

Mr. CARTER, of Charing-cross Hospital, said that in his own Medical Society the senior men were at first allowed to read papers, but that afterwards it was restricted to the students; and that the Society had been in a much more flourishing state since that period.

Mr. ANSTEY, of St. George's Hospital, Mr. WOOD, of the London Hospital, and others, took part in the discussion upon this amendment.

The amendment was then put from the chair, when it was lost by an overwhelming majority.

The resolution was then put to the vote, and carried.

5th. "That students of hospitals where there is no medical society be admitted to the Society by ballot, having been proposed and seconded by two ordinary members of the Society at the previous meeting, on payment of an entrance fee of —."

Mr. BELINFANTE proposed, as an amendment, that all students of hospitals should be admitted by ballot, saying that he believed there were many gentlemen who, though they did not belong to their own Hospital Medical Societies, would yet be willing to join the Junior Medical Society of London.

The CHAIRMAN declared this amendment to be inadmissible from Rule 3, already passed.

The resolution was then unanimously carried.

6th. "That, as far as possible, the papers be read by members of the several Hospital Medical Societies in union by rotation."—Carried unanimously.

7th. "That the Council shall consist of two delegates chosen annually by each Hospital Medical Society in union, such delegates being ordinary members of the Society."—Carried unanimously.

8th. "That the Council of the Junior Medical Society do manage the business of the Society, and be empowered to make such bye-laws as may be thought necessary, subject to the approval of the members of the Society at the next general meeting."—Carried unanimously.

9th. "That the officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, two Honorary Secretaries, and Council."—Carried unanimously.

10th. "That the President be elected annually by the delegates from amongst their own number, and act as chairman of Council, and preside at the general meetings of the Society."

Mr. ANSTEY, of St. George's Hospital, proposed the following amendment, seconded by Mr. BRETT, of the Westminster Hospital:—"That the President be elected, not especially from amongst the delegates, but that each ordinary member be qualified to be a candidate for the chair."—This amendment was lost.

Mr. BARTON proposed as an amendment, seconded by Mr. BELINFANTE,—"That the President be chosen by the delegates by vote at a general meeting of all the ordinary members of the Society."

Mr. BAKER BROWN spoke in favour of the resolution, believing that it would be better for the delegates to elect the President from amongst their own number, as in the event of the President being elected by the members from their body the hospital which could produce the greatest number of students would be enabled to return the President, which would be unfair towards the other hospitals.

Mr. MURRAY, of St. George's Hospital, spoke in favour of the resolution.

Mr. ALEXANDER SQUIRE explained that this resolution had been passed by the Provisional Council under the belief that it would be impossible for the members at large to know whether a member proposed as a candidate was a fit person for that office, and that as the delegates were picked men from the several hospitals, and had frequent opportunities of meeting one another, they would be enabled to judge which of their number was most fitted for the presidential chair.

The amendment having been rejected, the resolution was then put to the vote, and carried.

11th. "That the Vice-Presidents shall consist of one member chosen annually by each Hospital Medical Society in union."—Carried unanimously.

12th. "That the chair be taken at ordinary meetings by the Vice-President chosen by the Hospital Medical Society which supplies the paper, or, in his absence, by the President of the Junior Medical Society of London."—Carried unanimously.

13th. "That the Treasurer be elected annually by the delegates from amongst their own number."

14th. "That the Secretaries be elected annually by the delegates from amongst their own number."

15th. "That the meetings of the Society shall be held not oftener than once a month."

Mr. BELINFANTE proposed as an amendment that the words "not oftener than" be omitted.

This amendment not being seconded, the resolution was put from the chair, and carried unanimously.

16th. "That the meetings of the Society be held at some central place if possible."—Carried unanimously.

17th. "That only members of this Society be present at the general meetings of the Society, and that they be admitted by printed tickets, to be issued by the secretaries of the several Medical Societies in union."

Mr. MASON, of Middlesex Hospital, proposed as an amendment, seconded by Mr. LANE, of Guy's Hospital, "That after the words 'Medical Societies in union,' there be added—'but that honorary members shall not be allowed to vote on questions affecting the general working of the Society.'"

This amendment was carried unanimously.

The amendment was then put as a substantive resolution, and unanimously carried.

18th. "That each member be allowed the privilege of introducing a visitor to the ordinary meetings of the Society, but that the same visitor be not allowed to attend more than two meetings of the Society in the same session."—Carried unanimously.

19th. "That the expenses of the Society be defrayed by a contingent furnished by the several Medical Societies in union *pro rata*; and that the rate be levied according to the number of new members admitted during the preceding year."—Carried unanimously.

Resolution proposed by Mr. MASON, seconded by Mr. SKEY, of Charing-cross Hospital:—

20th. "That no alterations in the rules of the Society shall be made without notice of such alteration having been given a month previously at a meeting of the Society, and the votes of two-thirds of the ordinary members present at a general meeting called by the Council for that purpose being recorded in favour of the alteration."

Mr. WINTERBOTTAM proposed as an amendment, seconded by Mr. HICKMAN, "That any suggestion now made for any additional regulations be referred to the Council for consideration, and by them presented at a general meeting of members for confirmation."—This amendment was negatived.

The resolution was then put to the vote, and carried.

Mr. CHURCHILL, of Guy's Hospital, hon. treasurer *pro tem.*, then presented a statement of accounts, showing that £3 12s. 6d. had been subscribed at the preliminary meeting, and that £4 10s. had been expended; leaving a deficit of 17s. 6d.

Mr. MALDEN, of King's College Hospital, proposed, and Mr. BASTIAN, of University College Hospital, seconded, "That the thanks of the meeting to the Provisional Council, for the care and trouble with which they have drawn up the resolutions and transacted the preliminary business of the Society, be recorded in the minutes."—Carried unanimously.

Dr. Conway Evans having vacated the chair, a vote of thanks for his kindness in presiding was carried with acclamation.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE ALEXANDER MEMORIAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Observing in your issue of the 9th inst. a notice, under the head of "Medical Annotations," in reference to the meeting held at Prestonpans, with a view to the erection of a monument to the memory of Mr. Alexander, and a suggestion that the medical officers of the army, who have so largely benefited by Mr. Alexander's exertions, should testify to the merits and deserts of the late Director-General, I beg to say that the same has been for some time in progress, and that already a very large sum of money has been subscribed for this purpose.

The means selected for the perpetuation of Mr. Alexander's memory are, the placing of his bust in marble in the New Military Hospital at Netley, and the instituting of a Gold "Alexander Medal" for the Army, similar to the Sir Gilbert Blane Medal of the Navy.

I enclose to you the last printed list of subscribers. Since that issue a very large number of additional names have come in from abroad, and by every foreign post fresh ones are

arriving. Indeed, there are very few of the medical officers of the army who have not either subscribed or intimated to me their intention of so doing.

No man in the position of Director-General of the Army Medical Department can give universal satisfaction, but of this I am certain, that none ever more honestly discharged its duties, none ever struggled more for its advancement, and none ever deserved better from his fellows (as a body) than the late Thomas Alexander.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JOLLIFFE TUFNELL,

Hon. Secretary to the Alexander Memorial Fund.

Dublin, March 11th, 1861.

THE LATE DR. MATTHEW BAILLIE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The warmth displayed in the concluding paragraph of Dr. Latham's letter does not do dishonour to his heart, though in the opinion of friends jealous for his reputation it may seem indiscreet. For myself, I like a man who hotly defends the character of a dead friend.

The Doctor has at last hit my bad blunder, which I had discovered myself when it was only just too late to alter it. As soon almost as the book was published, an eminent physician, with characteristic temper and courtesy (although he was a personal friend of Matthew Baillie), wrote to me, lamenting the mistake, and hoping that no ill-natured dyspeptic critic would detect it, and make it the ground for attacking the general accuracy of the work. This kindly letter only told me what I already knew too well. Week by week I watched the reviews as they appeared, fearful lest my trip should have been discovered. One by one the important organs delivered a favourable judgment. One or two obscure journals hinted that I was a fool. But, friendly or adverse, the critics missed my blunder. I chuckled as I thought how much my "kind friends" would have given to know, as well as I did, the right point to strike at. At last Dr. Latham has hit the blot, but fortunately when his blow can do no serious harm. A heavy edition of my "Book about Doctors" has been exhausted. A second edition is already in preparation, for which I weeks since scratched out the story about Baillie, corrected the few other errors which, after a careful revision, I have been able to detect in the original work, and sent my publishers a bulk of new matter.

Let me, Sir, assure you that though I undertook merely to write an anecdotal work about the celebrities of your noble profession, I was systematically conscientious in my endeavours to verify statements advanced as matters of fact. Numerous are the good sayings in my pages that have been stripped of the vulgarities of the jestmongers, and restored to their originators. How did I come to make the mistake? Dr. Latham would imply that I fabricated the anecdote for the sake of the jest. My authority for the playful story, about which the learned doctor has raised such a droll storm of indignation, is a grave and most successful member of the medical profession. Dr. Forbes Winslow has told the story in his "Physic and Physicians"—a work to which I have publicly stated my obligations. Taking the anecdote from so distinguished a writer, I did not verify it—as I have now verified every story in my book—by collateral authorities. I did not profess to write Dr. Baillie's life, which I briefly described as one of "honourable action." I certainly thought that he died ten years before 1823, and was between eighty and ninety years old when he died. In consequence of this erroneous impression, I did not detect an anachronism in the story told by a distinguished living physician of a distinguished dead one. I do not, however, wish to make the author of "Physic and Physicians" responsible for the mistake in my work: the blunder, in all its magnitude, I would have put to my account. Great as it is, it is a small one compared with that made by Dr. Latham, who says, "Between Sir Hans Sloane and Matthew Baillie there intervened just one hundred years." Sir Hans Sloane died in 1753, and Dr. Baillie was born in 1761. Dr. Latham, therefore, who is so severe on literary accuracy, has put down one hundred years where he ought to have put eight. If the Doctor had said, "between the birth-days of Sir Hans Sloane and Matthew Baillie there intervened just one hundred years," he would have been not very far off the truth.

Surely, Sir, after this explanation, Dr. Latham must feel that his lava-flood of sentiment about "honour, decency, and truth," was a little out of place.

To part, however, with the Doctor on good terms—I can inform him of a fact about his dead friend of which he appears

to be ignorant. I have ascertained that there is no record at the College of Physicians of Matthew Baillie having been ever plucked. The story therefore, which has been long current, I may congratulate myself on being the means of proving false—in substance as well as detail.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

Rolls Chambers, Chancery-lane,
March 12th, 1861.

JOHN CORDY JEAFFRESON.

* * Perhaps it would have been as well if Mr. Jeaffreson, who quietly allowed an anecdote, injurious both to the memory of an honoured man and to the College of Physicians, to circulate whilst his book was selling, had himself made known the error. We do not think the warmth of Dr. Latham at all excessive or misdirected.—ED. L.

A NEW OPERATION FOR THE RELIEF OF HERNIA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I venture to suggest the following operation for the relief of strangulated hernia, which is new as far as I know. I conceive it to be most useful in the case of small and recent protrusions, where there is little chance of adhesions having been formed.

Every surgeon must have experienced the difficulty of reducing such herniæ by the taxis, and must also be aware of the exceeding ease with which a force acting from within, such as the peristaltic action of the bowels, effects their return. Many years ago I had occasion to perform the post-mortem examination of the body of a female, who died from an unreduced femoral hernia of this character, and was astonished to find that the slightest touch of the finger caused the protruded bowel to slip into its place before I had an opportunity of demonstrating it to the bystanders.

The operation I propose is this:—An incision is to be made in a vertical direction, about an inch or an inch and a half above the neck of the sac, dividing the skin of the abdomen, and gradually diminishing in extent till the peritoneum is reached. The peritoneum is then to be opened to the extent of admitting a blunt hook, or, what is perhaps better, a fine curved pair of forceps, with which the neck of the protruded intestine is to be grasped, and gently drawn upwards, whilst the taxis is applied from the outside to assist. The wound is then to be closed with a harelip pin or a wire suture.

Should this proceeding fail from any cause to effect reduction, it is open to the surgeon either to enlarge the wound, so as to admit the finger and to divide the stricture from the inside, or to perform the usual operation.

The advantages of this operation are the small extent of the incision into the peritoneal cavity, and that in a sound place; and the avoidance of the exposure of the protruded bowel to the fingering required in the usual method. In fact, the danger would not be greater than the operation of paracentesis.

During the last twelve months I have explained this proceeding to very many of the surgeons in town, and am happy to say that it has met with much approbation.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

Edinburgh, March, 1861.

JOHN NIVEN, M.D.

SULPHATE OF ZINC IN CANCER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The following communication may or may not prove well worthy of attention. It is strictly true, but it stands an unsupported fact. I offer it with some confidence for insertion in your valuable periodical, submitting it at the same time to the profession generally for their critical consideration.

In the year 1857 a lady consulted me on account of a tumour in the right breast; it had there existed more than four years, and was evidently cancerous; her sufferings were not trifling, and her general health was somewhat impaired. In the course of a short time high authority was appealed to, which confirmed my belief in the character of the disease, and a plan of treatment was recommended. In the space of two or three months her sufferings were somewhat increased, the tumour was enlarged, and her general condition altered for the worse, for there existed evident marks of decreased vitality. I determined to try the sulphate of zinc, a tonic whose powers I am persuaded are both safely available and very valuable. In the course of a month all pain had ceased, and her general condition was very much improved. In compliance with this