

the coexistence of tubercles; nay, it is highly probable, in perhaps the very great majority of instances, that both these morbid conditions—to wit, tubercles and cysticerci, are conjoined. Let us do the Icelanders a kindness if we can; let us urge them to abandon their dirty, uncivilised, unwholesome modes of living; urge the Danish Government to build these interesting people a better class of dwellings; but let us not be led away by illusory statements as to their ideal immunity from tubercular disease, the greatest scourge, in their case as in our own, under which the world now groans.

February 1869.

I am, etc.,  
HENRY MAC CORMAC.

#### REMUNERATION OF MEDICAL OFFICERS OF DISPENSARIES.

SIR,—In your notice of the annual meeting of the governors of the Canterbury Dispensary, you have inadvertently fallen into the error of supposing that, while a large number of persons have been attended gratuitously during the past year, the medical officer upon whom the labours and responsibility principally depend is entirely unpaid. I therefore take the earliest opportunity of correcting the mistake; and of informing you and your readers that the governors are not unmindful of his services, but provide for him a family residence and £170 *per annum*—a remuneration admitted to be inadequate to the services performed, but for which they may be justly regarded as much more liberal than the governors of most of our medical charities.

The diseases for which patients principally apply to the dispensary are those of the zymotic class, as well as the general diseases of childhood and advanced age, which are properly excluded from the hospital; and in answer to your inquiry respecting the class of patients, I have the pleasure of informing you that about fourteen per cent., for whom provision is made by the guardians, might and ought to have the attendance of the union surgeon, and that the remainder are but little above pauperism, and have no other provision in this city during their time of sickness; while those of our citizens and neighbours who have the means of paying for medical attendance, are very properly excluded from any claim upon the benefits of the charity. Hoping that you will give this letter an early insertion,—I am, etc.,

Bargate Street, Canterbury, Feb. 1869.

GEORGE RIGDEN.

## THE POOR-LAW MEDICAL SERVICE OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

### THE POOR-LAW MEDICAL SERVICE IN BIRMINGHAM.

THE following memorial has been forwarded to the Poor-law Board; and we call attention to it, believing that its prayer cannot fail to be acceded to.

“We, the physicians and surgeons of the public institutions and general practitioners of Birmingham, seeing that the Board of Guardians of the parish of Birmingham have resolved to reduce the number of the parochial medical officers from eight to five, respectfully request you at once to make such public inquiry, on oath, as will prevent such an injustice to the poor of this parish. Taking into consideration the fact, that the number of inhabitants of the parish is upwards of 220,000, we are of opinion the number of medical officers is not at present at all too many to properly perform the work incident to so large a population; we, therefore, respectfully request you will take such steps as will place the parochial medical relief on a permanent and satisfactory basis.”

“We are induced to adopt this course, from the fact that, two years ago, the late Board of Guardians, after a long and patient inquiry, found that the number of medical officers (*then six*) was inadequate for the duties required of them, and we fear that any diminution in the number of the present staff would be attended with calamity to the poor.”

“We are, etc.”

We are informed that the entire responsibility of the reduction rests with one guardian, who is a medical man—Mr. John Clay, Professor of Midwifery in Queen's College, Birmingham. He asked the Board of Guardians to grant a Committee upon the Medical Relief, with power to call the medical officers; which was granted. Mr. Clay, the Chairman of the Committee, proposed the reduction to five. The Committee had two meetings without agreeing to anything. At the third meeting, the resolution was carried.

It should be remembered that the proper population of a Poor-law district does not exceed 15,000. If the guardians are allowed to carry out their reduction, each medical officer will have a district with a

population of 45,000. The guardians have already advertised for five medical officers. The eight gentlemen in office are all, we believe, desirous of retaining their position. We do not for a moment think the Poor-law Board will consent to the proposed reduction of the staff; but the guardians would not be tempted to act so uncivilly, if the Poor-law Board would make the appointments permanent, which they could do at once by issuing the General Order of May 1857 to the guardians.

THE *Pall Mall Gazette* has the following. Among the “bottling” cases which are said to have occurred at the Stockport election was that of one Thomas Carrington, who, it was alleged, had been prevented from voting by his doctor, Mr. Bale, a Poor-law medical officer. The allegation was investigated by Mr. Cane, one of the inspectors, and the result is that Mr. Ball has received a letter from the Poor-law Board, reprimanding him for his conduct. The Board say it has not been proved to them that Mr. Ball coerced or seriously influenced Thomas Carrington by means incidental or peculiar to his office, but the Board consider that, having regard to his position as an officer of the union, he would have acted more properly if he had abstained from taking so active a part as he did in this particular case, and they are of opinion that the course which he pursued was marked by a serious want of prudence and caution.

THE Guardians of the Balrothery Union have, with the sanction of the Poor-law Commissioners, says the *Dublin Daily Express*, again shown their appreciation of the skilful and untiring services of Dr. Stanistreet, rendered to the sick poor of the district, by granting him a further increase to his salary, which was unanimously recommended by the Malahide Dispensary Committee.

## MEDICO-PARLIAMENTARY.

ADULTERATION OF FOOD AND DRINK, ETC.—Lord Eustace Cecil has given notice that he will, on March 5th, call attention to the present state of the law as regards the use of false weights and measures and the adulteration of food and drink; and that he will move a resolution.

THE METROPOLITAN POOR ACT.—Mr. Torrens has given notice that he will move, on March 10th, that, in the opinion of this House, the proposed expenditure on district and separate asylums, under the Metropolitan Poor Act of 1867, is excessive; and that no further outlay for such purposes ought to be sanctioned by the Poor-law Board, until full inquiry shall have been made into the expediency of the same for the better relief of the sick and infirm, and into the ability of the ratepayers generally to bear such increased burthens.

PETITIONS.—On Wednesday, February 24th, petitions for inquiry into the present state of medical relief and for the redress of grievances were presented from the following medical officers, and ordered to lie on the table. From Wm. Griffin, George S. Symmons, Lambeth; John T. Jones, Albert Wm. Wallis, Ed. Pinder, Geo. John Hinnel, Frederic Taylor, James G. Mackinlay, Joseph Blackshaw, Robert Knewstubb, Rotherhithe; Angus Macmillan, Tenbury; Charles Franklin, John T. Muriel (two), George Edwards, Anthony Crisp (two), Wm. Williams, Royston; Wm. Bower, F. S. Manisty, Hertford; Walter Lattey, Hitchin; Heynes Hardwicke, Wm. Alfred Elliston, Wm. Henry Brotherton, Fred. Josiah Burgess, Caleb Carey Richards, Major Greenwood, James Hair, A. W. Owen, Fredk. J. Wadd, James Breach, Edmund Banks Whitcomb, Alfred Howse, Wm. Prowse, Andrew Kirkland, Geo. T. Smeatham, Benjn. A. Brickwell, Geo. Faithorn, Martin Ffolkes Bush, London; Septimus Swyer, Charles Welch, Thomas Sarvis, Robt. S. Martin, Ed. Pendril King, Henry Turner Woodd, E. M. Wrench, Walter Edwards, Ware; John Vinall, Joseph George Defriez, Richard M. Wallace, James Balding, William P. Cullen, Robt. Lamb, Ed. Jones, Webster Adams, Geo. B. Baker, Montague Thomas, Eugene Goddard, G. M. Ashforth, Thomas Leonard, Geo. Ed. Nicholas, Alfred Kitching, Thomas Fox Morrish and others, Richard Roe, Maurice Mason, Hugh Clark, John Russell, F. H. Vertue, Ed. Baker Stephens (two), Fredk. Hawthorn, Thomas Walton, Geo. Moule Evans, James Cooper; Wm. Woodward, John Jackson, Wm. Pritchard, Wm. Jones, Harrison Mitchell; Frederick Manning, Robert Mostyn Rathill, A. Fleming, Draper Mackinder, Charles Spurgin, Frederic Wm. Parsons, Claude Clarke Claremont, Joseph Rogers, Harrison Branthwaite, James Brierley Hughes, Thos. Holyoake, J. Thomas Clarke, Cardiff; Robert Slater, Robt. E. Jones, Peter Lodwick Burchell, Guildford Humbledon; Wm. E. Baylie, Richd. V. Gosham, Thomas Crowther, James Thompson, Josiah Court, Wm. Allard, and William Elliott Porter—to lie upon the table.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS, ETC. (IRELAND).—Colonel French will move for a Select Committee, on Wednesday, March 3rd, to inquire into the management and cost of the lunatic asylums in Ireland; into the incidence of the taxation arising therefrom; and into the constitution and management of the department of the general valuation of Ireland, the cost of the townland tenement valuation, and all matters connected with the annual revision thereof.