

CONDUCT OF POOR-LAW OFFICIALS TOWARDS  
MEDICAL MEN.

On Wednesday last, Mr. Brown, medical officer to the out ward of the parish of Chelsea, at Kensal New Town, was summoned before the Chelsea Board of Guardians to answer a charge of disobeying the order of the Board, and of giving a medical certificate that a pauper named Murphy was not in a fit condition to be removed to the workhouse, while he was so in reality.

The relieving officer making the charge, one William Tubbs, said, on January 7, a woman called on him with a certificate that her husband, Dennis Murphy, was ill, and required immediate attention. He afforded relief, and upon inquiry he was informed, on good authority, that Murphy did not need parochial assistance, and, by direction of the Board, the relief was stopped. On the 20th, Mrs. Murphy again called at the workhouse with a certificate from Mr. Brown, stating that the man was suffering from an abscess in the arm, and could not be removed to the workhouse, as ordered by the Board. On the back of the certificate appeared the following memorandum:—

"SIR,—I must beg to call your attention to the case of this poor man. I ordered for him, last Thursday week, meat of Mr. Jordan, and wine of Mr. Pergeten, which I will thank you to pay for. It is absolutely necessary for his recovery that he should have very generous diet; and I request, therefore, you let him have one pound of meat, and half a pint of port wine, daily. I warn you, that if you neglect my poor in the way you have been in the habit of doing, I shall report you to the Board.—GEORGE BROWN, M.R.C.S."

The chairman said, that when Tubbs received the note he came to him (the chairman) for advice; and he and others thought it best to instruct another medical man to visit Murphy, and give his opinion upon the case. Dr. Barnes, who was sent, gave a certificate that Murphy was in a fit state to be removed into their house. The chairman then dwelt upon Mr. Brown's having set the Board's order at defiance about meat and wine being allowed sick paupers without first recommending it to the relieving officer. Mr. Brown said that Tubbs had not seen Murphy before he made his report to the Board, and therefore could not honestly report the case as underserving. Tubbs called on Murphy eight days after the medical certificate had been given; and it was then to say that the relief would be discontinued, as the accident occurred in a drunken row. It was not a portion of a relieving officer's business to inquire how people met with accidents. On the 19th of January he performed an operation on Murphy, and gave the certificate read. On the following day his patient told him that another medical man had been to visit him during the day; and at night Murphy received an order for his removal to the workhouse. Mr. Brown warmly denounced these proceedings, as extremely wrong, as it was impossible that a medical man totally unacquainted with Murphy's case, could give a fair opinion. He did not consider that any respectable medical man would have acted as Dr. Barnes had in the matter. Mr. Walker (the chairman) observed, that the medical gentleman whom the Board sent was not aware that Murphy had been medically attended. Mr. Brown now brought against Tubbs a charge of having systematically acted in opposition to his instructions and wishes, and of having afforded relief to a man who was actually dead. Some disgusting revelations were made in connexion with the latter charge. Mr. Brown said that, if the guardians did not choose to pay for what he ordered for the poor patients, he would defray the charges out of his own pocket. No resolution was arrived at respecting the charge against him.

HEALTH OF LONDON—FEBRUARY 4TH, 1860.  
[From the Registrar-General's Report.]

|   | Births.                       | Deaths.          |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------|
| During week .....   | { Boys..1003<br>Girls.. 940 } | { 1943 .. 1389 } |
| Average of corresponding weeks 1849-58 .....  | 1693 ..                       | 1326             |
| Among the causes of death were—bronchitis, 217; pneumonia, 136; phthisis, 142; small-pox, 44; scarlatina, 39; measles, 22; diphtheria, 4; hooping-cough, 48. The deaths from pulmonary diseases (exclusive of phthisis) were 398, being 96 above the corrected average. |                               |                  |
| Barometer:  |                               |                  |
| Highest (Fri.) 30.156; lowest (Mon.) 28.907; mean 29.655.   |                               |                  |
| Thermometer:  |                               |                  |
| In sun—highest (Tues.) 70.0 degrees; lowest (Wed.) 40.0 degrees.  |                               |                  |
| In shade—highest (Mon.) 45.7 degrees; lowest (Wed.) 25.5 degrees.   |                               |                  |
| Mean—36.3 degrees; difference from mean of 43 yrs.—1.1 degree.  |                               |                  |
| Range—during week, 22.2 degrees; mean daily, 10.7 degrees.  |                               |                  |
| Mean humidity of air (saturation=100), 85.  |                               |                  |
| Mean direction of wind, N.—Rain in inches, 0.31.  |                               |                  |

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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Communications have been received from:—Dr. E. H. VINEN; Mr. JOHN HOGGINBOTTOM; Mr. JAMES WEAVER; Mr. R. S. STEDMAN; Mr. HENRY TERRY, JUN.; Mr. W. W. THOMAS; Dr. FORBES WINSLOW; Mr. BLOKHAM; Dr. B. W. RICHARDSON; Dr. MARKHAM; Dr. G. D. GIBB; Dr. T. SKINNER; Dr. HARLEY; Dr. COWDELL; Mr. R. S. FOWLER; MESSRS. PRICE & Co.; Dr. GRAILY HEWITT; Mr. ROPER; Mr. R. H. CLARKE; Dr. HYDE SALTER; Dr. BEALE; Mr. F. WHITWELL; and Mr. C. WILLIAMS.

## BOOKS RECEIVED.

[\* An Asterisk is prefixed to the Names of Members of the Association.]

1. Clinical Lectures on Certain Acute Diseases. By Robert Bentley Todd, M.D., F.R.S. London: John Churchill. 1860.
2. Selected Monographs: Kussmaul and Tenner on Epileptiform Convulsions from Hemorrhage.—Wagner on the Resection of Bones and Joints.—Graefe's Three Memoirs on Iridectomy in Iritis, Choroiditis, and Glaucoma.—The New Sydenham Society. London: 1859.
3. Foundation for a New Theory and Practice of Medicine. By \*Thomas Inman, M.D. London: Churchill. Liverpool: A. Holden. 1860.
4. Exposition of a Method of Preserving Vaccine Lymph Fluid and Active; with Hints for the more Efficient Performance of Public Vaccination. By Wm. Husband, M.D. London: Churchill. Edinburgh: Sutherland & Knox. Dublin: Fannin & Co. 1860.
5. On Diseases of the Throat, Epiglottitis, and Windpipe. By \*George D. Gibb, M.D., M.A. London: Churchill. 1860.

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