

was granted the person might not be able to obtain a general average of over 25 per cent. We are not informed, officially or otherwise, that the Board has even yet taken any step to correct this bad practice.

It is stated in these resolutions that the Illinois State Board of Health is not at liberty to adopt any policy regarding the admission of non-graduates to examination; that is, persons mentally or morally unfit to practice medicine must be admitted to the examination if they apply, but certainly the law can not require the Board to issue licenses to such persons. In our resolution we called upon the Board, if there were defects in the law, to make all proper efforts to have them remedied. We have not been informed, either publicly or privately, that it has made any effort in that direction.

In the resolutions by the State Board of Health we are told that the law demands that the examination shall be "elementary and practical." Though the law under which the Board of Health acts prescribes that examinations shall be of an elementary and practical character, it does not prescribe that the Board of Health shall confer on incompetent persons the privilege of practicing medicine in Illinois, and the Legislature surely could have no such purpose in view when it enacted the law. If an applicant can pass a thorough examination in the elementary subjects of anatomy, chemistry, physiology and materia medica, and a practical examination in pathology, obstetrics, practice of medicine and surgery, he would be able to pass the examination for the degree of Doctor of Medicine in almost any of the recognized colleges throughout the United States.

We deeply regret that the resolutions of the State Board of Health failed to remove the belief that their methods are faulty, and we personally know another student who obtained license to practice during the past year who was unable to pass the examination for the degree of Doctor of Medicine this last spring. We have informed ourselves so far as possible of the methods and policy of the Board of Health, and we gladly embrace this opportunity to do it exact justice. The Faculty of the Northwestern University Woman's Medical School does not need to disclaim the suggestion that any individual interest or personal animosity prompted the drafting and circulation of the resolutions. This faculty, individually and collectively, is friendly to the Illinois State Board of Health, but in the matter under consideration it has been constrained, as a matter of public duty, to question the wisdom and propriety of some of its acts. We will gladly be the first to give it credit when it corrects its faulty practice, and we will gladly aid it in securing any necessary legislation for elevating the profession and for the benefit of the people.

I. N. DANFORTH,  
E. FLETCHER INGALS,  
MARIE J. MERGLER,  
Executive Committee.

### Serum-Therapy in Leprosy.

NEW YORK, Nov. 21, 1895.

To the Editor:—Mr. Luther F. McKinney, United States Minister in Bogota, writes me (Oct. 17, 1895): "I enclose an article written by Dr. Putnam of this city, in which I know you will be interested. Dr. Putnam has taken a great interest in the subject of leprosy and, as you will see, believes in the theory that the disease can be cured by the injection of the blood of an animal previously inoculated with the serum from the blood of a leprosy patient. He has one patient, a woman here in Bogota, whom he has been treating in this way for about four months. When she began there was an entire loss of sensibility of the arms and lower limbs, and large leprosy blotches or sores on her arm. She has entirely recovered the sensibility of the arms, but not of the lower limbs; the blotches on her arms have entirely disappeared; so says the Doctor. There are ten physicians here who are watching the case with great interest and have great hopes that extraordinary results will be obtained. The great trouble here is that there is no laboratory for the proper preparation of the serum, and the lack of proper apparatus for the carrying on of the experiments very greatly retards the investigations. To show how the medical profession is hampered in their efforts to stay this foul disease, some time ago Dr. Putnam wrote a letter to the

President of the Republic, explaining to him his theory and saying that he proposed to carry on the work and visit every part of the country where leprosy existed, and called the attention of the Executive to the assistance rendered by other civilized governments in the development of the scientific study of these diseases, and suggested that the Government provide a laboratory for the purpose of assisting in the work. The President instructed the Minister of Education to answer the letter, and say that while he thought the purpose of the Doctor was good, it was a matter of personal interest, and the Government did not desire to have anything to do with it. And this while there are 27,000 lepers in the country, and the Minister who answered the letter lost his wife by the disease, and has two leprosy daughters in his home at the present time. In about a month Dr. Putnam will visit the hospital again, and he says the first leper who dies while there, he will get a portion of the skin, muscle, liver and brain and send them to you."

The article which Mr. McKinney enclosed to me is entitled "Sero-Therapy," and was published in the *Herald* of Bogota, Oct. 10, 1895. In it he makes a report of a medical visit to the Lazaretto of Aqua de Dios, and the sero-therapeutic medication which he has begun there in a formal manner in the treatment of leprosy. He refers to an official offer, made by him on the 22d of last May, to carry on the project of establishing sero-therapy in Colombia. He had already begun this treatment on some private leper patient before going to Aqua de Dios. He refers to a grand lecture given by Dr. Juan de Dios Carrasquilla, in the Polyclinic of Bogota, the 1st of last July, on this subject. This lecture has guided him in his experiments, and Dr. Juan de Dios Carrasquilla will be his consultant in future. At Aqua de Dios he obtained a leprosy serum to be inoculated in several animals in a manner advised by Professor Ricket in syphilis, and which consists in taking some blood from the patient, inoculating the animal and returning from the animal to the patient. "In one word," says he, "to make the cultivation of the leper bacillus in the blood of an animal, instead of making it in a special apparatus for the purpose of strengthening natural immunity in the animal, for the experimental infection." He visited the hospital with the Rev. Father Crippa Salesiano, who has devoted himself to the patients, and Dr. Luis L. Gaitán, physician of the Lazaretto, and selected an adult of 16 years, in whom tubercular leprosy was in full development. He took from his arm 250 grammes, into an aseptic bladder, and put the latter carefully away, leaving the blood in repose for four hours, during which he prepared the animals for the inoculation. There were two asses and three she-goats. At the expiration of the four hours he separated the serum and inoculated a certain quantity into the animals. These animals were to be kept under supervision for several days. With the blood serum of these animals he intended to inoculate thirty or forty patients early in November.

Mr. McKinney encloses me the reply received by Dr. Putnam to his application to the Colombian Government:

"REPUBLIC OF COLOMBIA, OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF THE GOVERNMENT. No. 2540.

BOGOTA, Oct. 17, 1895.

DR. CARLOS E. PUTNAM—

Sir: Regarding your report with respect to the installation of the sero-therapy in the Lazaretto of Aqua de Dios, I have to answer that the Government, reiterating to you its manifestations of approbation and very much interest in the success of the experiments which you have undertaken with so much devotion, will give to you all the moral support necessary, so that you may not be discouraged for continuing such a praiseworthy enterprise."

Dr. Putnam writes me: "We have 27,000 lepers! We do nothing for them! The acting Government pays no attention at all! We are lost!"

"Think of offering a starving man moral support," says Mr. McKinney. "Unless the Government takes the matter in hand the country is lost indeed. Forty years ago there were 400 lepers in Colombia, now there are more than 27,000. How many at this rate of increase will there be in forty years from now?"

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