

THE INTERNATIONAL CANCER CONFERENCE.

BENEATH the ruins of the ancient Heidelberger Schloss, and in the midst of many mediæval associations, there assembled on September 24th some four hundred men of science from all parts of the world to discuss a problem not yet stripped of all the mystery enshrouding it at the time when the foundations of the oldest tower of that ancient Schloss were laid. Those thus assembled had come out of no mere idle curiosity, but in response to specific invitations to be present on the occasion of the opening of the new Cancer Hospital, and of the new Cancer Research Institute affiliated with it, and subsequently to participate in the First International Conference on Cancer.

We can name only a few of those present—Professor von Leyden, Professor Kirchner, Professor Metchnikoff, Professor Borrel, Professor Ehrlich, Professor Tillmanns, Professor Uhlenhuth, Professor George Meyer, Professor C. O. Jensen and Dr. Scheele of Copenhagen, Professor Lubarsch, Professor Henke, Dr. W. S. Bainbridge of New York, Professor von Hansemann, Professor Waldeyer, Professor Ferdinand Blumenthal, Dr. Leonor Michaelis, Professor Schiff of Vienna, and of the English representatives, Dr. E. F. Bashford, Dr. Lazarus-Barlow, Dr. Payne, Mr. Bowreman Jessett, Mr. Plimmer, and Dr. Powell White. From the presence of these and many others it was evident that at last those interested in medicine in the widest sense of the term had found an aspect of the cancer problem on which they could agree to meet in mutual intercourse. The proceedings on the subsequent days showed that this aspect was the remarkable development of the experimental study of cancer in mice.

At informal meetings on the Monday the delegates made acquaintance with each other. Although good fellowship prevailed, at the same time discordant notes were heard as to why certain people had not received invitations to attend, why Professor Jensen's work received such scant recognition in Germany, why well-known pathologists had refrained from attending, and why no discussion of the papers was to be permitted. It was obvious that the energetic General Secretary, Professor Meyer, had his work cut out if the Conference was to proceed peacefully. With tact these and other difficulties were smoothed over, and since the whole town was to be *en fête* on the next day, there was a hurry-scurry on the part of the English delegates to purchase white gloves and the other unexpected essentials to the full dress necessary to a midday function of official importance in Germany.

OPENING CEREMONY.

The opening ceremony proper was a ponderous and

pompous affair, befitting to the presence of so many Royal and distinguished persons in the old town of Heidelberg. A pathetic interest was added to the event by the fact that Her Royal Highness the Grand Duchess of Baden is the only surviving child of the Emperor William I, whose family has been so cruelly stricken by cancer. The Presidents were Professors v. Leyden, Czerny, and

Ehrlich, and the Honorary Presidents Dr. E. F. Bashford, Professor C. O. Jensen, Professor Metchnikoff, Professor Segond, and Professors Kirchner and Uhlenhuth. As President of the German Cancer Committee, Professor v. Leyden opened the proceedings by giving an historical sketch of the organized efforts to solve the cancer problem from the time of the foundation of the Middlesex Hospital Charity to the present day. His public declaration that both the Emperor and Empress Frederick died of cancer was somewhat startling to

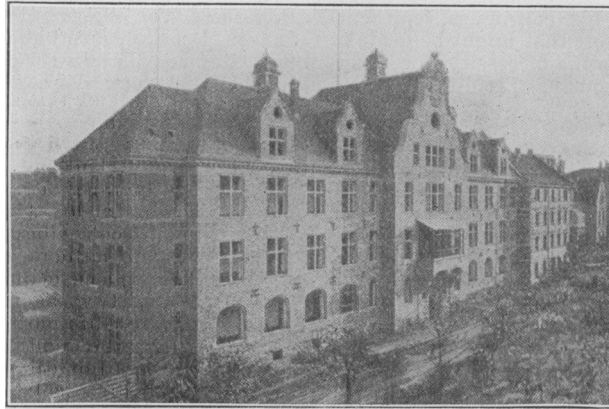
his audience, for in Germany this fact hitherto has been whispered about rather than openly stated. Professor Czerny followed with an account of the events leading up to the erection of the institute and a conveyance of thanks to the donors, who included Their Royal Highnesses the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess. After Professor Uhlenhuth had expressed the warm sentiments of the Reichskanzler and of the Reichsgesundheitsamt, Dr. Bashford conveyed the wish, on behalf

of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund and of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons responsible for the proper conduct of its investigations, that the work of the new institute might be crowned with success. He expressed the

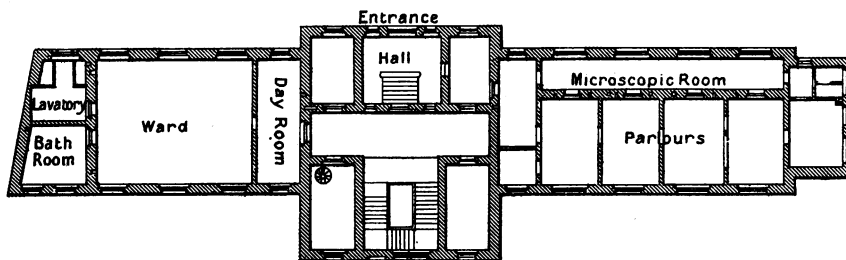
same wish on behalf of his colleagues Dr. Lazarus-Barlow of the Middlesex Hospital and of Mr. Jessett and others of the Cancer Hospital, and also of Dr. Bainbridge of the New York Cancer Hospital. Reminding his audience of the world-wide reputation of Professor v. Czerny, Dr. Bashford said it was not necessary for him to assure them that under Professor v. Czerny everything that could be done would be done to relieve those suffering from cancer. Dr. Bashford then drew attention to some outstanding points in the new institute. As one who had long advocated that progress could be expected only from experimental inquiry, he expressed his gratification at the ample provision made for such work under the

able direction of

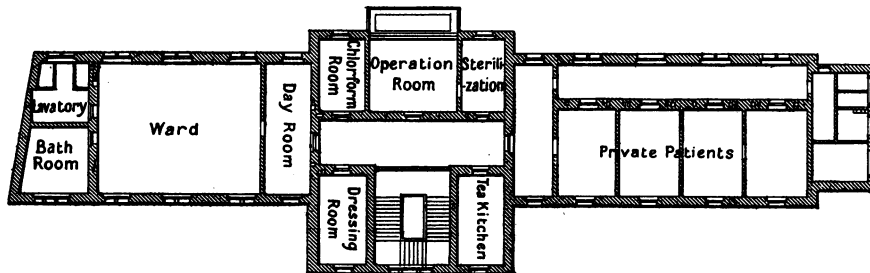
Professors von Dungern and Wasielewski. It appeared to him to be of the greatest importance that collaboration with Professor Ehrlich's Institute in Frankfurt was intended. Referring to the presence of so many distinguished representatives of cancer research in other countries, including those who had been pioneers in its later developments, Dr. Bashford said their presence there to-day was a further result of the work of the Committee for Cancer Research founded in Berlin in 1900 by Professor von Leyden, Professor



The New Cancer Research Institute, Heidelberg.



Samaritan House (Hospital). Ground floor.



Samaritan House. First floor.

Kirchner, and Professor George Meyer. Mr. Balfour, when Prime Minister, had written to the Berlin Committee in November, 1903: "There is no subject which, from its importance to the cause of humanity, calls more loudly for international co-operation; and there is, perhaps, none in which co-operation is likely to be more useful." Dr. Bashford assured the audience that this opinion still obtained in England, and concluded by promising the support of the corporations he more particularly represented as well as the support of his colleagues, representing other institutions, to any effort that might be made to give more concrete expression to the necessity for international collaboration and intercourse. Professors Segond (Paris), Levschin (Moscow), and others followed. After the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess had received the delegates, the company separated to meet again at lunch as the guests of Professor Czerny.

SCIENTIFIC PROCEEDINGS.

The scientific work of the Conference commenced in the afternoon, when papers were read by von Leyden, Czerny, Professor Goldman, Professor von Dungern, and others. Professors von Leyden and Czerny both preached from different standpoints the gospel that cancer was curable, but their utterances aroused little enthusiasm in an audience already fully informed in the clinical and pathological aspects of cancer in man, and the success of the opening meeting was an original and instructive communication by Professor Goldman of Freiburg on the Relations of Carcinoma to the Blood Vessels.

The scientific proceedings were resumed on Wednesday, under the Presidency of von Leyden, Professor Kirchner, and Dr. Bashford, when

again the rivalry which had shown itself in Heidelberg led to Professor von Leyden calling on Professor Ehrlich for his paper, and Professor Ehrlich announcing that the Burgomaster of Frankfurt wished to address the delegates. A similar incident happened again before Ehrlich gave a comprehensive and graphic account of the present position of the experimental study of cancer in mice. The paper was listened to attentively in a crowded meeting and was followed by a lantern demonstration by Ehrlich's collaborator, Dr. Apolant. As Ehrlich's work on mouse cancer was commented on in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of September 29th, we need not discuss the paper in detail. There were other important papers on cancer in mice by Professor Spiess, Professor Henke and Dr. Haaland, and a valuable paper on the destructive growth and malignancy of tumours by Professor Lubarsch, whose appearance at the Conference was welcomed on all sides. The papers by Professors Henke and Lubarsch were the only communications made by pathologists in the stricter sense; the pathologists generally kept aloof from the meeting or came to go away when they found that discussion of papers was not allowed.

The attitude of the pathologists towards the Berlin Committee has in the past been rather that of captious critics. Whatever the shortcomings of the Berlin Committee may have been in its early days, it has stuck to the work it marked out for itself in the face of much opposition, and in the end it deserves no small share of the credit due to those who have dissipated the

pessimism with which the investigation of cancer was regarded only a few years ago. The German pathologists, on the contrary, have indulged in destructive criticism without contributing anything of positive value to the new methods of cancer investigation.

LUNCHEON.

Professor and Madame Ehrlich entertained a limited party to lunch on Wednesday afternoon, including Professors von Leyden, Czerny, Metchnikoff, Borrel, Jensen, Dr. E. F. Bashford, and Professor George Meyer and Graf von Hutton-Schapski. In the evening a successful banquet took place at which von Leyden, Czerny,

Dr. Bashford, Professors Ehrlich, Kirchner, Schmidt, and others spoke.

FINAL SITTING.

At the final sitting on Thursday, an important

chemical paper was read by Dr. Blumenthal, and Dr. Leonor Michaelis gave a lucid account of his experiments on immunity to cancer in mice as well as description of a transplantable carcinoma in the rat. Dr. Prinzing and Professor Doellinger contributed two valuable statistical papers.

Viewed as a whole, the congress was a great success. There was naturally some friction and some discontent, but Professor George Meyer is to be congratulated on the skill with which he carried through the business of the meetings. It was probably a wise step to refuse to permit discussion of the papers, considering their number and the shortness of the time available, and it was certainly

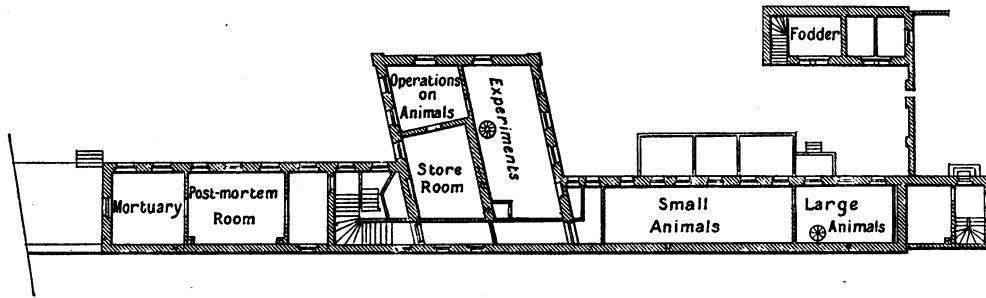
wise to have limited the attendance to persons specially invited.

The success of the Conference as a scientific gathering was due to a large extent to the fact that social functions and excursions formed

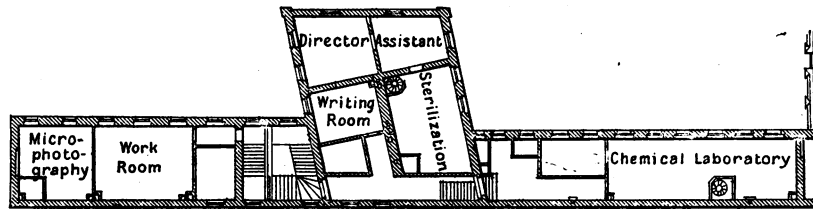
no part of the official programme, which was purely one of business.

On Wednesday afternoon the Conference adopted a resolution empowering a committee to take steps to give the Conference a permanent international character and to make arrangements for another meeting in two or three years' time. London was generally suggested as the next place of meeting, and if the experimental study of cancer advances as rapidly in the next three years as it has done in the past, and our experimental workers in England still remain in the forefront of progress, there seems no reason why an even more successful meeting should not then be held.

MEDICAL CO-OPERATION IN SPAIN.—A society has been formed in Madrid, under the title of *La Fraternidad Médica*, for the purchase and sale of medical and surgical appliances, dressings, disinfectants, books, etc., and for the promotion of institutions having a direct relation to hygiene, medicine, and surgery. The society may also aid in the development of co-operative societies which have as their sole object the promotion of the material interests of the medical profession. The capital of the society is 1,000,000 pesetas (£40,000), divided into shares of 25 pesetas (£1); only members of the medical profession can be shareholders. A part of the profits will be paid into the funds of the Madrid Colegio de Medicos, and another portion will be devoted to the establishment of a provident fund for the benefit of the medical practitioners who hold shares and their families.



Scientific section. Ground floor.



Scientific section. First floor.