

the subject realized that the knowledge could be obtained in other ways. He agreed that, pressing Mr. Hopps's argument to its logical conclusion, it would come to this: If experiments on animals led to experiments on babies, the eating of animals for food would lead to eating human beings for food. In regard to the following passage, in which Mr. Hopps spoke of voluntarily incurred experiments:

There is a splendid opportunity here for the suicide. Instead of a coward in retreat, let him be an hero as an offering. "The world," he says, "is full of misery—sordid, diseased, and despairing. I will get out of it." He is full of pity for mankind and is disgusted at its lot, so he decided to give it no help, but to go. What a lame and impotent conclusion! What an opportunity for heroism lost!

the witness said it was to his mind immoral in the highest degree, and showed an absolutely crass ignorance of the nature of scientific research to think that by a few suicides one could replace the experiments on animals which, in a complicated matter like this, must be enormous, but need rarely be painful, and which, if they were painful, could, in the great majority of cases, be stopped by inflicting death. In regard to the following passage:

Or might it not be possible to connect some minor forms of vivisection with crime? Here is a criminal who had earned his fourteen years of penal servitude. Let him commute it for six months in the hands of a reliable vivisectionist, within limits. And so on throughout the whole scale of penalties,

the witness said he thought it loathsome levity. Asked by Sir Mackenzie Chalmers, in regard to scientific men experimenting on themselves, if he would justify the course of experiments of Dr. Leonard Hill and his assistant experimenting on themselves in the way of testing how many atmospheres they could subject themselves to, the witness said Yes. That was a most interesting instance. He had worked at the subject until he felt clear that he had got the rule of danger, and, having worked it out, he had the confidence to submit himself to it, and in that way he enormously assisted the acceptance of his methods. He thought he was right. But he would have been perfectly wrong to go trying one method after another upon himself before he had worked his method out to that high degree of scientific probability. He made an exception when it was necessary to save human life. If a doctor knew that if he did not go into a hospital reeking with typhus at the imminent risk of his life many lives would certainly be lost, he thought he was perfectly right to say, "Well, I will risk my life in order to save those lives." But, in the other case, he thought that he was a bad scientific man if he did not find a way of working it out, without exposing his life, up to a point when he was justified in doing so. Asked as to the witnessing of experiments by medical students, he said that that fear was entirely bred in the minds of the people who expressed it. He did not believe there was the slightest justification for it. They compelled students to be present at operations on living men and living women because they felt that they must do so, and no one would listen to the suggestion that they ought not to be present there. How in the world could it have a bad effect when they saw operations on animals if it did not when they saw them performed on man? In reply to Mr. Tomkinson, he agreed that some more stringent law in the direction of prevention of cruelty to animals would be very desirable in regard to the destruction of dangerous or destructive animals. He would be very strongly in favour of legislation for lessening pain, if such a thing were possible; but, he was happy to say, the need grew less. There was a growing of increased sensitiveness towards suffering which would help legislation of the kind, and which was even rendering such legislation unnecessary.

(To be continued.)

A CORRECTION.

In the abstract of Lord Justice Fletcher Moulton's evidence before the Royal Commission on Vivisection which appeared in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of March 21st, p. 691, the passage at line 27 from the bottom of the column, where it is stated that "the sufferings of animals were not solely physical," should read as follows:

"The sufferings of animals were substantially physical only. The sufferings of men were not solely physical. Almost as important a factor in that suffering was mental suffering, etc."

UNITED KINGDOM HOSPITALS CONFERENCE.

The following is the programme of the meeting of the United Kingdom Hospitals Conference to be held at University College, Gower Street, London, W.C., on Wednesday and Thursday next, April 1st and 2nd.

AGENDA.

Wednesday, April 1st, Afternoon Session, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

1. Formal business:

- (a) Appoint chairman.
- (b) Receive: Return of members of Conference (document marked "A").
- (c) Receive: Apologies for absence.
- (d) Adopt standing orders (see document marked "B").
- (e) Receive: Report of proceedings of last Conference (marked "1").
- (f) Receive: Report of proceedings of Committee (marked "2").

2. Consider: Motions, if any, for amendment of proposals which were before last Conference (marked "3").

3. Consider: Questions of payment by hospital patients.

(a) Cases under the Workmen's Compensation Act.

Motion: That it is undesirable to supply gratuitous hospital treatment to those who are provided for by the Workmen's Compensation Act.

To be introduced by a representative of the Leicester Infirmary.

(b) Pay-wards in general hospitals.

(c) Payments for food and medicine.

Motion: That where they can afford to do so hospital patients ought to be asked to pay for the food, medicines, and bandages supplied to them.

Proposer: Hon. Sydney Holland (Chairman of the London Hospital).

4. Consider: Questions of prevention of abuse.

(a) Employment of almoners:

Motion: That, in the opinion of this Conference, the appointment of trained hospital almoners constitutes one of the best methods for checking the misuse of hospitals, and for rendering more effective the economic value of an out-patient department.

Proposer: Lieut.-Colonel Montefiore (Charity Organization Society).

(b) Co-operation of provident dispensaries and analogous institutions with hospitals.

Motion: That the use of the out-patient department of hospitals by persons able to pay for their own treatment can be most effectually prevented by a close co-operation between hospitals on the one hand, and provident dispensaries and similar institutions and local medical practitioners on the other.

Proposer: Mr. H. A. Harben (Treasurer of St. Mary's Hospital).

5. Mode of election of honorary staffs of hospitals.

Wednesday Evening (at 7.30 p.m. for 7.45 p.m.), Conference Dinner, Waldorf Hotel, Aldwych, Strand, W.C.

Thursday, April 2nd, Morning Session, 10.30 a.m. to 1.0 p.m.

At 10.30.

1. Cottage hospitals: System of payment by patients.

To be introduced by Colonel J. G. Curtis (Deal and Walmer Victoria Hospital).

At 11.30.

2. Question of the organization of county guilds, as in Bedfordshire, for the support of hospitals, as an alternative to the extension of the work of the "League of Mercy" in the provinces.

To be introduced by a Representative of the Bedford County Hospital.