

later writers have freely drawn, not always with due acknowledgement. Simpson traces the origin of the error to a misapprehension of the meaning of the passage by no less a scholar than Ducange. The whole thing is a curious illustration of the enduring vitality of a blunder or a lie. Many historical legends rest on no better foundation than this oft-corrected error about the mediæval leper houses. But they will continue to be believed and repeated. There never was a falsus maxim than that which assures us that the truth will prevail. It is error that prevails and will continue to prevail, for error is somehow more adapted to the brain of this foolish-compounded clay, man, than truth.

Professor Ehlers, however, contends that the number of leper houses was not much inferior to that of the manors of the knights of St. Lazarus (Hospitalarii). To nearly every manor there was attached a leper house. In the thirteenth century 3,000 leper houses in Europe were attached to the chief commandery of Boigny, near Orleans, which was the headquarters of the order. In the reign of St. Louis there were in France at least 1,502 leper houses. *L'Etat des Maladreries en France* of that time shows that 123 of these establishments were of royal foundation, 252 of seigneurial foundation, 530 founded by communes, others by the bishops and clergy. The closure of leper houses in France, which was decreed on August 24th, 1693, affected 1,133 establishments in 1,130 communes. The possession of the leper houses was placed at the disposal of the authorities for the care of sick persons of all kinds and the hospitals of St. Lazarus were transformed into general hospitals.

We published recently an epitaph composed for himself by a Dublin worthy of the eighteenth century, Boyle Godfrey, "Chymist and M.D." The epitaph reads like a mere play of fancy, and we do not know whether it was placed on Dr. Godfrey's tomb. Quaint pathological epitaphs are, however, found inscribed on gravestones. One of the best known is that of Dame Mary Page, which was published in the *JOURNAL* many years ago. Mr. Algernon Ashton recently called our attention to it in the following letter:

The other day, after an absence of twenty-three years, I once more happened to visit the highly interesting old Bunhill Fields Burial Ground. It is situated in the City Road, just opposite the house where John Wesley lived and died, and contains, among other memorable tombs, the graves of John Bunyan, Daniel Defoe, and Isaac Watts. But there is one monument upon which is inscribed so curious and remarkable an epitaph that I cannot refrain from quoting it.

South Side :

"Here lyes Dame Mary Page,
"Relict of Sir Gregory Page, Bart.,
"She departed this life March 11, 1728,
"In the 56 year of her age."

North Side :

"In 67 months she was tap'd 66 times ;
"Had taken away 240 gallons of water ;
"Without ever repining at her case,
"Or ever fearing the operation."

In the *St. Bartholomew's Hospital Journal* for September, 1902, Mr. E. H. Hunt quotes the following, without indicating where it is to be found :

Here lies the body of Susan Peg
Who had no issue but one in her leg ;
And what made the old lady appear so cunning,
While one leg kept still, the other kept running.

This may perhaps appear too aptly epigrammatic to be genuine, but gravestones seem in old days to have been favourite places for the display of grim humour. Mr. Hunt also refers to the well-known sufferer who

Had two sore legs and a badish cough,
But her legs it was that carried her off.

The second volume of the *Archives of Neurology*, edited by Dr. F. W. Mott, F.R.S., Pathologist to the London County Asylums, is now in the press, and will probably be issued in the course of a week or two by Messrs. Macmillan. It will contain about 900 pages, and will have a large number of beautiful plates, photomicrographs and other illustrations.

THE INCORPORATION OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

A SPECIAL general meeting of the members of University College, London, was held on February 2nd, under the chairmanship of Lord REAX, President of the College, to consider the proposal for the incorporation of the College into the University of London.

The Senate of the University and the Council of the College have come to an understanding as to the conditions and mode of incorporation, and a circular has been issued giving the

history of the movement and explaining the decision now reached on the recommendations of the Joint Committee. The following are the main lines of the scheme :

College Property.

The value of the site, buildings (including four houses in Gower Street subject to ground leases), and equipments of the College is estimated to be about half a million, and it has the administration of the income of trust funds of about £300,000, most of which would be available for education.

Preliminaries to Incorporation.

The incorporation of the College in the University would necessitate new arrangements (1) for the hospital and its funds, (2) for that part of the medical school which deals with advanced medical studies, (3) for the management of University College School, (4) for the adjustment of the College finances. The estimated cost of carrying out these preliminaries, including the probable cost of procuring a site in place of the houses in Gower Street for the School of Advanced Medical Studies (estimated to cost £70,000) would be £200,000. It was also agreed that a large sum is needed to develop the teaching work of the University to be done by the College, and an appeal to the public has brought in subscriptions of upwards of £62,000, including £30,000 given through Sir Michael Foster by a former student of the College. As the Drapers' Company had previously promised £30,000 on condition that incorporation was carried out the total of the subscriptions received or promised is £92,000, leaving £108,000 still to be raised to defray the preliminary expenses.

General Conditions of Incorporation.

On the one hand the University undertakes, as far as possible, to maintain and develop the College, and promises that the College, in common with other incorporated institutions, shall be represented on the Board of Advisors appointed for the election of professors primarily associated with such institution. On the other hand, the College agrees that the Senate of the University shall have the control of the land, buildings, and property of the College, a committee being appointed to advise the Senate under specified conditions and with powers to be delegated by the Senate.

Method of Carrying out the Incorporation.

The Government is to be asked to bring in a Bill to appoint a Statutory Commission of five members—two representing the University, two the College (with the Chairman), with the following powers :—

(a) To determine what property and trust funds shall be transferred to the University, the Boys' School Corporation, and the Hospital and School of Advanced Medical Studies Corporation respectively ; and to make any such alterations in the terms of the trusts as may be necessary in consequence of the transfers ; (b) to determine at what time or times the newly-constituted Corporations of the Boys' School and of the Hospital and School of Advanced Medical Studies shall come into existence and at what time or times the transfers of property and trust funds shall take effect ; and if necessary to provide for the use for a reasonable period by the Boys' School and School of Advanced Medical Studies of parts of the College which are to be transferred to the University, and to prescribe the terms on which such temporary use shall be allowed ; (c) generally to make all such arrangements as may be necessary or convenient for giving effect to these proposals, with due regard to the continuance of the work of the College, of the Boys' School, and of the School of Advanced Medical Studies respectively.

Sir JOHN ROTTON, in moving a resolution endorsing the action of the Council, recalled the fact that at the general meeting in February, 1902, a resolution of the Council in favour of incorporation had been carried. The scheme proposed that the College as a Corporation should cease to exist, the Senate of the University to which its property would be transferred becoming the governing body. The University, however, would not take over the Boy's School, nor the School for Advanced Medical Studies. The funds in the possession of the College would have to be transferred to a new governing body for that school, a matter at present under the consideration of the Medical Faculty and the Hospital Committee. It would be necessary to find a new site in the neighbourhood where ample provision could be made for this medical school. It was also intended that a new corporation should be constituted to which the hospital funds could be transferred. The hospital would thus become independent, and its prosperity would, it was hoped, be increased ; this matter also was still under consideration.

The resolution was seconded by Professor E. H. STARLING, who said that the incorporation would be the first real step towards the creation of a great teaching university in London.

Sir ARTHUR RÜCKER, Principal of the University of London, said that it was of the highest importance that all the higher educational authorities in London should co-operate, working together as a single whole. He welcomed the movement for the incorporation of University College, because the co-operation between colleges could best be effected when they became constituent members of a university, affording one complete method for obtaining the opinion of the majority of those qualified to speak.

Professor J. ROSE BRADFORD agreed that the concentration

of the preliminary and intermediate studies in medicine and surgery which would be afforded by the incorporation would be of the highest advantage to medical education.

Lord Justice COZENS HARDY said that the proposal was in strict accordance with the wishes of the founders and the traditions of the College; the movement was in the interests of the University, and all who contributed money to the incorporation were benefitting at once the College and the University.

Sir THOMAS BARLOW said that while the members of the College rejoiced in the movement there could not fail to be some feeling of sadness at the breach of old associations. On the medical side there was some danger to the College and the risk of the loss of students during the period of transition, but the scheme had been accepted because it was believed that it was for the good of education in London, and that in spite of the temporary drawbacks the advantage in the long run would be immense. He believed that with proper safeguards the department of advanced medical studies would flourish more than ever.

The CHAIRMAN said that the proposal only affected the internal side of the university work; those who supported it did not wish to interfere with the external work of the University. On its internal side the object was to teach those who regarded their work as a preparation and discipline of life, the teaching should be of the highest, and addressed only to those fit to receive it. He felt some regret and a little apprehension at the impending changes, but central control and consolidated machinery, such as could only be realized by incorporation, were needed, and he hoped that the *genius loci* would not be lost under altered conditions.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

The following resolution was then proposed by Mr. HENRY CUNYNGHAME, and seconded by Mr. A. G. TANSLEY:

That this meeting of the members of University College, London, while approving of the proposed incorporation of the College in the University on the lines proposed both on the general grounds of educational expediency and as being in accord with the aims of the founders of the College, desire to convey to the Council their strong feeling that, in giving effect to incorporation, nothing that is of value in the traditions and organization of the College should be lost. The traditions and organization of the College have been built up during the last seventy-six years, and they are of such great value that, in the interests of historic continuity not less than of the university of the future, they ought to be made use of and preserved, and that consideration should be given to the position and privileges of the Fellows of the College.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Council had not lost sight of the matter, but believed that vested rights and privileges had been sufficiently safeguarded. The Council had not for many years received any proposals from the Fellows, whose activity had been latent.

The resolution was carried.

A further resolution by Dr. MORRIS TRAVERS dealing with the status of Fellows, Governors, and Life Governors was, after some discussion, withdrawn.

ASSOCIATION NOTICES.

BRANCH MEETINGS TO BE HELD.

METROPOLITAN COUNTIES BRANCH: NORTH LONDON DISTRICT.—The next meeting of this District will be held at the Royal Free Hospital, Gray's Inn Road, on Wednesday, February 11th, at 4.30 p.m. Dr. Wynn Westcott will preside. Mr. James Berry, F.R.C.S., will read a paper on the Diagnosis of Caries of the Spine, illustrated by numerous museum specimens and living cases. Cases of interest will be shown by the staff of the hospital. The District Committee will meet at 4.15 p.m.—F. DILL RUSSELL, F.R.C.S., Osman House, Fortis Green, N., Honorary Secretary.

METROPOLITAN COUNTIES BRANCH: SOUTH LONDON DISTRICT.—The next meeting of this District will be held at the Court Room at Guy's Hospital, on Friday, February 13th, at 4 p.m. Dr. Beddard will read a paper on the Use of Expectorants. Clinical cases will be shown from the wards of the hospital.—MAURICE CRAIG, Bethlem Royal Hospital, S.E., Honorary District Secretary.

METROPOLITAN COUNTIES BRANCH: EAST LONDON AND SOUTH ESSEX DISTRICT.—The next meeting of this District will be held at Brooke House, Upper Clapton, on Thursday, March 10th, at 8.30 p.m. The chair will be taken by Mr. Powell, Vice-President of the District. Members desiring to read short papers or to show cases are requested to communicate with the Honorary secretary as soon as possible.—C. J. MORTON, 56, Orford Road, Walthamstow, Honorary Secretary.

EDINBURGH BRANCH.—The winter meeting of the Edinburgh Branch, in conjunction with other Branches, will be held in the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, on Friday, February 20th. The museum will be open from 2 p.m. onwards. Clinical meeting in the Large Theatre at 3.30 p.m.; dinner in the North British Station Hotel at 6.30 p.m., morning dress,

dinner ticket, 5s. Members who can be present at the meeting and dinner, and who have patients, specimens, etc., for exhibition, are requested to communicate with one of the Secretaries not later than February 11th.—JAMES HODSDON and NORMAN WALKER, Honorary Secretaries.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

PARIS.

Académie de Médecine: Discussion and Revision of the Diseases for Compulsory and Voluntary Notification in the New Public Health Act.—A Poster on the Dangers of Alcoholism.—Medical Senators.

AFTER full discussion, the Académie de Médecine has slightly modified the lists of diseases placed under the two headings for compulsory and voluntary notification as recommended by the Special Commission, and as printed in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of January 24th, 1903, p. 223. The matter was urgent, as the law comes into force on February 15th next. The revised lists now finally stand as follows:

A.—Diseases for Compulsory Notification.

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| 1. Typhoid fever. | 9. Plague. |
| 2. Typhus. | 10. Yellow fever. |
| 3. Variola and varioloid. | 11. Dysentery. |
| 4. Scarlet fever. | 12. Puerperal infections and ophthalmia neonatorum (when professional secrecy of the confinement shall not have been demanded). |
| 5. Measles. | 13. Epidemic cerebro-spinal meningitis. |
| 6. Diphtheria. | |
| 7. Miliary fever. | |
| 8. Cholera and choleric form diseases. | |

B.—Diseases for which Notification is Optional.

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| 1. Pulmonary tubercle. | 6. Mumps. |
| 2. Whooping-cough. | 7. Leprosy. |
| 3. Influenza. | 8. Ringworm. |
| 4. Pneumonia and broncho-pneumonia. | 9. Purulent conjunctivitis and granular ophthalmia. |
| 5. Erysipelas. | |

It will be noticed that pneumonia and broncho-pneumonia have been removed from among the diseases for compulsory, and are placed among those for voluntary notification. As M. Laveran pointed out in discussion, if a practitioner meets with epidemic pneumonia or severe influenza pneumonias, he can notify these pneumonias of abnormal gravity, as he notifies the serious cases of influenza. In an ordinary case not much good would result from compulsory notification, if the disinfection is only carried out when the patient is convalescent, as the pneumococcus is not very resistant, and will already have disappeared. Broncho-pneumonia following measles, which has a high mortality, will already have been notified as the notification of measles itself is compulsory. Ophthalmia neonatorum has been placed along with puerperal fever for compulsory notification of cases in which professional secrecy as to the confinement shall not have been demanded.

The following is a translation of a notice as to the dangers of alcoholism posted up recently all over Paris by the Assistance Publique. It is extracted from a report on the subject laid before the Conseil de Surveillance of the Assistance Publique in December last:

ALCOHOLISM: ITS DANGERS.

Professor Debove, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Dr. Faisans, Physician to the Hôtel Dieu, reporters.

Alcoholism is chronic poisoning resulting from the habitual use of alcohol, even when this does not produce drunkenness.

It is an error to say that alcohol is necessary for workmen who are occupied in fatiguing labour, that it gives courage for the work, or that it repairs the strength; the artificial excitement it produces soon gives place to nervous depression and feebleness; in reality alcohol is of use to nobody, it is harmful for everybody.

The habit of drinking spirits leads rapidly to alcoholism, but the so-called hygienic drinks also contain alcohol, there is only a difference in the dose. The man who drinks each day an immoderate quantity of wine, cider, or beer becomes alcoholic as surely as he who drinks spirits.

Drinks called *apéritifs* (absinthe, vermouth, bitters), aromatic liquors (wound-wort, eau de melisse, or eau de menthe, etc.) are the most pernicious, because they contain, in addition to alcohol, essences which are themselves also violent poisons.

The habit of drinking brings in its train disaffection in the family, forgetfulness of all social obligations, distaste for work, misery, theft, and crime. It leads, at least, to the hospital, for alcoholism engenders the most varied and the most deadly diseases—paralysis, madness, diseases of the stomach and liver, dropsy; it is one of the most frequent causes of tuberculosis. Lastly, it complicates and increases the gravity of all acute diseases—a typhoid fever, a pneumonia, and erysipelas which would be mild in a sober man, kill rapidly the alcoholic drinker.

The errors in hygiene of the parents fall on their children, if they live through the early months they are threatened with idiocy or epilepsy, or else they are carried off a little later by tuberculous meningitis or phthisis.