

Doctors in Medicine, 510 chemists, and 241 *officiers de santé*. On an average, one medical man for 750 inhabitants in Paris, and one for every 1,000 in the departments."

The question as to the expediency of treating patients in the public hospitals, or in their own homes, has often been discussed in the Municipal Council of Paris, with the view of reducing the enormous expenditure incurred by the hospitals. According to a report that has been submitted to the Council, each hospital patient costs on an average from two to four shillings *per diem*, the minimum being applied to the Pitié Hospital, which contains the greatest number of beds; and the maximum to the Hôpital Cochin, which contains the smallest number: the general average may be put down to a little more than two shillings and six pence a day. This, of course, does not include house-rent, or the space occupied by the patient; and, when the number of hospitals in Paris and their inmates are taken into consideration, it is no wonder that the Municipal Council should seek to reduce this expenditure to a minimum, by having the patients treated in their own homes; but the difficulty is, how it is to be carried out; and here the matter rests, and the building of new hospitals still goes on.

Another expensive institution is that of the "Enfants Assistés". This institution replaces to a certain extent the old "Tour des Enfants Trouvés", where the children of indigents, or those abandoned by their parents, are, up to the age of sixteen or eighteen, admitted and maintained at the expense of the municipality. The number of children thus taken care of, amounts, in the department of the Seine alone, to 27,000, involving an expenditure of 4,000,000 francs, or £160,000 sterling. During last year, no fewer than 3,200 new-born infants, abandoned by their parents, were admitted into this institution.

The Municipal Council of Paris has adopted a project that was submitted to it for the creation of mortuaries or wake-houses in the cemeteries situated in the interior of the town, and intended for the reception of bodies for a certain time before their inhumation. The object of the proposition is to prevent the possibility of premature inhumation; secondly, to prevent the infection caused by the bodies in cases of contagious diseases; and lastly, to withdraw them from the families which have but a single room to live in, and where they are kept for forty-eight hours prior to inhumation. This would appear to be a very desirable measure, when the steady increase of the population is considered; but it is a question whether it would be practicable, or accepted by the many; for, although these mortuaries would render immense service to the people, particularly among the poorer classes, yet there are certain prejudices which cannot be overcome, and the compulsory deposit of bodies in them during an epidemic may constitute a very serious objection.

The medical authorities of Paris are at last becoming alive to the importance of isolating patients suffering from infectious diseases; and it is owing to the energetic influence of Dr. Bourneville, a Member of the Municipal Council of Paris, that many and great reforms have been effected in the hospitals. A project by Dr. Bourneville, for the creation, at the Hôpital des Enfants, in the Rue de Sèvres, of a new pavilion for the reception of diphtheritic patients, has been approved and adopted by the Council, the mortality from that affection having always been most terrific at that hospital, where, to this day, the patients lie promiscuously in the same wards.

BIRMINGHAM.

The Medical Institute.—The Skin and Lock Hospital.—The Children's Hospital.—Hockley Provident Dispensary.—The Queen's Hospital.—The Late Mr. G. B. Evans.

SINCE my last letter, the Medical Institute has been formally opened, and the President of the College of Physicians, Dr. Risdon Bennett, delivered a very able and suggestive address on Medical Culture, a report of which appeared at the time in your columns, and which has been published *in extenso* in the January number of the *Birmingham Medical Review*. In the evening, after the address, the members entertained Dr. Bennett at dinner at the Grand Hotel; there was a very good attendance, and the proceedings passed off in every way satisfactorily.

A new hospital has been recently founded for the treatment of lock and skin cases. It is at present on a very modest scale, having no accommodation for in-patients. The honorary medical officers are Messrs. John Taylor, F.R.C.S.Ed., and Gilbert Smith, F.R.C.S.Ed. There is a good deal of difference of opinion as to necessity for a desirability of establishing such an institution; in the opinion of many it would have been better to endeavour to induce one of the general hospitals to create special departments for the treatment of these cases, if there be any need for further means of medical relief.

Some surprise has also been expressed at the mode in which the officers were elected, at a small meeting of subscribers, without any public advertisement for candidates.

The annual meeting of the governors of the Children's Hospital was held on the 24th ult. The balance-sheet shows a small balance of excess of expenditure over income, but the medical report represents the urgent need of the hospital for more in-patient accommodation, so that there seems little probability of any reduction in the annual outlay. It is worthy of notice that the registration and other payments from patients amounted to nearly £600, a considerable proportion of the total income, which is under £4,000.

The question of payments by patients is also of interest in connection with the annual report of the Hockley Provident Dispensary, which was presented at a meeting held on the same day. The income of the dispensary for 1879 was £497 5s. 5½d.; and that for the past year was £507 8s. The number of members on the books had increased from 2,801 at the end of 1879, to 4,013 at the end of 1880. The expenditure for the past year exceeded the income by £34, while for the previous fifteen months it had been £187. The amount distributed in medical fees was £221 13s. 11d. This is a very satisfactory report, showing that there is every prospect of the dispensary becoming self-supporting within a very short time.

I hear that the finances of the Queen's Hospital are not in a satisfactory state, in spite of the recent splendid exertions made by the town to relieve the committee of its embarrassments. If I am not misinformed, the present indebtedness of the hospital amounts to about £2,000, and I fear this sum represents the annual excess of expenditure over income.

The death of Mr. G. H. Evans, from typhoid fever, in Rome, whither he had gone to seek health, has excited the deepest sympathy of all who knew him. His death creates no vacancies, as Mr. Evans had resigned all his appointments some time before, owing to failing health.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MEDICAL EDUCATION.

SIR,—Will you allow me to call the attention of the Secretaries of the Branch Councils to the Report of the Committee of Council on Medical Education? It is now in the hands of the profession, and Branch Councils would do well to consider it, and to strengthen, as early as possible, the hands of the executive with regard to it.—I am, your obedient servant,

ALFRED CARPENTER, President of the Council.
Duppas House, Croydon, February 8th, 1881.

SIR,—The Subcommittee on Medical Education of the British Medical Association, in their report, at page 15, say: "To quote an instance, it is in the cognisance of one of the subcommittee, that a student, who was unable to pass the matriculation examination of the London University in June, and who failed to pass the preliminary examination of the Royal College of Surgeons in September, went up in October, and passed the preliminary examination of another body; he returned to London with a certificate in time to enter his name on the *Register* of the General Medical Council, and so to commence work as a student of medicine at one of our metropolitan schools. A condition of things such as this cannot be defended; and if the General Council of Medical Education has not the means, it seems to us absolutely necessary for them to apply to Government for powers, to enable them to prevent intending medical students from entering their names on the *Register* of the General Medical Council, until they have been proved to possess a sound knowledge of English, arithmetic, and in mathematics and Latin, up to a certain standard."

Most will read this quotation as I read it: that it implies that the knowledge of the medical student, or rather intending medical student, was not up to the standard laid down by the subcommittee.

Now, I put the plain facts of the case before the members of the British Medical Association, as they were by me told, about two years and four months ago, to the member of the subcommittee who publishes his cognisance of them; and ask whether a legitimate inference has been drawn? To me, it seems that a true mare's nest has been found, and the why and wherefore not considered.

My son went up for the June examination of London, a matriculation, in 1878, and was rejected in two subjects only: natural philosophy and chemistry; having passed in all other subjects—viz., Latin, Greek, French, English language, history, and modern geography and mathematics. In September 1878, after three months' tuition, he went up