

BRANCH MEETINGS TO BE HELD.

NAME OF BRANCH.	PLACE OF MEETING.	DATE.
METROPOL. COUNTIES. [Annual.]	Crystal Palace, Sydenham.	Tuesday, July 2nd, 3 P.M.
WEST SOMERSET. [Annual.]	Langport Arms Inn, Langport.	Wednesday, July 3.
CAMBRIDGE AND HUNTINGDON. [Annual.]	County Hospital, Huntingdon.	Wednesday, July 10, 2 P.M.
BATH AND BRISTOL. [Annual.]	Bristol Institution, Park Street.	Wedns. July 10, 3 P.M.

MEDICAL BENEVOLENT FUND.

THE Annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 9th, 1861, at 3 o'clock P.M., at Mr. Churchill's, New Burlington Street, for the purpose of receiving the Annual Report and Financial Statement, electing the Committee, etc.

The South-Eastern Branch of the British Medical Association has recently forwarded a second donation of Ten Guineas to the Fund.

The North Wales Branch has just sent a donation of Five Guineas.

Correspondence.

IMAGINARY SPERMATORRHOEA.

LETTER FROM R. DAWSON, EXT.L.R.C.P.

SIR,—I think if you had waited for my reply, published in the *Lancet* of last week, to the charge contained in Dr. Chambers's Clinical Lecture, you would not have given insertion to the letter of M.D., Univ. Edin., M.R.C.S., L.S.A., in your JOURNAL of 22nd of June.

I am totally unacquainted with the writer of that letter, unless it be a Mr. C—, who consulted me ten years ago, and who at that time was in the legal, and not in the medical, profession. Assuming that this is the same person, I never received a farthing from him after he became a medical student, although he frequently consulted me. By his own statement, it appears he was under my care from Oct. 1851, to June 1855; and, during that time, the whole amount of the fees paid to me was not more than £28. It was I who recommended him to study medicine, in order that he might satisfy himself that the view I took of his case was the correct one. He went to Edinburgh at my recommendation, and also to Germany. I have letters from him during his residence at both these places, which would shew the case in a very different light from that in which he now wishes to represent it. It is now two years since the same person commenced an action against me for the repayment of the £28 fees, which he dared not continue. At that time I was seriously unwell; and, although ordered to leave in October for Nice, I remained in England, at considerable personal risk, until January of last year, and would admit of no compromise of the case. Since that time I have not heard anything more from him or his solicitor, except, when the latter was applied to for his client's address, he stated that he did not know where to find him. Why, let me ask, if this person had any charge to bring against me, did he allow so many years to elapse before I heard from him? and why, if he could substantiate his charge, did he not proceed with his action, and not abandon it when he was confident of success? The facts speak for themselves, and require no comment from me. Who can be safe if, after the lapse of so many years, such disgraceful charges are permitted to be circulated, reflecting discredit and dishonour upon professional character and reputation?

I must appeal to your sense of justice, to insert my reply in your next publication.

I am, etc.,

R. DAWSON.

15, Finsbury Circus, June 25th, 1861.

PROFESSIONAL INTERCOURSE WITH HOMŒOPATHS.

LETTER FROM GEORGE MAY, JUN., ESQ.

SIR,—In 1858, the Reading Branch of the British Medical Association resolved that its members would "discountenance and cease to recommend those medical practitioners who were known to consult with homœopaths." It having been reported to me that Mr. Samuel Lane had consulted with a homœopathic practitioner in Reading, I shall feel obliged by your publishing the inclosed letter.

I am, etc.,

GEORGE MAY, JUN.,

Hon. Sec. Reading Branch Brit. Med. Association.

Reading, June 25th, 1861.

"DEAR SIR,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, informing me of the resolution come to by the Reading Pathological Society on the subject of physicians and surgeons meeting homœopathic practitioners in consultation, and stating that my name had been mentioned as a surgeon who had done so.

"In reply, I beg to inform you that, in the course of last year, I was consulted at my own house by a patient residing in Reading, who was suffering from stone in the bladder. I was afterwards introduced by him to Dr. Guinness, as his ordinary medical attendant. I had no previous knowledge whatever of the latter gentleman. I visited my patient at Reading several times, and performed the operation of lithotomy. The case was treated by me in conjunction with Dr. Guinness; and the remedies which I thought it necessary to suggest were supplied in the usual doses, without any comment or objection on the part of either Dr. Guinness or of the patient. Nothing was said by either the one or the other, which could lead me to suppose that Dr. Guinness was in the habit of treating this or any other patient on homœopathic principles; nor had I the slightest suspicion that such was the case.

"I have always refused to meet homœopathic practitioners, and shall continue to do so; believing as I do that those who adopt a contrary course of conduct are guilty of a dereliction of duty to the patient, to the public, and to the profession.

"May I request you to lay this letter before the Reading Pathological Society, and to give it any kind of publicity that may be thought desirable.

"I am, dear sir, faithfully yours,

"SAMUEL A. LANE.

"1, Grosvenor Place, S.W., June 21, 1861."

HOMŒOPATHY IN VOLUNTEER COMPANIES.

LETTER FROM JOHN W. HAYWARD, M.D.

SIR,—In his letter in your JOURNAL of the 15th inst., Mr. Bickerton says of the homœopathic medical officers of Liverpool volunteer corps that "had they possessed the honesty to declare their belief and practice... they would never have had the honour of serving in Her Majesty's forces"; and he deeply regrets "that the lieutenant of the county should have been so much misled as even to sanction the very questionable propriety of submitting the name" of such to Her Majesty (!)

By the former expression he, of course, insinuates that they had the dishonesty to hide the nature of their belief and practice. Now this is a charge which I call upon him to substantiate, if he has the honour of a professional man. There are, I believe, only two homœ-

opathic practitioners attached to the Liverpool volunteer service; and I can answer for one that his belief and practice were publicly and freely declared, and this declaration sent to the lord-lieutenant. His second charge is that the lord-lieutenant was "so much misled." Now, by whom was he misled? Mr. Bickerton ought to state against whom he makes this charge, that they may have the opportunity of clearing themselves of such imputation. I am sorry Mr. Bickerton should have lost his temper, as well as some patients, by these "irregular (!) practitioners."

He says further that "it is upon the individuals who forwarded the names of homœopathic practitioners to the lord-lieutenant that the odium should fall." Now, it was his own "liberal-minded and noble colonel, Wm. Brown," that forwarded the name, at least in one case, and that after the special declaration of the belief and practice of the party concerned.

He speaks of "coercion in the medical department of the brigade." What does he mean? and where is the coercion? against whom is this charge made?

He speaks too of "legitimate (!) medicine." What is legitimate medicine? In Italy it is bleeding Cavour to death; in England it was bleeding Byron to death, in the same way, under similar circumstances. What is it now? and what will it be next century?

He says it is "weak minded to serve in company with a homœopath." So the Italian physicians considered it to consult with an antiphlebotomist; thence the murder of Cavour.

I am, etc.,

JOHN W. HAYWARD, M.D., M.R.C.S., L.S.A.,
Hon. Ass. Sur. 66th Lan. R. V.

Vernon House, Liverpool, June 21, 1861.

[Our correspondent, in speaking of Byron, doubtless alludes to the bleeding which he sustained from the Jews and money-lenders in England. Of course, he is aware that Byron died in Greece. EDITOR.]

FEEES OF ASSURANCE OFFICES.

LETTER FROM R. GILLARD, ESQ.

SIR,—I forward you a letter from Mr. Francies, the manager of the North of England Branch of the English and Irish Church and University Life Assurance Society at Leeds.

In March last, I received from a patient three blank forms for medical reports, desiring that I would examine and report on three lives for the office mentioned. I did so, and sent the reports to the district agent, who thereupon sent me a guinea, saying it was for my medical reports for these three cases. I thereupon wrote to the agent, saying that the lowest fee I ever took was half a guinea for each examination and report. At the end of a fortnight, having received no answer, I wrote a second letter, reiterating my demand. At the end of a month I had an answer, saying that my first had been sent on to Mr. Francies, the branch manager at Leeds; but that *their office gave no more for two examinations on a joint policy than for one*. Obtaining no satisfaction, I wrote Mr. Francies a full account of the transaction, renewing my protest; saying that, if insurance offices choose to make such unfair rules, the least they could do was to give information beforehand to medical men; and I thought no respectable practitioner would undertake to act for them on such terms. Receiving no answer, I wrote him again, adding that, for the information of my medical brethren, I was about to publish a full account of the whole transaction in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL. This time I got an answer, which I inclose. I cannot but consider it a libel on my professional brethren. Most of the medical men in Leeds twelve years since I knew well; for at that time I was the resident medical

officer of the Leeds Fever Hospital; and I cannot believe, without further proof, that there are men who would take a half-crown fee for examining a life and reporting on it for life assurance. Mr. Francies even goes so far as to say that there are legally qualified men who *take shilling fees*. This I cannot believe. At any rate, I have never taken a less fee than half a guinea, and I do not mean to begin.

I am, etc.,

R. GILLARD.

Hovingham, York, June 11th, 1861.

The following is the reply of the manager of the English and Irish Church and University Assurance Society, Leeds:—

"The two small cases you examined were what we term industrial cases—viz., a joint life for £50, for which I sent you 10s. 6d. In Leeds, where our surgeons examine a large number of these industrial cases, we only pay 2s. 6d. each. Many offices only pay 1s. each; and the amount I sent was very nearly 25 per cent. on the first year's premium. In general business, we pay—Single lives, £100 to £500, 10s. 6d.; £500 and upwards, £1:1. Joint lives, £100, 10s. 6d.; £200 to £500, £1:1; £500 and upwards, £2:2."

[It is most unfair for the manager of an assurance office to offer less than the usual fee to any professional man, not their own medical officer, for examining a life for assurance. In manufacturing districts like Leeds, where so many small assurances are effected, it is clearly the duty of the directors to have the lives examined by their own medical officer, and to pay him a proper salary for the work done. EDITOR.]

ON LACERATION OF THE PERINÆUM.

LETTER FROM GRALLY HEWITT, M.D.

SIR,—I beg permission to make a few remarks in reply to Dr. Gray's criticisms on my papers on the "Perinæum."

Dr. Gray appears to imagine that I assume the originality of the incision treatment in cases of impending laceration. I assume no such thing; as the following quotation from my paper will demonstrate:—"Experience has shown," I remarked, "that incisions thus made subsequently heal with great rapidity." The treatment is not peculiar to Scotland, and Dr. Gray is not seemingly aware of the fact that Dr. Blundell long ago recommended and practised the procedure in question.

I never said that Dr. Leishman was the *originator* of the idea of retarding the progress of the head by opposing the fingers inserted within the vagina directly against the foetal head.

Dr. Gray considers that I have overlooked the point that every perinæum is not alike in its anatomical relations. I would call his attention to the following passage in my paper, which he appears to have overlooked:—"There are a few cases in which the condition of the vaginal outlet is such that laceration may be considered to be almost inevitable. I refer to cases where the vaginal outlet is *congenitally very small*." (BRIT. MED. JOURN., p. 462.)

Dr. Gray's statement in reference to the main question do not come in the shape of argument, and, therefore, call for no reply. I am, however, at a loss to conceive how it is possible to "adopt a middle course" between supporting the perinæum and *not* supporting the perinæum, which is the conclusion Dr. Gray's remarks would lead the reader to infer that he has arrived at.

I am, etc.,

GRALLY HEWITT.

36, Berkeley Square, June 23rd.