

the working men representatives that the opening of this new ward would render necessary an increase in the medical staff. During the last year, however, the daily average of in-patients was only 19.1, and, therefore, it may well be affirmed that more such wards will have to be added before it becomes necessary, or, indeed, desirable, to add to the honorary working staff, which already consists of three members.

The Mexborough School Board are proceeding with their plan of erecting a school close to the small-pox hospital, in spite of the remonstrances of the medical officer of health. The playground will be adjacent to the hospital.

The small-pox epidemic may almost be regarded as ended. The number of deaths from this cause during the last week was only five. Attercliffe has been the district where the disease has chiefly lingered. Here many people have unfortunately persistently set their faces against revaccination, pinning their faith to Mr. Herring. If Attercliffe had only adopted the prudent and sensible course adopted elsewhere, the disease would have died out ere this.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CHARTERS OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

SIR,—The Fellows and Members of the College must not allow of any lull in their agitation for those rights for which they have so long striven. A sharp eye must be kept on the petition of the College for a new charter. The last that was heard of the matter was on April 23rd, when Viscount Cranbrook, in reply to Lord Sudeley, said that he did not think that the petition of the Royal College of Surgeons for a supplementary charter, though it raised points of some importance, could be properly referred to the Commission about to be appointed to consider the question of a new university. Care must be taken lest the Fellows and Members should be hoodwinked by the expression "supplementary," which practically, though not technically, implies a new charter; in short, it signifies precisely what the Fellows do not wish to be sanctioned by law until they have been allowed a voice in the matter. Let them remember and think on their claims calmly and deliberately, else they may not be awakened to energy till within three weeks or a fortnight of the next meeting—too short a period for independent thought. Let not everything be left for a few well-known bold and disinterested leaders. Again, July is drawing near; let the Fellows and Members think whom they will select as worthy to represent them and to further their views on the Council; and may the provincial Fellows exert themselves, so as to add at least one more of their number to the Council. It is noteworthy that the Council have thought that prudence advised them not to notice the Members' petition to the Privy Council, or to attempt any reply to the statement made by them to the Lord President.—I am, etc., F.R.C.S.

SIR MORELL MACKENZIE AND PROFESSOR VON BERGMANN.

SIR,—At the meeting of the Berlin Medical Society last Tuesday a letter from Professor von Bergmann to the following effect was read: "On April 28th the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL made these remarks: 'As Professor von Bergmann has not contradicted this statement it may be accepted as true;' that is to say, because I am silent in the face of a statement of facts and of personal attacks it shows they must be well founded. If the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL were not a journal whose scientific value I prize very highly, I might still remain silent in the presence of such an accusation, but under the circumstances I must defend myself. *I am not silent because I am in the wrong, but because I, like every honourable British or German physician, do not talk publicly about what goes on at the bedside of my patients.*"

The observations which you made on Professor Bergmann were,

I suppose, called forth by the letter which Mr. Hovell addressed to the *Cologne Gazette* demanding a rectification when charged by that newspaper with "having done serious injury to His Majesty by having forced deleterious matters down into his lungs." In Germany, before taking criminal proceedings against a journal for making a false statement, the Press Laws require the aggrieved person to demand a *rectification* (*Berichtigung*), and *such demand must be signed*. I have never given any information to the press except such as was permitted by august personages, with a view of contradicting the false and exaggerated reports which certain people have delighted to spread.¹

Further, neither I nor Mr. Hovell have ever attacked a colleague under the veil of anonymity, nor openly, except when acting in self-defence. On the other hand, Professor von Bergmann is known to be in close relationship with Dr. Fischer, the Berlin correspondent of the paper (*Cologne Gazette*) which libelled Mr. Hovell so cruelly. It has, in fact, been stated over and over again in the German press that this attack could only have come from Professor von Bergmann. The English public have seen that Professor von Bergmann is on such intimate terms with the Berlin correspondent of the *Times* that he has shown that person a private letter of mine to him. The *Kreuz Zeitung*, an organ which likewise receives its inspirations from Professor von Bergmann, and could only have obtained its pretended information, directly or indirectly, from him, described me as "*at my wit's end*" (*rathlos*); then, when, in accordance with the German Press Laws, I wrote a letter demanding a rectification, and pointed out that Professor von Bergmann did not even introduce the cannula, the professor is hurt at my candour and poses as a "whole-souled" man who "*does not speak publicly of what goes on in the sick room.*" This is really too much like the Gracchi denouncing sedition.

The medical profession in England will be glad to hear that I have received an immense number of letters from medical men in all parts of Germany expressing their satisfaction at the treatment which I have pursued in the case of His Majesty, and it is on the pressing advice of eminent members of the profession in Berlin (members of the Berlin Medical Society) that I now defend myself in the JOURNAL against the attacks of Professor von Bergmann.—I am, etc.,

MORELL MACKENZIE.

Charlottenburg, May 8th, 1888.

WANTED AN ADDRESS.

SIR,—The late Dr. John Murray published in the *Medico-Chirurgical Transactions* for 1873 the cases of three children in one family who suffered from a most extraordinary condition of the gums with the development of subcutaneous tumours in various parts of the body. The parents of the children S. kept a green-grocer's shop near the Liverpool Road. The children had been under care at various hospitals, and their cases had excited great interest. I should be very much obliged to any of your readers who may be able to give me any information as to the present condition of these patients, and should be especially glad of an opportunity of seeing them again.—I am, etc.,

15, Cavendish Square, W.

JONATHAN HUTCHINSON.

TEA AND TEETH.

SIR,—It seems a pity that the writer who contributes to the JOURNAL of May 5th some speculations on a subject of dental pathology did not first make himself acquainted with some of the fundamental facts of the subject. He might have learnt from any dental manual that no such structures as "tooth-sacs" exist in relation with fully formed teeth; and that teeth are covered with enamel, not dentine. Reference to a work on chemistry might have further taught him that to write of "theine or tannin having an elective affinity for dentine" is pure nonsense.

This writer represents a considerable class who seem to look upon the teeth as mysteries worked by miracle, whereas they are, in fact, extremely simple structures compared to more highly organised parts, and their maladies proportionately easy to under-

¹ Whilst, however, Professor von Bergmann was in attendance, the minutest details from the sick chamber were published in the *National Zeitung*, a paper which received its information from Professor von Bergmann. Not only was the state of the pulse given, but the frequency of the respiration was published; not only was the exact food and drink stated, but the medicine and even the surgical measures proposed by Professor von Bergmann, but not carried into effect, were described. Neither I nor my English colleague have ever given any information as to food or medicine, much less as to the frequency of respiration. Any details on such matters published in English papers have been taken from German sources.—M. M.

stand and explain. The main predisposing causes of tooth decay (caries) are, first, innate structural defects in enamel and dentine, rendering them easily acted upon by agents; and, secondly, vitiation of the secretions of the mouth, whereby these agents (acids and micro-organisms) are developed and lodged on and about the teeth. Excessive tea drinking, in so far as it might tend to produce the latter effect, should certainly be looked upon as a remote cause of dental disease.—I am, etc., H. S.

London, May 5th.

SIR,—About 2,000 of the population here work in the cotton factories; they not only take strong tea at their morning, mid-day, and evening meals, but many of them a cup at 6 A.M. when going to their work, and numbers also carry cans of tea with them which they drink during the day, heating it on steam pipes. They almost without exception have bad teeth, many having lost nearly all their teeth at puberty, and in not a few instances the disease, whatever be its cause, appears to be hereditary, children during the period of teething losing their first teeth before the latter ones appear. The decay begins in or near the fangs, having no resemblance to specific disease; in fact, syphilis is almost unknown in this particular district.—I am, etc.,

E. B. FFENELL, M.B., B.Ch.

Barrowford, Lancashire, May 7th.

INCISION AND EXCISION OF JOINTS.

SIR,—May I be allowed to correct a clerical error in the report of my remarks on Mr. Wainwright's paper, read before the last meeting of the Clinical Society. I was arguing in favour of Mr. Bennett's view that the suppurating hip-joint which recovered after incision was the result of acute inflammation, possibly septic in nature; and I mentioned a case in which three joints in succession had been affected, requiring incision. The printed report says, "Mr. Lucas mentioned a case in which three joints had been affected in succession requiring excision." This quite alters the direction of my contention, which was to the effect that acute suppurating joints would recover after simple incision, but that chronic pulpy joints would require a more radical operation to bring about complete cure.

The case alluded to is now before me. A child, aged 3 years and 9 months, was seized five days before admission with shivering, sickness, and headache. She was admitted as a medical case in a fretful, typhoid condition, complaining of general tenderness. A few days later a swelling connected with the left shoulder was noticed, and about three weeks after an abscess was opened antiseptically. The temperature fell to subnormal, but soon rose again. After another interval of three weeks, owing to pain and swelling about the right hip, it was thought advisable to apply a double hip-splint. A week later an abscess was opened behind the right trochanter. Irregular temperatures continued, and, after a fortnight's interval, an abscess was found connected with the left hip, which was also opened. All these joints recovered, and the wounds healed, but some shortening was noticed on the right side before the child left the hospital.—I am, etc.,

R. CLEMENT LUCAS, B.S., F.R.C.S.,

Surgeon to the Evelina Hospital for Children, etc.
Finsbury Square, May 5th.

MEDICAL DECLARATIONS RE ALCOHOL.

SIR,—The annexed circular has been sent to more than 2,000 of the leading medical men of the United Kingdom, and a very large number of valuable endorsements has been received. Our Council would, but for the great expense involved, have sent a similar circular to every practitioner in the kingdom; but, as this is impossible, may I ask that this important matter may be brought under their notice through your columns, and that all may thus have an opportunity of appending their names before the list is published? If, as soon as possible after reading this, each one who approves of these declarations will send me a post-card, addressed "Dr. Ridge, Enfield, Middlesex," with the simple statement, "I endorse Declaration I, II, and III" (any or all, as the case may be), with his name and qualifications, it will be much appreciated.—I am, etc., J. JAMES RIDGE.

Enfield.

Carlton House, Enfield, Middlesex, February, 1888. DEAR SIR,—You are doubtless aware that during the last fifty years three medical declarations respecting alcohol have been issued. The first of these, issued in 1839, was to the following effect:—

Declaration I.—"An opinion handed down from rude and ignorant times and imbibed by Englishmen from their youth, has become very general, that the habitual use of some portion of alcoholic drink, as of wine, beer, or spirit, is beneficial to health, and even necessary to those who are subjected to habitual labour. Anatomy, physiology, and the experience of all ages and countries when properly examined, must satisfy every mind, well-informed in medical science, that the above opinion is altogether erroneous. Man, in ordinary health, like other animals, requires not any such stimulants, and cannot be benefited by the habitual employment of any quantity of them, large or small; nor will their use during his lifetime increase the aggregate amount of his labour. In whatever quantity they are employed, they will rather tend to diminish it. When he is in a state of temporary debility from illness or other causes, a temporary use of them, as of other stimulant medicines, may be desirable; but as soon as he is raised to his natural standard of health, a continuance of their use can do no good to him, even in the most moderate quantities, while larger quantities (yet such as by many persons are thought moderate) do, sooner or later, prove injurious to the human constitution, without any exceptions. It is my opinion that the above statement is substantially correct."

This document was signed by Sir Benjamin Brodie, Dr. W. F. Chambers, Sir James Clarke, Bransby Cooper, Dr. D. Davies, Sir J. Eyre, Dr. R. Ferguson, Mason Good, Dr. Marshall Hall, Dr. J. Hope, C. A. Key, Dr. R. Lee, Herbert Mayo, R. Partridge, Richard Quain, Dr. A. T. Thomson, R. Travers, Drs. Andrew and Alexander Ure, and in all by seventy-eight men of distinction in the profession.

The second medical certificate was promoted by John Dunlop, Esq., in 1847, and was signed by upwards of 2,000 physicians and surgeons. Their testimony was as follows:—

Declaration II.—"We, the undersigned, are of opinion: 1. That a very large portion of human misery, including poverty, disease, and crime, is induced by the use of alcoholic or fermented liquors or beverages. 2. That the most perfect health is compatible with total abstinence from all such intoxicating beverages, whether in the form of ardent spirits, or as wine, beer, ale, porter, cider, etc. 3. That persons accustomed to such drinks may, with perfect safety, discontinue them entirely, either at once or gradually, after a short time. 4. That total and universal abstinence from alcoholic liquors and beverages of all sorts would greatly contribute to the health, the prosperity, the morality, and the happiness of the human race."

Among the signatures to this document in London were those of Dr. Addison, Dr. Niel Arnott, J. Moncreiff Arnott, Esq., Dr. B. G. Babington, Dr. Beattie, Sir J. Risdon Bennett, Dr. A. Billing, Dr. John Bostock, Dr. Golding Bird, Dr. Black, Dr. R. Bright, W. Bowman, Esq., Sir B. C. Brodie, Sir W. Burnett, Dr. G. Budd, Sir G. Burrows, Dr. W. B. Carpenter, Dr. W. F. Chambers, Sir J. Clark, Dr. Copland, Sir J. Eyre, Dr. A. Farre, Dr. Robert Ferguson, Sir W. Ferguson, Sir J. Forbes, R. D. Grainger, Esq., Dr. Guy, Dr. Marshall Hall, Sir H. Holland, Sir Aston Key, F. Kiernan, Esq., W. B. Langmore, Esq., Dr. P. M. Latham, Sir J. McGrigor, Bart., Dr. J. A. Paris, Dr. Peacock, Dr. Pereira, Dr. Pettigrew, Dr. Prout, Dr. Toynbee, Dr. Wilke, Brasmus Wilson, Esq., Dr. Forbes Winslow, and many others of equal note.

In the provinces the following signed with many others:—Professor Adams, Dr. Aitken, Professor Alison, Dr. S. Beegle, W. Braithwaite, Esq., Dr. Buchanan, Dr. P. Crampton, Professor Curran, Dr. Keith, Sir H. Marsh, Dr. Q. E. Paget, Professor Pirrie, Professor J. Reid, Professor Syme, T. P. Teale, Esq., Dr. Andrew Wood, Dr. Wylie, etc.

The third declaration was issued in 1871 to the following effect:—

Declaration III.—"As it is believed that the inconsiderate prescription of large quantities of alcoholic liquids by medical men for their patients has given rise, in many instances, to the formation of intemperate habits, the undersigned, while unable to abandon the use of alcohol in the treatment of certain cases of disease, are yet of opinion that no medical practitioner should prescribe it without a sense of grave responsibility. They believe that alcohol, in whatever form, should be prescribed with as much care as any powerful drug, and that the directions for its use should be so framed as not to be interpreted as a sanction for excess, or necessarily for the continuance of its use when the occasion is past."

They are also of opinion that many people immensely exaggerate the value of alcohol as an article of diet, and since no class of men see so much of its ill effects, and possess such power to restrain its abuse, as members of their own profession, they hold that every medical practitioner is bound to exert his utmost influence to inculcate habits of great moderation in the use of alcoholic liquids."

"Being also firmly convinced that the great amount of drinking of alcoholic liquors among the working classes of this country is one of the greatest evils of the day, destroying—more than anything else—the health, happiness, and welfare of those classes, and neutralising to a large extent the great industrial prosperity which Providence has placed within the reach of this nation, the undersigned would gladly support any wise legislation which would tend to restrict within proper limits the use of alcoholic beverages, and gradually introduce habits of temperance."

This third declaration was signed by most of the leading consulting and hospital physicians and surgeons of the day.

It is now 17 years since the last declaration, 41 years since the second, and 49 since the first, and during this long period a vast amount of experience has accumulated, both as to the effects of alcohol, and as to the practice of abstinence, so that there should be no difficulty in determining whether the above declarations are correct or not.

It has seemed to the Council of the British Medical Temperance Association highly desirable, both for the credit of the profession and the advantage of the public, that these declarations should be reviewed, and their statements confirmed or denied, according to the judgment of the medical authorities of the present day.

I beg, therefore, respectfully to submit these declarations to your notice, and ask you to be kind enough to sign and return the enclosed form, if your experience and observation enable you to endorse them.—I am, etc., J. JAMES RIDGE, Honorary Secretary British Medical Temperance Association.

REQUESTS AND DONATIONS.—Mr. George Cope, J.P., of Woolton, Liverpool, has bequeathed £5,000 to the Woolton Convalescent Institution.—The Baroness de Stern has given £1,000 to the London Hospital.