

workhouses, where a paid nurse is employed, it may sometimes be practicable to adopt a system under which such of the female inmates as may be trustworthy and competent for the work may be employed in the infirmary and sick wards, not only with the object of acting as assistants to the paid nurses, but also with the view of their being taught the duties of nurses in such a manner as may subsequently enable them to support themselves by becoming nurses on their own independent account.

It is of course unnecessary for the Board to point out that this species of employment must, however, be subject to the qualification, that no person should be employed in attendance on infectious cases without her free consent. If such a scheme were carried successfully into effect, it is thought that recourse would be frequently had to the workhouses where it was in operation for nurses to attend the sick; and it is suggested that a register might be kept of the names and qualifications of those inmates who shall have been thus taught, and who are fit for such attendance.

The Board are accordingly desirous that some such plan should be suggested by you to any Board of Guardians within your district, in which the arrangements of the workhouse are, or may be made, such as to admit of its being carried into practical effect.

The Poor-law Board further requests, that in bringing the subject under the notice of any meeting of guardians, you will not fail to state the strong sense which the Board entertain of the evils resulting from the want of a sufficient number of trained and efficient nurses for the poor, and their confidence that the guardians will be ready to concur in any plan by which, consistently with a sound system of Poor-law administration, and with the laws regulating the expenditure of the Poor Rate, their number may be increased.—I am, &c.,

(Signed) COURTENAY, *Secretary.*  
To Poor-law Inspector.

## THE EPIDEMIC OF RUBEOLA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Perhaps you will permit me, through the medium of THE LANCET, to call the attention of such of the profession as see much disease amongst children to the prevalence, just now, of the particular exanthematous fever, *Rubeola*, as distinguished from *Morbilli*, or measles, on the one hand, and from *Scarlatina* on the other. The distinction in question has long been made by the Germans, but in this country has scarcely been recognised; Dr. Copland being the only writer I can recall to mind who has pointed out the difference between the diseases I have mentioned. To his article '*Rubeola*,' in the "*Dictionary of Practical Medicine*," and to vol. xxiv. of the German "*Journal for the Diseases of Children*," (1855,) I may, *en passant*, refer the reader. I have already seen about a dozen cases of *Rubeola*, of which one has been rather severe in character. I refrain from any pathologic comment, however, until I have had further experience of the present epidemic, but I would desire thus early to excite the attention of as many observers as possible.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

W. HUGHES WILLSHIRE, M.D., &c.

Parliament-street, May 30th, 1856.

## RETIRING PAY TO THE ACTING ASSISTANT-SURGEONS OF THE ARMY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—May I be allowed the favour of a place in your valuable journal, in order to draw the attention of the army assistant-surgeons to their position, now that peace is established, and the army about to return. Those of us who have not been either so fortunate as to be sent to the seat of war, or to get commissions, will, in proportion as the army returns, be sent to the right-about; and at present nothing has been said about retiring pay. Now, as the civil surgeons are allowed a year's pay at two guineas a day, and the militia surgeons the same at their rate of pay, it is but fair that we should have a similar allowance, and I am sure that the Government only need to be reminded of our claims to treat us with equal liberality. As we are all scattered about with our various charges, and are thus prevented meeting together, I would suggest that everyone so disposed should write to Mr. Layard, as a member of Parliament well acquainted with the whole subject of the war, requesting him to ask the question of the Secretary for War.—I am, Sir, your obliged servant,

June, 1856.

ACTING ASSISTANT-SURGEON.

## GRIEVANCES OF POOR-LAW SURGEONS.

At a meeting of the Medical Officers of the Gainsborough Union, held at the house of Dr. Mackinder, on the 1st of May, it was resolved,—

1st.—That the Medical Officers of this Union do form themselves into a local association for the purpose of co-operating with Mr. Griffin, to obtain an equitable remuneration for their services.

2nd.—That the propositions promulgated by Mr. Griffin, in his circular of the 21st of April, be approved, excepting only the manner of payment; the actual *per case* being preferred, as less liable to encroachment and misunderstanding on the part of the guardians.

3rd.—That all recognised operations and bad cases of surgery and midwifery be included in the scale of extras, which should also embrace those casualties or cases not requiring money relief.

4th.—That it be not in the power of the guardians to send patients to the public hospitals in order to avoid the extra fee, except at the request of the surgeon in whose district such patients may happen to reside.

5th.—That every member subscribe 5s. per quarter towards the general fund in the hands of Mr. Griffin.

6th.—That Dr. Mackinder be appointed honorary secretary and treasurer.

7th.—That the thanks of this meeting be given to Mr. Griffin for his indefatigable exertions in behalf of the Union Surgeons, and that a copy of these resolutions be forwarded to the medical journals.

(Signed)

D. MACKINDER, M.D.

JAMES H. WILLIAMS.

WM. TRONSDALE.

H. J. WATERLAND.

A. FAIRCHILD.

J. H. BENNETT, M.D.

The Medical Officers of the Penistone Union, by communication with each other, resolve—

1st.—That, without pledging themselves to details, they approve generally of the opinions contained in Mr. Griffin's last circular.

2nd.—That their hearty thanks are due to Mr. Griffin for his zealous advocacy of Poor-law Medical Reform.

3rd.—That each Medical Officer subscribe 5s. per quarter, if necessary, towards defraying the expenses of the movement.

4th.—That Mr. Rowley do transmit to Mr. Griffin the subscriptions and resolutions, and also a copy of the letter to the weekly medical journals.

J. T. B. ELLISS.

JOHN WARD, M.R.C.S.E.

T. TURTON.

C. O. ROWLEY, M.R.C.S.E. &c.

A meeting of the Medical Officers of the Kingston Union, was held at Dr. Cox's house, at Kingston, on the 26th of May, —present, Dr. Cox, of Kingston; Mr. Jepson, of Hampton; Mr. Coleman, of Surbiton; Mr. Kent, of Kingston; Mr. Wellings, of East Molesey; and Mr. Holberton, of Hampton.

The two remaining officers of the Union, Mr. Fennell, of Wimbledon, and Mr. Izod, of Esher, who were unavoidably absent, have expressed to the secretary their entire concurrence in the objects of the meeting.

Mr. Jepson, as the oldest medical officer of the Union, was voted into the chair; and Mr. Holberton was requested to act as secretary and treasurer.

It was resolved—

1st.—That the thanks of this meeting be transmitted to Mr. Griffin for his energetic and disinterested exertions in the cause of Poor-law medical reform.

2nd.—That this meeting, without pledging itself to details, approves of the propositions contained in Mr. Griffin's draught of a petition to Parliament, as well as his memorial to the Poor-law Board.

3rd.—That the usual subscription of 5s. be entered into and forwarded to Mr. Griffin, and be repeated quarterly if necessary.

4th.—That it is desirable that any of the medical officers of this Union who can make it convenient to attend the general meeting on the 30th instant, should do so, and that they be considered a deputation from this meeting.

5th.—That a copy of these resolutions be sent to Mr. Griffin, and to the medical journals.

HENRY JEPSON, Chairman.

At a meeting of the Medical Officers of the Eastbourne Union, it was resolved—

1st.—That the thanks of this meeting be given to Mr. Griffin for his exertions in the cause of the Poor-law medical officers.

2nd.—That the members of this meeting will give Mr. Griffin their best support in carrying out the suggestions contained in his letter.

3rd.—That a subscription of 5s. a quarter be entered into to defray expenses.

ROBERT COLGATE, Secretary.

## SCOTLAND.

[FROM OUR EDINBURGH CORRESPONDENT.]

SCOTTISH LUNATIC ASYLUMS.—The annual reports of the Royal Edinburgh and Crichton Lunatic Asylums for the year 1855, present features of interest. In the Edinburgh Asylum, the ordinary expenditure being deducted, a surplus of £357 11s. 7d. remains for the past year. During the year 1855, 762 patients received the benefits of this asylum, while the average number of in-patients was 546. The mortality is somewhat higher than it was in 1854, but less than the average of previous years. A very general but mild epidemic of influenza appears to have occurred, but the deaths comparatively were very few. Dr. Shae, in his report, forcibly notices the very prevalent practice of bringing patients to the asylum in irons. Policemen, sheriffs' officers, and inspectors of poor, inflated with authority, *iron* the paralytic and worn-out imbeciles, because "if mad, they must, they suppose, be dangerous;" and this seems perfectly an official theory. Dr. Shae gives an instance of a paralytic soldier, perfectly unable to prove "dangerous," whose hands and feet were ironed, his hands being ironed behind his back; another the same; also a third, who bore this treatment during a long voyage from the north of Scotland, complained bitterly of his disgrace in being led through the streets of Edinburgh like an escaped felon. By caresses, rather, and gentle treatment, we should lead the wandering mind. Little good can be done by using the very means which excite, and by leading through public streets a paralytic imbecile in manacles. An error appears to have gone forth in the medical journals with respect to the effects of chloroform taken during labour, and its producing puerperal mania; but from the absence of such cases in the statistics of this asylum, and the fact that in fifty cases of puerperal mania only one occurred in which chloroform had been administered during parturition, we may infer that the application of the anæsthetic agent is unattended by deleterious results. 62 deaths occurred, and 95 patients have been cured. Of the deaths, only 16 resulted from real insanity; the greater number were from various diseases more or less associated with it.

The sixteenth annual report of the Crichton Royal Institution for Lunatics is similarly satisfactory. Dr. Brown, the resident physician, remarks upon the increase of mental disease. In England, during the last eight years, the number of lunatics has increased not less than 64 per cent. In Scotland also this lamentable malady appears spreading, and from a knowledge of the number of insane now in seclusion it appears that the accommodation afforded by existing asylums is almost inadequate to cope with the yearly increase. Upwards of 125 cases were obliged to be rejected in their applications for admission to this asylum during the late year. 100 have been admitted, and 394 have been under treatment, and of these 14 have died, 13 were discharged improved, and 54 recovered such a degree of sanity as to resume their position in society. Although there is much to deplore in the rapid increase of mental disease, still there are few more striking proofs of the progress of medical science than in the treatment of insanity. Years ago, the lunatic, once immured within the asylum's walls, seldom came forth restored and sane; it was generally a life of incarceration; but now timely medical aid and efficient treatment seldom fail in procuring a desirable result. In these asylums rational recreations for the patients form a leading feature; out-door amusements, excursions, music and literary provisions, are successful adjuncts in alleviating the disease, increasing the mental vigour, and giving back sanity to the lunatic.

THE VACANT CHAIR OF MILITARY SURGERY.—A sharp contest is now pending for the chair of Logic in the University, rendered vacant by the death of Sir William Hamilton; and this recalls to the minds of many that the chair of Military Surgery is yet unfilled. A long time has elapsed since the vacancy occurred, and nothing has yet been heard, even whether the chair is likely or not to be retained in this University. If the Town Council have, during the winter, pondered the subject well over, let us hope to have soon some proofs of the phenomenon that they thought wisely.

## THE SANITARY CONDITION OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN THE CRIMEA

FOR THE WEEK ENDING APRIL 26TH.

The Inspector-General states that the health of the army continues remarkably good, and only five deaths from disease have occurred in the whole army serving in the Crimea during the week; two from fever, two from phthisis, and one from inflammation of the lungs.

A casualty occurred out of hospital, in a man of the Right Siege Train, who had been absent from his quarters all night, and was found near the Tchernaya at the point of death in the morning. His clothes were wet, but there were no marks of violence on his person, and his medal and two sovereigns in money were found in his possession.

Four deaths took place in the Land Transport Hospital; three from fever, and one from disease of the lungs; and a man was killed by the kick of a mule out of hospital.

The general health of the corps is improving; but there is an apparent increase of sickness this week from the admission of 200 cases of itch, in men who have been attending on mangy animals.

Two casualties have occurred in the Army Works Corps, one under the head of rheumatism, and the other a case of suicide; a death from fever in the Commissariat branch of this corps occurred in the general hospital in camp.

Large fatigue parties have been employed during the week in collecting expended shot; and six men have been injured, two of them seriously, by the explosion of percussion shells that had fallen without bursting when fired; but every precaution has now been taken to prevent such accidents in future, by placing artillerymen at different points to warn the men of the danger of carelessly handling such missiles.

At Kertch, only three per cent. were sick, and no casualty had occurred during the week ending 12th April.

One death had occurred in the Cavalry Division stationed on the Bosphorus during the same week, and the ratio of sickness in it was five per cent.

At Smyrna, though the sickness does not amount to more than 3·78 per cent., four deaths have occurred out of a strength of 1894, which is within one of the mortality of the whole British army in the Crimea.

Three deaths occurred in the General Hospital at Scutari, and one in the General Hospital at Renkioi, making a total mortality of twenty-one during the week from disease, and two from accidents out of hospital.

In the Crimea, the ratio of admission to strength has been 1·91 per cent.; death to strength, 0·02; sick to healthy, 3·39.

Assuming the force of all denominations to be (exclusive of officers, 70·000, the ratio of admissions to strength would be 2 per cent.; deaths to strength, 0·03; and sick to healthy, 4·92.

### WEEK ENDING MAY 3RD.

The same satisfactory state of health continues to prevail in the army. A decrease both of sickness and mortality has taken place which was not anticipated, nor can it be reasonably calculated that the present favourable state of things should continue much longer.

Ophthalmia continues prevalent in some few corps, and there has been an increase of twenty-four cases during the week. It is difficult to assign any particular local cause for this disease in these regiments, as they are placed under precisely the same circumstances regarding duty, diet, and accommodation as the rest of the army; but the disease has prevailed in all these regiments on former occasions.

As regiments embark, more space in barracks will be given to the men, and by that means, daily inspections, and other sanitary arrangements, it is to be hoped the disease will be checked, if not eradicated. But it is at all times a very troublesome and tedious complaint. The General Hospital at the monastery is now devoted almost exclusively to ophthalmic cases, and nearly the whole of them are progressing favourably. In four cases vision will, I fear, be more or less impaired; but it is difficult to prevent occasional occurrences of the kind when the disease attacks scrofulous subjects.

The health of the Land Transport Corps is more satisfactory this week, and only three deaths have occurred,—namely, two in the Head-Quarters Hospitals of the corps, and one in the hospital of the battalion attached to the 3rd Division. A death occurred in the Army Works Corps, which reduces the mortality in the army in the Crimea to five,—and of these, one died from delirium tremens.