has no connection with them whatever, and that they will not be responsible for any liabilities he may contract. They request that any person knowing where he is to be found will communicate with the authorities at Scotland Yard.

A QUESTION OF TREATMENT.

IN reply to "Alpha" (see BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, June 6th, p. 1184), Dr. Maurice G. Evans (Cardiff) recommends a trial of the following: Bismuthi trisnitris gr. v; magnesia carbonatis, gr. v; carbonis ligni gr. x; M. To be taken three times a day, well stirred up in a wineglassful of water, immediately after meals. In the majority of cases the voluminous generation of gas is due to some abnormal fermentation of the intestinal secretions which the charcoal prevents. "Alpha" will confer a favour by communicating the results to Dr. Evans.

SUBSCRIBER A. B.—There can be no objection to a temperate and accurate statement of fact being made on such a subject, through any legitimate channel; but the statement should be rigidly confined to accurately ascertained facts.

LOCUM TENENS is referred to the answer which we ave on the same subject last week.

COMMUNICATIONS, LETTERS, etc., have been received from:

Dr. J. F. Howard, Shaw; Mr. G. C. Searle, Brixham; Mr. E. A. Hart, London; The Secretary of St. Mary's Hospital; Dr. Jno. Phillips, London; Dr. R. N. Ingle, Cambridge; Mr. W. G. Black, Newcastle-on-Tyne; Mr. W. T. Gardiner, London; Dr. Styrap, Shrewsbury; Dr. Fitch, Nova Scotia; Mr. Dodsworth, London; Dr. Myers, London; Mr. F. Swinford Edwards, London; Dr. J. J. K. Fairclough, Old Trafford; Dr. D. McRitchie, London; Mr. E. White Wallis, London; Dr. Maxwell, Woolwich; Mr. J. W. Hayward, Whitstable; Mr. Lund, Manchester; Mr. J. Binks, Wakefield; Dr. George Newton Pitt, London; Mr. H. H. Fowler, London; Mr. F. H. Spooner, London; Mr. C. B. Plowright, King's Lynn; Dr. Huggard, Geneva; Dr. W. Marct, London; The Rev. A. J. D. D'Orsey, London; Mr. George Owen Willis, Henley-on-Thames; Mr. Samuel Nall, Disley; Dr. Heywood Smith, London; Mr. Wagstaffe, Sevenoaks; A Member; the Rev. W. Venables Williams, Colwyn Bay; Messrs. Steel and Jones, London; Mr. H. A. Bredin, Bootle; Mr. F. J. Turner, Gurnerside; Mr. W. Hood, York; Mr. J. Sidney Hunt, Shepton Mallett; Dr. Clark Bell, New York; Mr. James Marshall, Glasgow; Mr. J. Storey, Leicester; Dr. Parsons, Dover; Mr. W. Smith, Ballymena; Mr. R. Greene, Liverpool; Dr. Pavy, London; Dr. A. Hill, Birmingham; Mr. P. H. Emerson, Southwold; Surgeon-Major F. W. S. Hodder, Newry; Mr. J. V. Solomon, Birmingham; Mr. G. L. Fraser, Newcastle-on-Tyne; Our Birmingham Correspondent; Dr. Murphy, Sunderland; Mr. F. Broadbent, South Collingham; Dr. R. T. Kinkead, Galway; Mr. J. Sargent, Worcester; Dr. T. Spencer Cobbold, London; Mr. T. F. Raven, Broadstairs; Our Paris Correspondent; Mr. T. B. Ireland, Tadcaster; Mr. G. E. Stewart, London; Dr. N. Kerr, London; Dr. J. W. Moore, Dublin; Mr. Durham, London; Dr. D. Drummond, Newcastle-on-Tyne; Mr. Charles Stewart, London; Our Dublin Correspondent; Dr. Gibson, Edinburgh; Our Edinburgh Correspondent; Our Correspondent in Rome; Mr. W. I. Keir, Melksham; Mr. T. J. Clancy, Cork; Mr. W. Davenport Adams, London; Our Berlin Correspondent; Mr. A. H. Young, London; Mr. W. Whitehead, Manchester; The Secretary of the National Hospital, London; Mr. Jno. Alcock, Burslem; Messrs. Burn and Galloway, London; Mr. F. J. Gant, London; Messrs. Raphael Tuck and Sons, London; Mr. A. W. Mayo Robson, Leeds; Dr. J. Weston Bull, London; Mr. John Furley, London; Mr. J. Vesey Fitzgerald, Birmingham; Mr. H. W. Phillips, Bolton; Mr. T. P. Devlin, Finstown, Orkney; Dr. F. P. Atkinson, Surbiton, etc.

BOOKS, ETC., RECEIVED.

Ringworm, its Diagnosis and Treatment. By Alder Smith, M.B. Third Edition. London: H. K. Lewis. 1885.

Transactions of the American Gynaecological Society for the Year 1884. Vol. IX. New York: D. Appleton and Co. 1885.

The Nature of Mind and Human Automatism. By Morton Prince, M.D. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co. 1885.

Gout. By Robson Roose, M.D. London: H. K. Lewis. 1885.

Bedside Urine Testing. By G. Oliver, M.D. London: H. K. Lewis. 1885.

Frozen Sections of a Child. By T. Dwight, M.D. New York: W. Wood and Co. 1881.

Gout in its Clinical Aspects. By J. Mortimer Granville, M.D. London: J. and A. Churchill. 1885.

Year-Book of the Scientific and Learned Societies of Great Britain and Ireland. London: Griffin and Co. 1885.

Diseases of the Tongue. By H. T. Batlin, F.R.C.S. London: Cassell and Co., Limited. 1885.

A System of Obstetric Medicine and Surgery, Theoretical and Clinical, for the Student and Practitioner. By Robert Barnes, M.D., and Fancourt Barnes, M.D. Second Volume. London: Smith, Elder, and Co. 1885.

Surgical Operations. Part I. The Ligature of Arteries. By Sir William Mac Cormac. London: Smith, Elder, and Co. 1885.

Comparative Anatomy and Physiology. By F. Jeffrey Bell, M.A. London: Cassell and Company, Limited. 1885.

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