MEDICO-PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.

THE Medico-Psychological Association held its annual meeting, for the twenty-fourth time, at York on Monday last, under the presidency of Dr. Laycock, of Edinburgh. All has passed off with the most signal success, and the sittings have been very largely attended. The members began to reach York on Saturday in considerable numbers, and in the afternoon of that day were received in a sumptuous manner by Dr. Christie, of the North Riding Asylum. In the evening of the same day Dr. Laycock, the new President, gave a dinner at Harper's Hotel, which was largely attended, and was a brilliant affair.

The business of the Association was opened on Monday at 11 A.M., in the Museum of the Philosophical Society, with an able address by the retiring President, Dr. Sankey. Professor Laycock then took the chair, and gave an address, in which he noticed more particularly the character, objects, and constitution of the Association. In speaking of the proposed scheme for amalgamating the Association with the Royal Society of Medicine, he maintained a view adverse to amalgamation. A Psychological Section would, he thought, be a valuable addition to the proposed society; but he felt that if the Association merged into such a section it could not carry out all its present work, and that consequently a modified and much less useful Society would still remain. The President also suggested the formation of committees for special work by the Association, with some other rather important changes for promoting greater activity and sustaining the power of the Association.

After the President's address, about twenty-three new members were elected, and subsequently in the proceedings five gentlemen were elected honorary members; amongst these were Mr. Egerton Harcourt, Dr. Richardson, and Mr. Lockhart Clarke.

Dr. Boyd was elected president for next year, Dr. Tukey was re-elected honorary secretary, Dr. Paul honorary treasurer, and Drs. Robertson and Maudsley editors of the Journal. Some additional names were also added to the Council. In returning thanks for his re-election, Dr. Paul, the treasurer, read a favourable balance-sheet, showing a sum on the safe side of over £40.

A brisk discussion took place on the question of amalgamation of the Association with the proposed Royal Society of Medicine, and Dr. Tukey moved a resolution, which was seconded by Dr. Robertson, referring the whole subject to a committee, which should have power to act on behalf of the Association. Ultimately a resolution was carried for a committee to consider the question, but without power to do more than to report to a future general meeting.

A committee was also formed, consisting of the President, the past Presidents, and Drs. Arlidge, Christie, and Crichton Browne, to reconsider the laws of the Association.

The Scientific Proceedings were opened at the second meeting by an extempore and most able address by Professor LAYCOCK, 'On the Advance of Psychological Medicine.' It is impossible, in an abstract, to make an analysis of the very concise and, at the same time, comprehensive address of the learned Edinburgh Professor. Suffice it to say, it elicited the warmest approbation from the full and attentive audience which listened to it—an audience composed not merely of the members of the Association, but of many of the representatives of the medical and other professions in York and the surrounding neighbourhood. A vote of thanks was voted to Dr. Laycock, and carried by acclamation. The address will, we understand, be printed in full in the Journal of the Society.

The next address, "On Physical Disease from Mental Strain," was delivered by Dr. RICHARDSON, F.R.S. The author first pointed out the importance of studying the influence of impressions made through the mind upon the organs of the body, and urged that in this day, when the mental powers were so terribly overtaxed, this study demanded earnest and immediate recognition by the general not less than by the psychological physician. He then described the different classes of men who are engaged in labours which call forth the energies of the mind, dividing them into copyists, authors, artists, speculators, professionals, and students. He defined the nature of the work of these

respectively, and the diseases to which they were subject as the result of their toils. Lastly, he turned to the diseases in detail, placing diabetes, paralysis, intermittent action of the heart, and arterial enervation, with symptoms simulating aneurism, as disorders directly connected with mental strain; and cancer, epilepsy, and insanity, as diseases connected indirectly with the same cause—i.e., as disorders brought out by the overstrain in persons who have an hereditary tendency to them. Regarding insanity itself, the author held that work, and even hard work, of a mental character, does not of itself bring out the disease, but that by such work the organs of the body which are purely physical are most severely injured. Insanity, he thought, was rather a disease engendered in ignorance and mental inactivity; so that, in fact, the cloddish parts of our populations were the most determinate producers of insanity, and the educated and most intelligent parts of our populations were the producers and propagators of the more serious and fatal of organic diseases.

An interesting discussion, in which many members took part, followed the reading of this paper, and the author's view that insanity is not induced by simple hard mental work was very strongly confirmed.

Mr. LOCKHART CLARKE, F.R.S., read a paper "On a Case of General Paresis," and showed some remarkable specimens of diseased brain taken from a patient who had died under the care of Dr. Gairdner, of Glasgow. The brain exhibited a considerable number of small oval cavities, sharply defined, and of sufficient size, we should think, to hold an oat-grain. The case was thought by some of the members to be unique, and certainly the disease it represents has not before been described so as to be easily recognised. It is now, however, thanks to Mr. Clarke's skill in preparation of brain-matter and admirable method of observation, so well defined, that we may all be ready to follow up research on the subject.

Mr. Clarke had a second paper, which he could not read, the time being too short; but at the request of the President he gave a brief and lucid demonstration of the anatomy of the brain, dealing especially with the plan of the convolutions.

Dr. TUKE read a paper entitled "An Apology for Lord Brougham on Psychological Grounds;" and Dr. JAMES SABBEN read a communication on "The consideration of Ritualism with reference to its Influence on Insanity."

The members of the Association dined together on Monday evening under the presidency of Dr. Laycock, and in the company of the Lord Mayor of York (Mr. Carron Hey), and other well-known local visitors. After the dinner, Dr. Christie gave a *conversazione* at the Assembly Rooms; in the course of which Dr. Proctor, of York, gave some beautiful and successful demonstrations of various electrical phenomena; Dr. Clifford Allbutt, of Leeds, exhibited experiments with the ophthalmoscope; Mr. Lockhart Clarke described and showed microscopical preparations of the nervous system; and Dr. Richardson explained the principle of his new instrument for painless superficial cutting in surgery, operating upon himself and on one of the gentlemen present in illustration of the method.

On Tuesday morning, at the request of several members, Dr. RICHARDSON gave a lecture in the Museum of the Philosophical Society, on Artificial Respiration in illustration of the action of the new instrument which he has constructed for this purpose. The attendance at the lecture was numerous and the experiments successful; and a vote of thanks, proposed by Dr. Christie, and seconded by Professor Laycock, was passed.

The next annual meeting of the Medico-Psychological Association will be held in London.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS EXAMINATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As one of the candidates who obtained the diploma of the Royal College of Surgeons on the 23rd of July, will

you allow me space to record my earnest protest against the bad management and want of consideration for the students manifested on that occasion.

At ten A.M. on the 17th, nearly one hundred gentlemen presented themselves at the College for the purpose of paying their fees. At seven minutes to eleven we were still standing about the lobby, and not a fee had been taken, the reason assigned being that *one of the gentlemen had not yet arrived*. At five minutes past twelve, I and some others who came last on the list were told that, as the examination was supposed to begin at twelve, no time for refreshment could be allowed. A number of us then sat down in a condition of more or less exhaustion, and were at once confronted by the questions upon which you commented last week—questions which the University of London itself would not be ashamed to set. As a psychological experiment, it would doubtless be interesting to ascertain how much physical exhaustion is required to annul for the day the fruits of years of study; but I must respectfully submit that it is a cruel experiment where it imperils the future welfare of a number of deserving men. Complaints were abundant (I do not quote my own case only) that memory, mental power, and even the power of writing at all, were sacrificed to this inconsiderate act of the College officials.

But I have another objection to the management at the College of Surgeons, which will be even more cordially endorsed by the ninety candidates of the 17th than the above: i. e., that the College studiously ignores the fact that students presenting themselves for examination are gentlemen—men soon to take an honourable position in one of the leading professions. Can the College point to any other examining body where candidates are compelled to stand about for hours awaiting the pleasure of its officials?—where there are such chambers of horror as the so-called “funking-rooms,” where students must remain incarcerated for nearly seven hours, subject to the will of the porters, who seldom prefix their commands with the most ordinary terms of civility? All this, I submit, is a relic of a barbarous age; and the evidence of the necessity for reform is the humiliation which all feel at having been subjected to it.

Be it understood that in the above remarks I censure no individuals, but the hereditary system of management, which the College still deems it expedient to maintain. The general feeling was that nothing could have been more considerate, or more calculated to elicit the knowledge of the students, than the behaviour of the examiners. Why cannot all be brought into conformity with this?—when, instead of an ordeal to be dreaded, the passage through the College of Surgeons might be made a really pleasant event in the medical student's life.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
Dorking, July 28th, 1869. EDWARD DE MORGAN.

THE CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACT.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Our attention has just been drawn to the evidence given by Mr. W. G. Romaine, late Secretary to the Admiralty, before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Contagious Diseases Act, 1866, wherein he states, page 46, answer 905, compared with page 47, answer 914, that the medical officers of the Royal Albert Hospital, Devonport, visit their patients only once a week, and that very often, in consequence, a patient is kept longer in hospital than is necessary.

We are, of course, quite unaware of the source of Mr. Romaine's information, but we lose no time in expressing our surprise that statements should have been made so entirely at variance with fact.

The patients are visited daily by the house-surgeon, and always twice a week by the surgeons of the hospital, and oftener when required. It is impossible that patients can be kept longer than is necessary. The very opposite allegation has in fact reached us; and as Mr. Sloggett, the visiting surgeon, was in attendance on the Committee, we must presume that he was absent when those statements were made, or he would certainly have contradicted them.

We trust Mr. Romaine will furnish us with his authority for the above statements, the more especially as he appears

anxious, by answer 905, to supersede the present staff of our Lock hospitals, or place them under the supervision of a medical officer paid by the Admiralty.

We are, Sir, your obedient servants,
(Signed) FRED. ROW, M.D.,
R. J. LAITY, M.R.C.S.,
C. BULTEEL, F.R.C.S.,
W. P. SWAIN, F.R.C.S.

Royal Albert Hospital, Devonport, July 29th, 1869.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I feel sure that all who take an interest in St. Bartholomew's Hospital will be glad to learn that the complaints, to which you opened your columns, have at length been listened to in a quarter where appeal before seemed to be hopeless; and still more so, that the causes of those complaints have been promptly and effectually removed. It would, perhaps, be ungracious to say that this sudden awakening to a sense of the injuries suffered by the house-surgeons and dressers was due to pressure from without; but while expressing my most cordial thanks for the space you afforded me, I cannot help congratulating you on the apparent intimate connexion between the two events.

On Monday afternoon last four students, who had been elected to represent their fellow-dressers, were requested to join a conference between the Treasurer and two of the surgeons. A conversation of over an hour ensued, in which the last two gentlemen only occasionally joined, and then usually in support of their pupils, and resulted in the concession of all the points demanded—unlimited right of prescription for house-surgeons, the validity of prescriptions written by dressers but signed by a house-surgeon, and improved accommodation for dressers on duty.

The next day the work of the surgery was proceeding as before the misunderstanding, much to the satisfaction of all concerned, and the workmen had commenced their task in the dressers' room.

In conclusion, I would say that whatever may be the influence of this struggle, for such it has been, one moral effect is the strengthening of the friendship and confidence which unite the surgeons and their pupils, and that among the practical results are the improvement of the educational opportunities of the students, and the greater comfort and better treatment of the out-patients. Also let me add, in expressing to you my personal thanks, I echo the feelings of many others than

Your obedient servant,
St. Bartholomew's Hospital, July 28th, 1869. OMEGA.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS.

THE following has been forwarded to us for publication:—

“Poor-law Board, Whitehall, July 16th, 1869.

“SIR,—I am directed by the Poor-law Board to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th inst., in which you transmit, for their information, a copy of the form of licence to be granted, henceforth, by the Royal College of Physicians, London.

“I am directed to state that the Board will, in future, recognise the licence in question as conferring the right to practise both medicine and surgery, and thus rendering the holder of such licence legally qualified for the office of medical officer under the regulations of the Board.

“I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
“ARTHUR W. PEEL, *Secretary*.

“Henry A. Pitman, Esq., M.D., Registrar,
Royal College of Physicians, Pall-mall East.”

THE return of the Poor-law Board gives the number of paupers in the metropolis in the fourth week of July at 124,414, in the proportion of 91,682 out-door to 32,732 in-door. This was a decrease of 2093 upon the figures of the corresponding period of last year.