

## BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION. SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1898.

SUBSCRIPTIONS to the Association for 1898 became due on January 1st. Members of Branches are requested to pay the same to their respective Secretaries. Members of the Association not belonging to Branches are requested to forward their remittances to the General Secretary, 429, Strand, London. Post-Office Orders should be made payable at the General Post Office, London.

# British Medical Journal.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22ND, 1898.

## THE LEAGUE AND THE LAW.

THE action of some magistrates under Clause 2 of the new Vaccination Act, in their endeavour to satisfy themselves as to the reality of objection, has incidentally caused the President of the Antivaccination League to present himself before the public in an attitude which many people would hardly have expected of him. Antivaccination in the past has prided itself on its defiance of the law, and imprisonment has been looked on as bringing with it all the glories of martyrdom. Now, however, that the law is altered and that some magistrates are unable to see eye-to-eye with Major-General Phelps in his interpretation of Clause 2, that warrior's attack on the said magistrates as law breakers lacks nothing in the way of vigour, though it seems to indicate some want of humour. He complains in a letter to the newspapers that many magistrates "refuse to carry out the law," and, indeed, that they "behave as anarchists on the Bench, and, setting themselves above the law, go outside the simple provisions of the conscience clause." "Such defiance of law and justice" he declares to be "intolerable," and he asks whether magistrates imagine they will be able to fine "the victims of their lawlessness owing to their want of certificates." Satan reproving sin cannot hold a candle to the President of the Antivaccination League when he gives himself rein in the way of objurgation and denunciation. If antivaccination disapproves of a law, it is among the highest of human duties to defy that law, but if any law, or any particular clause of a law, or any particular interpretation of any clause, recommends itself to antivaccination as embodied in the President of the League, that law, or clause, or interpretation must forthwith be accepted and adhered to by all magistrates everywhere, under the penalty of drawing down on their devoted heads the wrath of Major-General Phelps. No doubt the crime is a terrible one, and no doubt also, in Gilbertian phrase, the punishment suits the crime.

So far the President of the League. He writes, as we have above quoted, to the public prints and to the man in the street; and he writes, as we have seen, in objurgation, almost in imprecation, of law-breakers. But there is another audience besides the man in the street. There is the antivaccinationist, the reader of the *Vaccination Inquirer*. What advice does he get regarding obedience to the new law? Is he told that a man who tries to set aside the Act is an anarchist, and that such lawlessness is

intolerable? Let us see. In the October issue of the recognised organ of the League which has Major-General Phelps for its President there is an article entitled "Our Policy." Here is a quotation from it: "Places where we have already secured the election of good men and true, who will not consent to prosecute in any case, are places where *the new law must be simply disregarded* even as was the old. And this *disregard of the law must be our goal for every place.*" The italics are ours. The article proceeds thus: "The political position is clear—the enemy have no more right to make us ask their leave to keep our children unvaccinated than we have to make them ask our leave to vaccinate their own children." The President spoke of the new law as the work of "The Legislature," but the editor of the *Inquirer* says nothing of "The Legislature." He is talking to his fellows, and his phrase is "the enemy."

The President's vituperation of the magistrates refers especially to Clause 2, which deals with the granting of certificates to conscientious objectors. What says the editor to his audience of conscientious objectors? "For the citizens of such a town as Leicester, for instance, to appear in the courts to get certificates of exemption would, in our judgment, be a most foolish waste of the fruits of victory." The advice deliberately given to conscientious objectors by the official *Journal* of the League is that they should not obey the new law, but that "disregard for the law" should be their "goal for every place," and at the same time the official head of the League writes to the newspapers which are widely read by the public at large, declaiming against magistrates for their alleged "refusal to obey a law which is distasteful to them."

We commend these things to Mr. Chaplin and his colleagues in the Government as a study preparatory to their drafting of the Revaccination Bill, which they have practically promised for the coming session. They ought frankly to recognise the professional antivaccinationist as an irreconcilable, and their sole object should be to take, altogether independently of any hope of propitiating him, such steps as are best calculated, in the circumstances and under the political constitution of the kingdom, to promote the practice of vaccination and revaccination throughout the realm.

## THE FIGHT AGAINST TUBERCULOSIS.

WE called attention last week to the report of the Public Health Committee of the London County Council recommending the Council to take steps for safeguarding the meat and milk supply of the metropolis, and to accept the responsibilities which would fall upon it in carrying out the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis. We are now able to announce that the city of Manchester has already resolved to take action in this matter, and has instructed the Town Clerk to apply to Parliament for powers for dealing with the milk supply similar to those obtained by Glasgow as long ago as 1890. The legislation sought includes power to enter cowsheds, whether within the city or elsewhere, which furnish milk for sale within the city, and to examine any cow in order to determine whether it suffers from any diseases which render the milk dangerous or injurious to health. It would further be enacted that every dairyman or keeper of a cow-

shed whose milk is sold within the city, who, after official intimation to him that any cow in his possession kept for the supply of milk for human consumption suffers from tuberculosis or any disease which might render the use of such milk dangerous or injurious to the health, shall retain such cow in his possession, shall, unless the contrary be proved, be presumed to have sold the milk produced by such cow for human consumption, and shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding £5. A penalty not exceeding £10 would be incurred by any person who sold, or suffered to be sold, or suffered to be used for human consumption, the milk of any cow suffering from tuberculosis or any disease which might render the milk dangerous or injurious to health. This action has been taken as the result of an investigation into the infectiveness of milk brought into the city of Manchester. In consequence of recent increase of knowledge with regard to the dissemination of tuberculosis by milk, and in particular of a report made by Professor E. W. Hope, Medical Officer of Health for Liverpool, who by a special inquiry had ascertained that 2.8 per cent. of samples of milk from cowsheds in Liverpool, and 29.1 per cent. of samples taken at railway stations contained the infection of tubercle, Dr. Niven took steps to put the matter to the test with regard to milk sold in Manchester. The experimental inquiry was undertaken by Professor Delépine, who gave some of its results in his address at Sudbury, which was reported in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of September 24th. Out of 93 samples of milk taken at random at the railway stations in Manchester, no fewer than 17, or over 18 per cent., proved to be tuberculous. The Sanitary Committee, in consultation with the medical officer of health, then instructed Mr. King, the chief veterinary surgeon of the Manchester Corporation, to investigate the condition of the cows at the farms from which the infectious milk came. His report confirmed Professor Delépine's results in a remarkable manner. He was able to make investigations at sixteen of the seventeen farms, and on fourteen one or more cows were found to have udders which were indurated, and therefore presumably tuberculous. With regard to the other two farms, it cannot be assumed that the cows were free from tuberculosis, for, as Dr. Niven pointed out in his report to the Committee, an udder may be tuberculous and yet give no palpable indications of disease: thus in one case in which a cow was subjected to the tuberculin test, the udder, which had not previously been found to be tuberculous, gave a marked local reaction.

There can be no doubt that the example set by Glasgow, now followed by Manchester, and, it is to be hoped, about to be followed by London also, will not only have an important effect in diminishing the prevalence of tuberculosis in these cities, but will also have a great influence upon public opinion and upon the Legislature. The subject is discussed from the point of view of the veterinary surgeon in the current number of the *Journal of Comparative Pathology and Therapeutics*. Here, while the importance of milk as an agent for disseminating tuberculosis to man is not lost sight of, stress is laid upon the fact that the disease in cattle is a contagious malady which is detracting from the legitimate profits of agriculture, and to that extent interfer-

ing with national prosperity. At the same time the opinion is expressed that there is on the part of farmers and cattle owners no very ardent desire that the Board of Agriculture or local authorities should put in force the measures necessary to eradicate the disease. Farmers and butchers express great dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs; but the only remedy which they suggest is compensation for losses incurred through the condemnation of tuberculous carcasses. Short of State intervention, however, our contemporary supports the opinion which we have ventured to express on previous occasions that much is to be expected from a more enlightened opinion among the owners of dairy herds. If, our contemporary writes, "the owner of a tuberculous herd suffers losses so slight that he feels it would not be worth while to buy tuberculin and employ his own veterinary surgeon in order to put a stop to them, the case is hardly one demanding State assistance. On the other hand, if anyone is now experiencing serious loss from tuberculosis among his cattle, it may fairly be said that the fault is his own."

If Manchester has been wise enough to place itself in the van of reform of the struggle against tuberculosis in one direction, there seems to be reason to hope that Liverpool will in another part of the field of battle shortly set an example which it is to be hoped will be followed by other communities. Our Liverpool correspondent gives this week some particulars of the scheme which is now under the consideration of the guardians of the West Derby Union, who are responsible for the care of the sick poor of a very large district at Liverpool. Dr. Nathan Raw, Medical Superintendent of the great Millroad Infirmary, Liverpool, which is maintained by this Board of Guardians, recently called the attention of his Board to the very large number of cases of tuberculosis which have to be dealt with every year, and to the disappointing results of treatment in a general infirmary. He pointed out that the only hope of recovery to poor persons suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis was their removal from city dwellings where the conditions favourable to recovery cannot exist, into a purer and healthier atmosphere, and therefore urged the establishment of a sanatorium in some suitable locality in the country, where facilities could be afforded for carrying out the open-air treatment of cases in the earlier stages, when there is a reasonable hope of permanent recovery.

Experience has shown that patients suffering from tuberculosis of the lungs as a rule readily submit themselves to the discipline necessary in such a sanatorium, and that they quickly appreciate that the precautions enforced are beneficial to themselves as well as advantageous to others.

Dr. Raw rightly laid stress on the fact that by withdrawing the sufferers from their homes a source of danger to others would be removed, and as a necessary corollary he advised that patients chargeable to the guardians and suffering from the disease in an advanced stage should be removed to a properly-conducted sanatorium where the risk of infection of others would be minimised if not entirely obviated, and where perchance some of the unfortunate sufferers themselves might ultimately recover. Very much is to be expected from a well-organised attempt to deal with consumption in the poorer classes on



these lines, and there seems no legal reason why the guardians should not take this step. In the interest of the country at large, as well as of the poor at Liverpool, it is sincerely to be hoped that Liverpool will set an example in this matter, for its action will have a great influence on the future developments of our efforts to combat tuberculosis in all its forms.

### ORGANOTHERAPY IN DIABETES.

WITH the discovery of the value of the thyroid treatment in cases of suppression of the functional activity of the thyroid gland, a new hope arose that some other grave and hitherto intractable diseases might be favourably influenced by treatment based on similar lines. Diabetes was one of the diseases to which early attention was given in this regard. Experiment has distinctly proved that extirpation of the pancreas in certain animals will surely produce diabetes, and morbid anatomy has equally demonstrated that in at least one class of cases of human diabetes a total disorganisation of the pancreas has sometimes been found; thus it appeared that diabetes might be due to the suppression of some function of this organ, and this apart from the mere secretion of pancreatic juice. It was therefore hoped that pancreatic feeding might supply the deficiency in the same way as thyroid feeding had so distinctly supplemented the functions of the thyroid body. These expectations have not, however, been realised, and with few exceptions the treatment of diabetes proved to be of the pancreatic variety by feeding with pancreas has ended in disappointment.

Dr. Ferdinand Blumenthal<sup>1</sup> has recently endeavoured to throw light on the causes of the failure of this treatment of diabetes, and to indicate the lines of investigation to be pursued in the future. The gist of the whole question obviously lies in the discovery of the active principle of the pancreas, the absence of which is believed to lead to the development of the pancreatic form of diabetes. Experiment renders it probable that this active principle is a glycolytic ferment distinct, as the researches of Blumenthal himself as well as others show, from the oxidative ferment. On this supposition, a rational treatment of diabetes would consist in supplying this ferment in cases in which it was absent through disease of the pancreas. This ferment may be destroyed by various secretions, such as those of the stomach, or it may be insufficiently absorbed from the bowel. In such cases the use of pancreatic gland tissue containing active glycolytic ferment would be rendered nugatory. Or, again, glycerine or saline solution may fail to extract the glycolytic ferment from the pancreas, with the consequence that sometimes an inefficient preparation may have been used in treating diabetes by the subcutaneous method.

It is not assumed that this glycolytic ferment is exclusively manufactured in the pancreas, and hence the treatment would apply to cases of diabetes not necessarily of pancreatic origin. Professor v. Leyden saw a case of diabetes markedly improved by the use of the juice expressed out of the pancreas, and Blumenthal, availing himself of Leyden's suggestion, has been able to prepare

the glycolytic ferment in considerable quantities. Thus under a pressure of 70 to 100 atmospheres he was able to obtain from 500 g. of pancreas 100 to 250 c.cm. of fluid rich in ferment. This fluid can be kept under ice for more than ten weeks without the addition of any antiseptic. The sugar solutions used for testing this ferment must, of course, be sterile. Blumenthal mentions that alcohol does not destroy the ferment if left in contact with it for only a few hours, and that hence the ferment may be obtained in a dry form. A difficulty, however, lies in the administration of the glycolytic ferment, since it is extremely poisonous when given subcutaneously to rabbits, and dilution does not overcome these deleterious properties. The author says that the task of finding an efficient and harmless glycolytic ferment prepared either from the substance of organs or from plants must remain a problem of the future.

These researches will be watched with interest, but it must not be forgotten that Minkowski failed to benefit de-pancreatised dogs by the hypodermic injection of pancreatic emulsion, and it has yet to be shown that Blumenthal's juice, although active *in vitro*, possesses therapeutic properties even in animals.

### SICKNESS IN THE KHARTOUM FORCE.

IN the early part of the month, the whole number of sick in the Citadel Hospital, Cairo, was 700, being all the sick out of a force of 12,000, with the exception of the last convoy of 50 men which arrived in Cairo on October 5th. The proportion is 6 per cent. Reports in private correspondence state that the sickness has been "fearful," although the papers, save the *Chronicle*, say little or nothing about it. The Cairo Hospital was so full about October 4th that most of the sick had to be put under canvas. The type of enteric fever was very severe, death occurring in some cases within three days of admission, and the bowels were found "riddled with ulcers." The dysenteric cases were also severe; and at Atbara, it is said, the Highlanders used to come into hospital "with the blood running down their legs under their kilts;" all this coming on very quickly—it is said within one day. The men of the Royal Army Medical Corps suffered much at Atbara from both enteric fever and dysentery, and the mortality was high. The mortality during the campaign from enteric fever (which is said to be following the troops to Crete) will probably be found, when full reports are received, to be excessive. Respecting the extensive diseased conditions found in cases of enteric fever of apparently short duration, the fact is well known in India. One example will suffice. The 2nd Queen's on first arrival—about 1878—in India from Malta, at a comparatively speaking healthy station (Bareilly), contributed some enteric cases to hospital which died in two, three, or four days after admission; occasionally three men died in twenty-four hours. On *post-mortem* examination an almost gangrenous condition of the bowel was discovered in these cases.

### THE ANTIVACCINATION AGITATION IN GLOUCESTER.

FOR some years Leicester enjoyed the reputation of being the Mecca of the antivaccination movement, and the late Mr. P. A. Taylor was its prophet. But of late the antivaccinators of Gloucester, incited, apparently, by the ambiguous notoriety conferred upon the city by the epidemic of two years ago, have been seeking to drag it still more prominently into the fierce light of public criticism. We have before us a copy of the last issue of the *Gloucester Journal*, which contains some suggestive reading to those

<sup>1</sup> *Zeitschr. f. diätetische und physikalische Therapie*, Bd. i, Hft. 3.

who are interested in studying what may be called the pathology of the vaccination question. From its columns we learn, in the first place, that at the approaching municipal elections in Gloucester the local antivaccinators intend to renew the efforts they have made at the two previous elections to capture the City Council. Dr. Hadwen, whose name is identified with the most thorough-going advocacy of the antivaccination cause, not merely in Gloucester but in other parts of the country, is to contest the Barton district, the largest of the city wards, as an "independent;" whilst Mr. S. Bland, for many years the president of the local antivaccination society, and who has publicly intimated recently that his vaccination during the epidemic was not to be taken as an indication of his conversion to a healthier frame of mind, is also announced as a candidate for election in the same ward. The City Council already contains some six or seven pronounced antivaccinators, to whom the balance of the two ordinary political parties in it at the present time gives a weight which they would not otherwise possess. We shall look, therefore, with some interest to see the result of this effort to assure the public that Gloucester has learned nothing from her terrible experience two years ago, and that a considerable number of her citizens are even more determined than they were before it to show to the world their contempt for the teachings of one of Gloucestershire's most illustrious sons. From another column of the *Gloucester Journal*, we learn that at a recent meeting of the antivaccinators of the city, held under the chairmanship of Dr. Hadwen, it was unanimously resolved not to avail themselves of the relief provided by the recent Act "whilst the magistrates (of Gloucester) maintain their present attitude." This "attitude" appears, from some very judicious editorial remarks in another part of the paper, to consist in a decision to require the personal attendance of the father, and not, as the Keighley Bench have decided, the mother, to claim the certificate of exemption; to require a certificate of the child's birth; that the simple declaration of belief shall, if made on oath or by affirmation, be held as "satisfactory"; and that the fee charged shall be 2s. It is unnecessary to discuss the merits of these decisions; it is sufficient to recognise that they represent a middle course between extremes which have been adopted in other parts of the country, and that they may well be defended on the score of moderation. Certainly no parent has a reasonable right to complain if required to obtain, by so small a personal sacrifice as these regulations entail, exemption from an obligation which Parliament has almost unanimously affirmed as generally expedient. In adopting this course the Gloucester antivaccinators have decided, as the editor of the *Gloucester Journal* points out, "to entirely ignore an Act which was passed by a large majority of the House of Commons, and, what is more important, against the conscience clause of which no word of protest was heard from any representative antivaccinator when it was finally before the House of Commons." The results of this policy will be, as our contemporary indicates, that on January 1st next "the Gloucester Board of Guardians will be confronted with as large a body of uncertificated defaulters as ever." If the guardians then fail to carry out their duties the *venue* of the case will be transferred to Whitehall. It will be well, therefore, for Mr. Chaplin to consider beforehand what course he will take when faced by this dilemma. The contention of the Gloucester antivaccinators that the Gloucester magistrates have imposed conditions upon conscientious objectors contrary to the provisions of the Vaccination Act is clearly not justifiable. The statement made by the chairman at the meeting in question that "they were not going to rest until the Vaccination Act was swept entirely off the British Statute Book" is a sufficient indication of the attitude of the leaders by whom the movement is dominated.

#### THE ANTIVIVISECTIONIST PROPAGANDA.

THE methods of the opponents of vivisection are well exemplified in the following letter, which has been circulated amongst various holders of licences under 39 and 40 Vict., c. 77:

Harewood House, Keyhaven, Milford-on-Sea,  
Hampshire, Oct. 17, 1898.

SIR,—The Home Secretary informs me that having, in the course of your work last year, applied for and obtained a certificate authorising experiments on dogs, etc., *without anæsthetics*, on the express ground that the experiments in question could only be so performed, you then, notwithstanding the certificate, performed them *under anæsthetics*, thereby plainly showing the incorrectness of the ground on which your application was based.

Please observe that the statement is Sir Matthew White Ridley's, not mine. And as it certainly appears to cast a serious slur either upon your good faith or your professional competence, I think it only right, before making use of it, to ask whether you admit its accuracy. If you do so, pray do not trouble to write. Silence will be taken as assent.

Your obedient servant,

The Editor *Verulam Review*.

The statements contained in this letter may be classed as inaccurate, misleading, and threatening. To drag the name of the Home Secretary into such a circular is misleading, for the facts are obtained from a printed paper to be purchased by anyone who is interested in the matter. The serious part of the letter is the absolute incorrectness of the implied charge of obtaining a licence to perform experiments without anæsthetics, and then violating the terms of the permit by administering an anæsthetic. The particular certificate to which allusion is made seems to be EE, which is issued with the following provision, that the experimenter "is duly authorised to perform on living animals certain experiments . . . such animals being, during the whole of the initial operation . . . under the influence of some anæsthetic of sufficient power to prevent their feeling pain," though it dispenses with the statutory obligation to kill the animal on which the experiment is performed before it recovers from the influence of the anæsthetic. It is clear, therefore, that every holder of this certificate is bound to perform the whole of the actual operation whilst the animal is anæsthetised, and if his experiment is to be successful he must see that the healing of the wound is aseptic. But it may be some time before the object of the experiment is attained, and it would be impossible to keep the animal in a condition of narcosis during the whole of this time. The irresponsible editor of the periodical in question, either ignorant of the terms of the licence, or too careless to ascertain them, impugns the good faith of the members of the medical profession who choose to devote themselves to advance their art by experimental methods. The minatory clause is too feeble to be worth notice.

#### THE TRAFFIC IN ABORTIFACIENTS.

A SINGULAR nemesis has overtaken a number of unfortunate women who have been duped into correspondence with an advertising vendor of so-called "female medicines." It appears that a man signing himself "Charles J. Mitchell" had obtained access to the list of customers of a person who some two years ago dealt in the "Lady Montrose Miraculous Female Tabules," advertised as a certain remedy for all female obstructions, etc. By the post of Saturday week typewritten letters were issued broadcast to women in all parts of the country who had had dealings with Montrose, purporting to be of an "official character," and announcing that legal proceedings had been commenced against them for committing, or attempting to commit, "the fearful crime of preventing, or attempting to prevent, birth." The letter went on to threaten arrest in each case unless on or before the following Tuesday postal orders to the amount of two guineas were received by Mitchell to cover legal costs, with "a promise in writing on oath as before God" never to repeat the offence! Fortunately some of the women addressed had the strength of mind to put the matter into the hands



of the police, and warrants were issued for the apprehension of Mitchell. No fewer than 600 letters from panic-stricken victims, each containing two guineas were in the course of two days intercepted at the office in Trafalgar Buildings, taken by Mitchell, who has himself disappeared. This nefarious attempt at blackmailing draws attention to the scandal of the publication by journals, professing to be respectable, of advertisements in which so-called remedies of an abortifacient character are offered for sale. A provincial contemporary remarks: "It is remarkable that certain well-known religious journals are the greatest offenders in this respect, and several of the intended victims of 'Charles J. Mitchell' admit having written for a medicine which they say was advertised in a religious print." It is true that the advertisements are sometimes couched in language of an ambiguous or a pseudo-medical character, but the suggestions which they imply are perfectly obvious, and ought to be brought within the purview of the criminal law. How far they may fall under the provisions of the Indecent Advertisements Act is a matter for the police authorities; but considering the damage to health, as well as to morals, that may occur to ignorant women duped by these advertisements, the question whether representations might usefully be made to the Home Secretary on the subject is worthy of consideration. The machinery of the Apothecaries' Act might perhaps be put in motion against the quacks who profess to give advice and supply medicines of the objectionable character advertised. An appeal to the good sense of newspaper proprietors ought, however, to suffice to suppress such advertisements, and has already been successful in more than one instance.

#### SPAIN AND THE MEDICAL STUDENTS OF HAVANA IN 1871.

DOCTOR ANTONIO GONZALO PEREZ, Doctor of Laws of the Havana University, in relating some episodes of the ten years' war (1868-78) in Cuba, which indirectly led to the outbreak of the war in 1895, alludes to the painful circumstances attending the shooting of some medical students in Havana city on November 27th, 1871. He states that of all the crimes committed by Spaniards in Cuba, this was perhaps the most conspicuously infamous, on account of the circumstances attending it. It had, it is alleged, its origin in the cupidity of the Governor, Lopez Roberts, who accused the students of having desecrated the tomb of a Spaniard, Gonzalo de Castañon, and of breaking the marble slab covering the place where his remains reposed. The accusation, according to Dr. Pérez, was a fabrication of the Spanish Governor's, for the purpose of obtaining money from the parents in order to secure the acquittal of the accused. But although large sums were afterwards offered, in order to save the lives of the victims, unforeseen events prevented the Governor from accepting them. The Governor had made a pretended investigation, which proved nothing. Notwithstanding this, forty-five students of the School of Medicine of San Dionisio, were ordered to be imprisoned. General Crespo, although aware of the innocence of the prisoners, but, acceding to the petition of a band of miscreants (the Army of Volunteers) ordered a court-martial, which acquitted the students. General Crespo, with reprehensible weakness, consented to allay the Volunteer agitation by ordering yet a new Court to assemble, which was partly packed by some six of the agitating Volunteers. This time no one could be found to defend the students, but neither could this Court agree as to the sentence to be passed. Eight students were shot, the youngest of them a boy of 16 years of age—while thirty-five were condemned to imprisonment in a penal settlement, and compelled to work with convicts, weighted with heavy chains. They were cruelly beaten and insulted by prison officials, by escorting soldiers, and by Spanish convicts deputed to supervise their allotted tasks. The

lengthy account of the whole of this business, with much else besides, tends to prove that treachery and brutality marked some of the dealings of the Spaniards with the Cubans. Those who desire to read more of the details of this painful affair are referred to the current number of the *United Service Magazine*, to which Dr. Gonzalo Pérez is contributing a series of papers.

#### LONDON SMOKE.

DURING the past few months the London County Council has been actively engaged in dealing with the smoke nuisance in London. In a recent report of the Public Control Committee will be found an account of the particular measures employed. Information of an offending chimney having been brought to the Council, either by the police or by one of their own officers, the sanitary authority of the district is at once communicated with. If it can succeed in bringing sufficient pressure to bear to abate the nuisance, well and good; if not, a summons is taken out. Unfortunately the latter resource has fallen into disrepute among sanitary authorities, for the magistrates have in many cases shown themselves unwilling to convict, and prone to make excuses for the defendants. In a few cases the Council has been obliged to declare the sanitary authorities in default, and to initiate proceedings in accordance with the Act, a method which seems to have been very efficacious, for the report adds that in no case was it necessary actually to issue a summons, as the nuisance was abated. We share the regrets expressed by the Committee as to the inactivity of the magistrates, for it is with these officers that the clearing of London's atmosphere rests. The whole question of smoke abatement is one of expense, and consequent reduction of profits. If a manufacturer is willing to pay a sufficient number of stokers smoke is abolished, for smoke means hurried and inefficient stoking. In only few cases it is not possible to control the smoke from factory shafts by care in putting the fuel to the fire. Where a range of boilers is left to one man it is impossible for him to put on the coal in small quantities and at frequent intervals, which is the secret of smoke prevention, he must perforce put all he can on to each furnace in turn, with the result that much smoke is produced.

#### UNIVERSITY COLLEGE MEDICAL SOCIETY.

THE Medical Society of University College, London, held its annual public night on October 19th. The meeting took place in one of the College lecture rooms, and after the President (Dr. H. Batty Shaw) and the Secretary (Mr. Bryan Reynolds) had formally disposed of the business, Professor F. T. Roberts addressed the meeting. Dr. Roberts possesses the power of teaching the most serious lessons in the most charming manner, and his whole address was colloquial and informal. At times it was difficult to follow him, for the frequent and prolonged laughter together with much cheering and clapping of hands interfered not a little with hearing. Taking for his subject the Personal Factor, he said that too little attention was paid to it in medical matters, although its importance could not be overestimated. In deciding to enter the profession the personal predilection was too often neglected, and a man found himself studying subjects for which he had no aptitude. Even when the student's career was ended and the student became a fully-qualified practitioner, it often turned out that, although a brilliant examination had been passed and the highest honours obtained, a man found himself set to do work for which he had no real inclination. Success in the medical profession could only be obtained by those who really worked for the sake of their liking for the work itself, and was not to be won by those who entered the profession on account of any facilities it offered for making an income. There was another class of men who having been successful in one branch of practice thought that they could be

equally so in any other branch, or who, having succeeded in one place considered themselves able to succeed in another under quite different conditions. It was not infrequent to find men leaving good country practices to come to London, fondly imagining they would carry all before them, and only finding out to their bitter cost that their individual personal factor, which was of service in the country, was of no use in the metropolis. Again, in the practical teaching of medical students, their individuality was too often not considered. They were not infants to have their food ready prepared and poured into them. At the present day there was far too much teaching on this system. Even in post-graduate teaching the fact was lost sight of that a medical graduate was an individual and not merely a recipient for previously digested facts. Dr. Roberts's description of the various types of medical practitioners was realistically put before his audience, the gist of his remarks being that over-estimation led to advertisement, whether in what might be called a professional or a non-professional manner. A common class of man was the theorist, who often in consequence called himself a pathologist. There was the writer of books and pamphlets, the dogmatic type, the egotistical type, and that most dangerous of all—the silent type of practitioner. Continuing in this strain, Dr. Roberts kept his audience in perfect, if noisy, good humour for considerably over an hour, when, changing his tone, he very seriously drew the moral of his address, and spoke very impressively of many of the present abuses of professional life, matters which had been already laughingly alluded to in his address. After the address there was an exhibition of medical and surgical instruments. Professor Ramsay also demonstrated the spectra of the gases most recently discovered by him.

#### THE GUILD OF ST. LUKE.

THE thirty-fourth annual medical service of St. Luke took place at St. Paul's Cathedral on Wednesday evening. Over 1,000 medical men were present, and a large number of ladies also attended. Dr. E. Symes Thompson, Provost of the Guild, Mr. C. D. Marshall, and Dr. S. Russell Wells, Registrar, represented the Executive Committee. The passage up the centre of the nave was lined on each side by Volunteers from the London Companies of the Volunteer Medical Staff Corps, under Captain Rawnsley. The musical portion of the service was rendered by the London Gregorian Choral Association, under the direction of Dr. Warwick Jordan, honorary organist to the Association; and the organ was in parts supplemented by silver trumpets. Service began by a long procession of medical men, mostly in their Doctors' robes, and a few medical ladies, from the west end of the nave to their seats under the dome; then followed choristers, clerical associates of the Guild, the clergy of St. Paul's, and the Bishop of London, preceded by the episcopal staff. The hymn "Christ is made the sure Foundation," from the Salisbury Hymnal, was sung as the procession advanced. Several members of the Court of Common Council, and representatives of the Apothecaries' and other City Companies were seated in the choir. The service was conducted by the Rev. C. Kelly, Minor Canon. The Psalms and Lessons were those appointed for evening prayer of St. Luke's Day. "O Christ, Thou Lord of the worlds!" was rendered as the office hymn; and Luther's "Now thank we all our God" was sung before the sermon, which was preached by the Bishop of London from the text (Epistle to the Philippians, iii, 21): "Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." Dr. Creighton said that there were two conceptions of the body, the one that of the man who simply served it; the other the right one, that of the man who regarded it as the body of our humiliation, but capable of change to a higher condition. The Revised Version used the phrase "the body of our humiliation," and the form "vile body" used in the

Authorised Version was a proof of the way in which the true view of the body was overlooked for so many ages. In their desire to rise above the difficulties under which they felt life was lived, men had despised the body because they were ignorant of its powers, functions, and connections with their inner selves. As anatomy and biology had succeeded in revealing the true functions of the body, mankind had got back again in some degree to the true, profound, and noble view of the body and its place which was expressed in St. Paul's words. They who were concerned with the human frame knew well both its limitations, failures, and frailties, and its inherent dignity, nobility, beautiful adaptation to purpose, and splendid capacities. Man at his worst they saw often, but it was given them also to see man at his best. Their ideal was not to be found here and now, but in the body of His glory. There was a time when science mocked at the possibility of this, but that was changed now, and a great biologist had said that if there was a resurrection it must be a resurrection of the body. Body and spirit were so intimately connected that the one could not be conceived as existing in a perfect state without the other. Law was constantly broken by man's perversity, and man had to be taught the law, written in his members, of what he might do and what he might not do. The indomitable soul through affliction could rise to the highest flight of heroic self-abnegation. They must always endeavour to inculcate self-control, and thus raise men from their original low state. The Bishop ended by an appeal on behalf of the Medical Missionary Fund of the Guild, which he said would prove of incalculable good in the field of mission work. The medical missionaries would teach men by their example and precept that the body was capable of being raised to a high point of glory. Whilst the offertory was being taken, the hymn "Light's abode, celestial Salem" was sung, and after the blessing by the Bishop the recessional "O what their joy and their glory must be" and "To the name of our Salvation," brought the service to a close.

#### EXERCISE AND OVER-EXERCISE.

DR. LAUDER BRUNTON opened the session of the York Medical Society last week by an address on Exercise and Over-exercise, in which, as was to be expected, he said a great many wise things with which every physician will agree. He said, for instance, that exercise which put into action every muscle of the body, but did not put any one into action for too great a length of time at once, or in too violent a manner, was exceedingly beneficial, but in applying this excellent principle he had the temerity to compare unfavourably with lawn tennis the three most popular physical recreations of the day—cricket, golf, and cycling. Moreover, he classed together croquet, cricket, and golf—rather a curious collocation—on the ground that in playing them there was not the same general movement of the whole body that was necessary in lawn tennis or polo. As to croquet all will probably be ready to agree, but as to cricket and golf, it is not likely that their devotees will be disposed to accept Dr. Brunton's rather sweeping assertion. What muscles of the body are brought into play in lawn tennis which are not brought into play by, say, a fast bowler, we should be rather curious to know; and as to golf, the distribution of the stiffness after a day's play in a man out of condition and practice leads at least to the suspicion that very few muscles in the body have not been called into action. As to cycling, Dr. Lauder Brunton said that it tended to narrow the chest and to cause more or less a permanent stoop. He added that, as it had become so very general an amusement, its effects on the body as compared with those of other physical exercises must be very carefully watched. Like most of us, Dr. Brunton has been struck by the fact that the girl of the period tends to be most divinely



tall, and he seems disposed to put this down to the great popularity of lawn tennis a few years ago. It is certainly a pity that this very excellent game appears to be going out of fashion owing to the great popularity of cycling, which we should be disposed to agree with Dr. Brunton is not an exercise so well calculated to produce an all-round development of the muscular system. Although he spoke in faint praise of cricket and golf, he admitted that they shared with tennis one essential feature of a good game—intermittent action of many groups of muscles. Passing on to speak of over-exercise, he observed that what was sufficient exercise for the muscles might be over-exercise for the heart, so that schoolboys ran a risk of injury if their athletic power were judged from their apparent size and strength and not according to the strength of the heart. Dr. Brunton then pointed out that a continuous strain upon one set of muscles was not only painful and exhausting but injurious, and illustrated this point very happily by referring to the fatigue experienced by men and women employed in shops who were compelled by custom to stand for many hours a day. He showed a rest by means of which a shopwoman could sit down and take the weight of the body off the legs, whilst movements behind the counter were hardly interfered with. The cause of the quickened breathing associated with muscular exertion was really the poisonous products formed by muscular action, and the shortness of breath was due to heart disturbance. Thus, in the case of growing boys, football or paper-chases might lead to distinct heart strain. Another factor which Dr. Brunton said must be regarded in exercises for boys and young men was that mental fatigue caused bodily exhaustion. If boys were pushed both at lessons and at exercises they were much more likely to break down than if they were pushed at one or the other alone. In adolescence the heart, like other muscles, though it was more easily strained, recovered more readily, and with moderate care would recover completely. In conclusion, Dr. Brunton dwelt on the important point that, while in middle life the heart was less liable to strain, yet as age advanced, and especially if the arteries became atheromatous, the heart was not only more easily affected by strain, but had less power of recovery—a fact which has its obvious bearing on the kind and amount of exercise which should be taken as age advances.

#### PRACTICE AS AN APOTHECARY.

THE proposition of the judge of the Greenwich County Court, laid down in the course of the hearing of a prosecution instituted by the Medical Defence Union, a report of which is published in another column, is, if we may assume the accuracy of the report of his remarks, one which appears to require some qualification. He is reported to have said that "an unqualified person can open a chemist's shop and sell medicines and be well within the law, provided no poisons are sold or treatment of patients undertaken." Now, in the first place, an unqualified person could not call himself a chemist; and, secondly, if a person not a chemist, and not otherwise qualified, sells medicines without a stamp, it is not improbable that the Inland Revenue authorities would have something to say in the matter. The question before the Court however, it seems to us, had nothing to do with the Pharmacy Acts or Patent Medicine Acts, but had reference solely to the fact whether there had been any infringement of the Apothecaries Act. The practice of an apothecary has been defined over and over again by eminent judges of the High Court. If an unqualified person prescribes for another person requiring medical treatment, and makes up and supplies the medicine, there is very little room to doubt that such unqualified person is acting contrary to the provisions of the Apothecaries Acts. According to the report the defendant had no qualification, and the evidence of Mr. T. W. Tyrrell

(unshaken on the point in cross-examination) went to prove that he had been treated for a cold and supplied with medicine for it. The report of the case does not contain the judge's summing up, nor probably all the facts, but, having regard to this evidence as reported, we venture to express the opinion that it would have been more satisfactory if the request for leave to appeal had been complied with.

#### EPSOM COLLEGE.

THE appeal from the Council of the Royal Medical Benevolent College, Epsom, which is published in another column, sets forth the objects of that excellent institution in a manner in which they have never before been presented to the profession. An unfortunate misconception prevails, even in quarters where a better knowledge of the facts might be looked for, that Epsom College is mainly a charity school, the benefits of which are confined to the families of members of the medical profession. It is well, therefore, that it should be made plain that Epsom College is a public school conducted on the lines of Winchester, Charterhouse, or Rugby, and, like them, giving a liberal education of the highest standard not only to the sons of medical men but to boys of all classes. The training, which is of the broadest kind, is intended to fit the pupils for the acquisition of the technical knowledge necessary for whatever profession they may choose as their business in life. The soundness of the education given at Epsom is sufficiently shown by the success of its pupils in competitions for open scholarships in classics and mathematics as well as in science at Oxford and Cambridge, and by the high position taken by many of them in after-life. No fewer than nine old Epsomians are at present teachers in metropolitan hospitals, and several more are teachers in provincial schools. The success of the school is further shown by its rapid growth in recent years, a growth which has made it necessary to build a junior school. But increase in size brings with it increase in requirements, and, besides, there is a "benevolent" part of the institution which has to be provided for. Like Eton, Winchester, and Charterhouse, Epsom has foundation scholars, but, unlike those historic schools, it has no permanent endowment. Hence arises the necessity of the appeal to the profession which we publish to-day. The foundation scholarships of Epsom, fifty in number, are reserved for sons of medical men. There is another charitable element in the institution which has a special interest for the medical profession. Pensions are provided for fifty aged medical men or widows of medical practitioners who are in need of such assistance. For these two classes of beneficiaries a sum of £6,000 has to be found each year. Of this sum not more than one-half is at present contributed by the medical profession. We are convinced that this can only be due to an imperfect appreciation on the part of medical men of the objects of Epsom College and of the precarious nature of the funds which the Council has at its disposal for the carrying out of these objects. The appeal has our hearty sympathy, and we hope that it may meet with a thoroughly satisfactory response.

#### SEPARATED CONDENSED MILK.

IN recent years the sale of condensed whole milk has suffered somewhat from the appearance on the market of "condensed skimmed milk" and condensed "separated milk." Whereas the former contains as a rule about 1 per cent. of fat, the latter has been robbed of practically the whole of its fat, so that commonly not more than 0.2 or 0.3 per cent. remains. The words "separated" and "skimmed" are frequently only to be discovered on the tins after a careful and painstaking search, and the consequence is that parents often purchase a product in the belief that it is condensed whole milk, which as a food for infants has

been robbed of a most valuable constituent. The Vestry of Camberwell has recently resolved to adopt the following recommendations of its Sanitary Committee, in order to check the purchase by ignorant parents of separated milk for infant feeding: (1) That the Government be asked to at once introduce a short Bill to deal with this serious danger, requiring that persons manufacturing or importing condensed milk should state in plain language on the outside of each tin, what quantity of the milk contained in the tin it would be necessary to use to obtain the full benefits derivable from a pint of new English milk. (2) That posters and bills be printed and circulated throughout the parish, and that the registrars of births be asked to hand to each person on registering a birth a handbill containing the above information.

#### THE ROYAL COLLEGES OF PHYSICIANS.

In accordance with custom the Harveian Oration was delivered on St. Luke's Day (Tuesday last) at the Royal College of Physicians of London by Sir Dyce Duckworth. The President, Sir Samuel Wilks, occupied the chair, and the officers and Fellows of the College, and the guests (amongst whom were Sir W. Mac Cormac and Canon Duckworth) made a large audience. The bust of Harvey was placed to the right of the Orator, whilst the splendid portrait of Harvey, which the College also possesses, was hanging in its usual position behind the President's chair. The oration, which is published in another column, was listened to with much attention and frequently applauded. On the same day Dr. John William Moore was elected President of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, an appointment upon which both Dr. Moore and the College are to be congratulated. Among the guests entertained by Dr. Moore and the Fellows at the annual banquet on the same evening were Mr. Horace Plunkett, M.P., Mr. J. H. Campbell, M.P., and the President of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

#### PROFESSOR VIRCHOW AT CLAYBURY.

Of the many things which Professor Virchow saw while he was in England, there was none, as we have reason to know, that interested him more than the pathological laboratory established by the London County Council in connection with the great asylum at Claybury. This laboratory, which was opened about two years and a half ago, was the first of its kind, and till the establishment of a similar one at Edinburgh for the Scottish asylums it was the only one in existence. Professor Virchow having expressed a wish to visit the laboratory, Dr. Mott, whose excellent work there has already more than justified its establishment, placed himself at his disposal for the purpose. On October 6th Professor Virchow, under the guidance of Dr. Mott and Dr. Forman, J.P., Chairman of the Pathological Subcommittee of the County Council, visited Claybury, and inspected not only the laboratory but the asylum. He was greatly struck by the liberality of the County Council in establishing so fine and so fully equipped a laboratory. He was particularly interested in the "cold chamber" for the preservation of pathological material, introduced by Dr. Mott, and adopted in the new laboratories at Liverpool. Professor Golgi, who visited the laboratory not long ago, also expressed his approval of the "cold chamber." Professor Virchow showed a keen interest in the researches now in progress in the laboratory, particularly those on the degeneration of the neuron after ligation of vessels, and on the large part played by syphilis in the pathogeny of general paralysis. The only fault which he had to find with the laboratory was its out-of-the-way situation, which made it less useful than it would be if it were in a central position. Professor Virchow expressed his admiration of the magnificent recreation hall of the asylum and of the park around the building. It may not

be out of place to recall the fact that the distinguished pathologist is an expert on the structure and management of lunatic asylums, a subject to which he gave much attention during his active career as a member of the Berlin Municipality. He was evidently greatly impressed with the public spirit and enlightened liberality of the County Councillors who give their services without remuneration, and show so just an appreciation of the value of pathological work. On leaving, Professor Virchow signed his name in a book recently provided as a record of the visits of distinguished persons. It is a good omen for the laboratory that the first signature should be that of the Father of Modern Pathology, who added the words *Gut Heil!* (good luck) to his name.

#### A SPECIAL PLAGUE COMMISSION IN INDIA.

It has been determined to appoint a Special Commission, to consist of five members, to conduct investigations regarding plague in India. The specific duty of the Commission will be to inquire into the origin of the various outbreaks of plague, and the manner in which the disease is spread. An official statement also is required as to the efficacy of the serum treatment and the prevention of plague by means of inoculation. So far as the nominations to serve on this Commission have been made public two Indian civilians, Messrs. J. R. Sewwett and A. Cumine, have already been appointed, but it is understood that three other members will be nominated by the Secretary of State for India to proceed from this country, of whom one will act as chairman while two will be experts. We congratulate the Indian Government upon the step they have taken, and hope that neither pecuniary considerations nor official prerogative will hamper the authorities in obtaining men of ability to take up the work. There is plenty of work for the Commission to do. Plague, as Dr. Simpson in his address at Edinburgh stated, has demonstrated the absolute necessity for a trained sanitary service for India, and although the intended Commission may work out the scientific bearings of the epidemic of plague, it must be remembered that plague is but one of the epidemics which ever threaten India. Plague is but an expression of the general insanitary state; and any Governmental inquiry which does not deal with the general relief of the insanitation of India will but touch the fringe of the evil. A Sanitary Service, complete in all its branches, administrative, investigative, and scientific, is required in India. The Commission about to take up its work may fulfil in some measure one of these—the investigative; but mere investigation, without a staff of local health officers, medical inspectors, and a full staff of "subordinates," can show but little practical results. If the Government of India have merely appointed this Commission to make inquiries into the question, we are afraid much valuable time is being wasted. In India at the present moment two or three dozen medical men are employed specially by the Government for plague work. We would recommend that these medical men, who have by this time become acquainted with what insanitation in India means, be enrolled as health officers, to carry out immediately the suggestions that may be made by the members of the Plague Commission. In this way a nucleus, at any rate, of a sanitary service for India would be formed and the recommendations of the Commissioners put into execution without delay.

#### FIRST AID BY RAILWAY MEN.

THE St. John Ambulance Association has been gradually spreading its influence in many directions, and it is the exception not to find one or more railway men at the stations and depôts of the United Kingdom wearing the medallion of the Association, which shows that they are competent to render first aid. From a paragraph which



recently appeared in a North of England daily newspaper, there seems to have been great activity in this direction among the men employed by the North-Eastern Railway, for at the West Hartlepool and Newcastle centres alone there were respectively 53 and 45 successful candidates at a recent examination, and there are nearly 4,000 men qualified to render first aid distributed throughout the system, and no fewer than 168 properly-equipped ambulance stations. That there is some use in it is shown by the fact that aid was rendered in some 2,451 cases in 1897, and 2,605 in the first half of the present year. Provided that those who are rendering first aid remember that they are not qualified medical men, and that they do not take unnecessary responsibility upon themselves in the way of treatment beyond the necessary first aid, the boon to the unfortunate individual who meets with an accident is very great. Timely aid intelligently given will often prevent a simple injury becoming a very serious one before the services of a medical man can be obtained.

#### THE ROYAL HOSPITAL, BELFAST.

THE winter session began on Tuesday, October 18th, when the inaugural address was delivered by Dr. W. Calwell, Assistant Physician to the hospital. After heartily welcoming both old and new students, he observed that in the early stages of their curriculum the dissecting-room and the physiological laboratory should chiefly engage their attention, but as time went on the circle of their studies would enlarge. Evolutional biology would give a greater breadth of view in their estimation of mankind, and would show them that man was but a link in the great chain of life, having affinities to the plant and the invertebrate, as well as to the higher forms. Each species had an average standard to which the individual tended to conform, and for everyone who rose above that standard there was someone who fell below it. Quick reformation, either among races or individuals, was usually unsuccessful, and involved the risk of checking growth and dwarfing the characteristics of the individual. It was clear that the elements of the savage were still strong, though latent, in the breast of civilised man, and were in many cases kept within bounds only by education and the firm administration of the law. The ordinary moral law received the strongest support from evolution. On this theory there was hope that the higher moral qualities—such as justice, honour, mercy, charity, toleration, and religion—were the latest manifestations of the evolutionary process, and hence capable of the greatest development. He concluded by some points of practical advice, and urged his hearers to be earnest in their work, to recollect the limitations of their period of study, to bear in mind that learning came by repetition, that the great secret of clinical proficiency was repeated careful examination. He quoted with approval two sayings—one by a former and the second by a present physician of that institution: "Examine, examine, examine," and "Never lose an opportunity of becoming a wiser man."

#### MEDICAL REGISTRATION IN CANADA.

A BRIEF reference was made in a report of the meeting of the Canadian Medical Association, published in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of September 15th, 1898, to a report of a committee on medical registration in the Dominion of Canada. It will be remembered that Dr. Roddick, in his address as President of the annual meeting of the British Medical Association at Montreal last year, called attention to the anomalous position in which medical registration was in Canada. When the British American provinces became federated in 1867 the control of educational affairs was taken away from the federal authorities and handed over to the provinces, each of which has legislated on the subject. In consequence there is practically no uniformity

in regard to the standard of study or qualification for practice. Each province has its own medical Board or medical council, which has the power to grant licences, either after examination or simply on presentation of the diploma of certain recognised universities. An examination is exacted in Ontario and British Columbia only. In this way not only are the provinces cut off from the rest of the empire, but they are also entirely separated from each other in this matter. One effect has been to prevent the recognition by the General Medical Council in this country of Canadian medical degrees, which cannot be registered upon the *Colonial Register*. The proposal now adopted by the Canadian Medical Association is the establishment of a Dominion Board to grant diplomas which shall be accepted throughout the whole of Canada after a uniform curriculum and identical examinations. A preliminary or matriculation examination, with a uniform standard should, it is suggested, be conducted by the various councils of the Education Department of each province, and should include English grammar, arithmetic, algebra, Latin, elementary mechanics, Canadian and British history, and either Greek, French, or German. Candidates producing evidence of having passed a satisfactory examination in these subjects would be excused the examination. It is further proposed that professional education should begin only after registration as a medical student, and should comprise a graded course of four years, consisting of four sessions of not less than eight months in each year, the subjects to be the ordinary subjects of medical education. It would also be required that the student should attend hospital practice for at least twenty-four months out of the period of four years. It is further proposed that the various provinces should at once proceed to enforce these regulations and to require all candidates to undergo examination before examiners to be appointed in each of the provinces by the respective medical councils. The various councils of the provinces of the Dominion are invited to secure legislation under which candidates passing the examination of their Provincial Board should be entitled to registration in the several provinces of the Dominion, and eventually to seek the establishment of a central qualification which shall place the profession of Canada upon an equal footing with that of Great Britain. Dr. Roddick has undertaken to bring the matter under the notice of the Dominion Parliament, and the Canadian Medical Association has appointed a committee to assist him in influencing the provincial councils and the Dominion Parliament to give facilities for the desired legislation. There can be, we presume, judging from the influential position which Dr. Roddick holds in the Canadian politics, little doubt that his efforts will be successful if they receive, as now appears probable, the support both of the medical councils of the provinces and of the medical profession throughout the Dominion.

#### CYSTS OF THE URACHUS.

THE literary history of diseases supposed to be rare is very instructive. A paper is read before a Society, or published in a medical periodical; it treats of some disorder, say, a tumour, hitherto but little known. Attention being turned to the subject, a number of such tumours are soon reported, and later on some observer finds that many of these later reports are untrustworthy. Then, again, some genuine samples turn up. Thus some twenty years since several instances of large cyst of the urachus were reported in Germany, but a few years later Wutz wrote to show that there was no evidence that any of these large cysts were urachal. Valuable reports on the same kind of tumour were published shortly afterwards by Mr. Lawson Tait, and important work in the same field was undertaken by certain American observers. Two cases of large urachal cyst underwent operation in 1897; the one formed the sub-

ject of a memoir read at a meeting of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society in May by Mr. Doran; the other was reported at the annual meeting of the American Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the operator being Dr. Douglas, of Nashville. The tenth volume of the *Transactions* of that Association, recently issued, contains an interesting discussion on Dr. Douglas's paper, tending to show that urachal cyst is not very rare, and that its surgical treatment demands some consideration. There is nearly always a train of nervous symptoms, with a feeling of discomfort in the lower part of the abdomen not observed in ovarian tumour. As to operating, the surgeon must feel sure that there is no open channel of communication between the cyst and the bladder. Dr. Ill, of Newark, once came across a case of this kind, and treated the open channel, which was, of course, part of the urachal canal, as though it were a vermiform appendix, the duct being cut very short, and the edges of its sheath closed by suture. This method is preferable to simple ligature, for experience shows that a thread may cut its way through the canal instead of bringing about its obliteration. The patient then suffers the misery of an abdominal urinary fistula. The great difficulty in respect to the actual removal of a urachal cyst is what to do with the peritoneum which invests its posterior aspect. In Douglas's case the cyst was enucleable, but the detached peritoneum sloughed. Dr. Vander Veer, of Albany, advocates the stitching of the omentum to the detached flaps to ensure its vitality. Dr. C. Reed, of Cincinnati, believes that the surgeon need not scruple to remove the flap if there be any trouble about it. When this is done, he facilitates the approximation of the cut edges of peritoneum by separating the serous membrane for about 2 inches behind and beyond the limits of the wound; then the edges will glide forwards and can be united with catgut, the endothelial surfaces being brought together. Altogether, however, opinion seemed to be in favour of the view that incision and gauze drainage is the best treatment for urachal cyst. Dr. Cushing was of that opinion, and Dr. Ill insisted that the surgeon should at least never attempt to remove an inflamed cyst. The adhesions between the inflamed tissue and the peritoneum are so intimate that separation is impossible, and when the cyst is inflamed the material is highly septic, and the patient's life will be endangered by such a manipulation. Free incision answers very well. The best results, we may add, followed incision in Doran's case as well as in one of Ill's which was reported in 1892. Lastly, if it be true, as Reed, of Cincinnati, asserted, that urachal cyst is not rare but includes, as far as operative surgery is concerned, all the cysts that are encountered in the abdominal wall, it follows that the disease must have been largely overlooked, and should, for reasons above explained, receive the serious attention of clinical observers and surgeons.

#### SIR JOHN BANKS, K.C.B.

SIR JOHN BANKS, K.C.B., Regius Professor of Medicine in the University of Dublin, has resigned that position, which he has held for many years with great distinction. The Board has accepted his resignation with an expression of deep regret. Sir Francis Cruise and Dr. J. M. Finny (King's Professor of Medicine in the Medical School) are mentioned as candidates for the office.

#### OUT-PATIENTS IN BIRMINGHAM.

SINCE the new buildings of the General Hospital, Birmingham, have been opened, the number of out-patients has, we are informed, increased so greatly as to become almost unmanageable, and to be a serious drain on the resources of the institution. The Committee of the hospital have, therefore, appointed an officer to investigate the circum-

stances of each new out-patient, and to keep a record of such investigation. This system is to be carried on for a period of four months, and the results thus obtained will then be taken into consideration as a guide to future arrangements.

DR. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, medical officer of health for Lambeth, has been appointed Teacher of Hygiene in the British Institute of Preventive Medicine.

WE are asked to state that after paying all expenses connected with the complimentary dinner to Professor Virchow the secretaries have a balance in hand of between £7 and £8. This they propose to hand over to the British Medical Benevolent Fund, of which Sir William Broadbent is the treasurer.

THE trooper of the 21st Lancers (Private Pedder), who was instrumental in saving the life of Major Pinches, R.A.M.C., it is reported, is recommended for the Victoria Cross. Major Pinches had one horse shot under him and another wounded. Private Pedder displayed great bravery in catching two stray horses amidst the der-vishes in order that Major Pinches might escape.

A REUTER's telegram dated Vienna, October 19th, states that a man employed in the General Hospital in Vienna died on October 18th in Professor Nothnagel's private hospital from bubonic plague. It is believed that the man became infected by handling cultures of the plague bacillus. The diagnosis in this case was established by the results of an examination of the sputum, which revealed the presence of the plague bacillus.

DR. T. GILBERT SMITH has been elected Chairman of Council of the Irish Medical Schools and Graduates' Association in succession to Dr. Phineas Abraham, whose three years' tenure of office terminated at the end of this month. Sir William MacCormac, Bart., K.C.V.O., will be the guest of the Association at the autumn banquet of the Association, which will take place on November 23rd at the Café Monico, when the chair will be taken by the President, Dr. E. D. Mapother.

MR. FREDERICK TREVES has resigned the office of Surgeon to the London Hospital, which he has held for the past fourteen years, having previously served for five years as Assistant Surgeon. The retirement of Mr. Treves six years before the expiration of his term of office will be a loss to the hospital and medical school in connection with which his early reputation was made; but we understand that he has found the claims of private practice incompatible with the exacting duties of surgeon to a large hospital.

GERMAN papers note with evident satisfaction the enthusiastic reception accorded to Professor Virchow in England, and the *National Zeitung*, one of the leading Berlin dailies, quotes part of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL's article on the Huxley Lecture. The medical papers express the gratification felt by the profession of Germany at the enthusiastic welcome given to the "Altmeister" in this country. The Lecture was published in full in the *Berliner klinische Wochenschrift* of October 10th.