REMINISCENCES OF THE DUBLIN BIOLOGICAL CLUB.*

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THE object aimed at in this communication, entitled "Reminiscences of the Biological Club," is a retrospective glance at its origin and progress. It can be nothing more than a sketch or outline, both because the subject is large and the canvas small, and because time allows of only the briefest allusion to some of the many persons and places which have at one time or another been identified with this club—a club unique in some respects and peculiar in many.

As the club is now in the twenty-first year of its existence, and as I am one of the five surviving original members who remain connected with it, it has been an amusement to me to look over its records with a view of preserving some information about its early history from falling into oblivion.

The club has gone through three distinct epochs or periods of existence—the first, its infancy, was passed in Trinity College, and lasted for three years; the second, its youth, continued for a space of seven years, during which it was lodged in Great Brunswick-street; and it may now be said to have reached maturity, since it has been located on the premises of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland in Kildare-street, where it is spending the eleventh year of its tenancy, and the twenty-first of its existence.

The Biological Club was formally inaugurated and christened in No. 30 T. C. D., north side of the Belfry-square, on Saturday evening, 6th of January, 1872. On that date a meeting was held there, at 8 p.m., "to consider the expediency of forming a scientific club." There were nine present at this meeting—James Adams Clarke, George Frederick Duffey, Charles Edward Fitzgerald, Arthur Wynne Foot, Thomas Evelyn Little, John Mallet Purser, Henry Rosborough Swanzy, John Todhunter, Gerald Francis Yeo. Some others who had been invited to attend but who were not present at this meeting were—Edward Hallaran Bennett, Edward Wolfenden Collins, Reuben Joshua Harvey, John William Moore, Richard Rainsford. These five latter were co-opted with the nine others present to form the *original* members, making fourteen in all. R. J. Harvey was elected secretary and treasurer for the ensuing year; the subscription was fixed at ten shillings a year, each new member to pay in addition an entrance fee of ten shillings. The election of new

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members was to be by unanimous vote. It was further arranged that the club should meet in No. 30 T. C. D., at 8 p.m., every Saturday night, for eight months in the year, from the last Saturday in October to the last Saturday in June. The chairman—to be elected each evening as soon as three or more members had arrived—was given absolute control over the proceedings.

Of the fourteen *original* members four have left Dublin—J. A. Clarke, E. W. Collins, G. F. Yeo, J. Todhunter, but are all at present (April, 1892) living, and *honorary* members; two others have resigned—J. W. Moore and C. E. Fitzgerald; three have died—R. Rainsford (Feb., 1880), R. J. Harvey (Dec., 1881), and T. E. Little (Nov., 1891). Of the fourteen five still remain in Dublin—E. H. Bennett, G. F. Duffey, A. W. Foot, J. M. Purser, H. R. Swanzy.

Within the first month of its establishment four members were added to the club—all of whom, strange to say, have since died—Robert M'Donnell, Henry Wilson, Benjamin George M'Dowel, and Anthony Corley. Foreseeing a rapid increase in numbers from its then total of eighteen, it was soon (3rd Feb., 1872) resolved that the number of members should be limited to thirty. In the same month (23rd Feb.) it was resolved that each member should contribute a paper, at least once during the year, as a condition of membership. A committee of three was appointed (8th Mar., 1872), called the Morbid Anatomy Committee, to report upon any specimens as to which there might be a difference of opinion; the three selected were T. E. Little, J. M. Purser, and G. F. Yeo. This is now called the Committee of Reference. At the same time it was resolved that recent specimens should have the precedence of papers for the evening; recent specimens were defined to be such as would be injured by being held over to the next meeting. Early in this session (17th Feb., 1872), the night of meeting was changed from Saturday to Friday, chiefly because of Saturday being a very usual night for dinner parties.

The second session (1872-73), opened in T. C. D. (4th Oct., 1872), with twenty-two members, and a balance in favour of the club of £4 17s. 10d., £2 of which was allocated towards the coal fund. R. J. Harvey was re-elected secretary and treasurer for the ensuing year. At the first meeting of this session it was resolved that the mode of election should be changed from its original form—that of an invitation signed by all the members—to a ballot, one black bean in ten to exclude, absent members to have the right of voting by proxy. The night of meeting again changed to Tuesday (by resolution 21st Feb., 1873).

The vigorous nature of the club is indicated by a resolution passed near the end of the session (24th June, 1873), to continue the weekly meetings on all through the summer and autumn months, instead of closing in the last week of June. This step was taken without calling a

general meeting, there then being no fear of "rules" before the eyes of the members. To facilitate this innovation the hour of meeting was changed to 8½ p.m., for the extra evenings. There were exertions made even so long ago as the second year—notice of motion promised—to obtain possession of a good microscope for the use of the meetings. The club continued to meet on Tuesday evenings at 8½ p.m., on through the autumn. The meetings, though not very regular, and often small, were frequently pleasant enough. The minutes of 9th Sept. (1873) record that three members were present. After the conclusion of some light business, it was proposed and seconded, and their being no dissentient—as the chairman sagaciously declined to vote—it was carried, that the club should adjourn to Professor Hynes', in the city, to study the anatomy, physiology, and therapeutic properties of some common bivalve molluscs. There were then no apprehensions of enteric fever latent in the minds of any ostreophagist.

The third session (1873-74), opened in T. C. D., 7th Oct., 1873. R. J. Harvey resigned the office of secretary and treasurer, and G. F. Yeo was elected in his place. A sum, not to exceed £11, was voted from the club funds for the purchase of a microscope. As a result, perhaps, of the over-exhaustion of the previous summer the material for the evening meetings became more and more scanty, and it sometimes looked as if the club would collapse from well-marked uncomplicated starvation. A special discussion took place (14th Oct., 1873) on the best mode of supplying pabulum for each evening of meeting. There was no inclination to repeat last year's experiment of keeping at work all through the summer, and the third session ended 23rd June, 1874.

The fourth session (1874-75), opened with thirty members (the full number) in T. C. D. The room in No. 30 having proved inconveniently small, R. J. Harvey, T. E. Little, and the secretary, G. F. Yeo, were deputed to look out for more commodious quarters. Their labours ended in the renting of a large room in 212 Great Brunswick-street, over Clarendon's Riding School, at the western side of the Queen's Theatre, for a period of six months, at a payment of six shillings an evening. This house now forms part of Mackenzie's buildings facing Tara-street. The first meeting of the club was held in this room, 3rd Nov., 1874, and here the club assembled for seven years, till they moved to the premises of the Royal College of Physicians, in Kildare-street. At the last meeting of this session the secretary and treasurer, G. F. Yeo, tendered his resignation after two years of office; the minute book records that it was accepted "*with acclamation.*" This entry, which is in G. F. Yeo's own unmistakable handwriting, is indicative rather of his personal feelings upon being released from an irksome office, than of any reflection on the part of the club upon the way in which he had discharged his duties.

The first three years of the club's life were passed with the careless indifference of youth in No. 30 T. C. D.—indifference, *i.e.*, to many details of ease and comfort which would now cause a general outcry had they to be submitted to. The meeting room was on the ground floor, the accommodation very unlike what we have at present, but the evenings were often, if not always, as lively and as instructive as they have ever since been in more pretentious quarters. The room belonged to R. J. Harvey and C. B. Ball, the latter was early elected (27th Feb., 1872) an hon. member in recognition of his courtesy in allowing such a weekly trespass on his premises. Seven years later C. B. Ball was elected an ordinary member (21st Oct., 1879). [The conditions of hon. membership were at that time quite different from what they are at present. The order is now confined to "former members of the club who have left Dublin."] R. T. Stack was a parallel instance; he was elected an hon. member while unqualified (18th March, 1873); four months afterwards (1st July, 1873), having taken his degree, R. T. Stack was elected an ordinary member of the club.

Seats were scarce in No. 30, and were secured of course by the earliest arrivals, so that it was one of the first regulations that each new member should provide himself with "a chair, to be left in the club room, whether such person were to continue a member or not." When the rule allowing each member to introduce one visitor was passed, the chairman expressed a hope that owing to the paucity of seats this privilege would be used by the members with discretion. As our room of meeting was low and small, the two windows looking out upon the Belfry-square were usually wide open, both sashes and shutters, for sake of ventilation, and so, the room being on the ground floor, our proceedings were often observed with curiosity by inquisitive students passing to and fro in the courts outside. They were much exercised in mind as to the nature and objects of our assembly. The company seemed too amicable for the meetings to have a political complexion, and not sufficiently dignified to be a branch of the philosophical or theological societies. Some suggested it was a gastronomic sodality, others held it was a vivisection club. It was rumoured among the jibs through Botany Bay that the resurrectionists in No. 30 had been seen handing brains, livers, and kidneys from one to another, and heard saying they were exquisite, and also filling pipes and drinking beer with unwashed hands round a table covered with dishes and trays full of human entrails. Some of them thought it wrong that the Provost should be kept a moment longer in ignorance of this state of things. Occasionally the window spectators gathering courage from their numbers—particularly at the time of year when there was bright daylight—would extemporise witty remarks at the expense of individual members of the club, and sometimes even became so noisy with ironical applause after a learned disquisition on

polio-myelitis or hæmorrhagic infarction as to disturb the stillness of the square itself. On such occasions it would be proposed, seconded, and carried, *nem. con.*, that a sally should be made in force and a victim captured, whose punishment was to be immediate deprivation of the testes without benefit of anæsthesia. The position of the room on the basement allowed of such a threat being rapidly executed, so that the mere suggestion of it was instantly followed by the rapid flight of the busy mockers, who for some time after used show considerable caution in loitering about the windows of No. 30.

In this, the Trinity College, period of the club, beer was the only fluid supplied for refreshment. There was no coffee, no aerated water, no such things as cigars or cigarettes; there was no soap or water, no basins, towels, or spittoons; matches were not provided, a well-twisted light of paper was a convenience not to be lightly cast away, and polite requests of "after you" were the order of the "night." "Churchwardens" were purchased by the gross from the makers in Francis-street, but after a time were given up, as inconvenient from their length, and because the number of fractures among them was incalculable, from want of a suitable place for storage. The beer was kept on draught, in half-barrels, light ale from Greenwood & Pim, of the Harold's-cross Brewery, long since closed; £1 1s. the half-barrel. The cask reposed on a bed of coals on the floor of a small closet, which formed a combination of coal and beer cellar, and also served as a tenement for some guinea pigs, white rats, and a kid which frequently, when in full evening dress, wore a manometer—I think it was called—in its carotid artery, or some other part of its neck, which made it look particularly uncomfortable. The contents of this aforesaid cask were subject to the strangest fluctuations in bulk, to discover either the cause, cure, or prevention of which several scratch and some select committees were appointed. Their reputations for acumen were invariably damaged by collision with a problem which proved to be insoluble. It is to be borne in mind that the solution of every mystery by a microbe had not been then invented, or perhaps a *Coccus beeriophilus* might have been discovered to be the culprit. The theories constructed to account for the remarkable diminution of the beer-content, mostly evolved from clouds of tobacco smoke, were leakage, evaporation, fraudulent paracentesis, and capillary aspiration. Even spontaneous annihilation was mooted—why not? Many then believed in spontaneous generation—why should there not be a Buddhism for beer, when it was the drink of the immortals?—the biological members. The problem remained insoluble. Of course no one was uncharitable enough to suspect the "skip," Tim O'Loughlin by name. "It was poor thin stuff for a working man like him to fancy; when the gintlemin come to his age they would like something a bit stronger. If it was in the regard of sperrits it was, he would not be

agin saying a drop of it would do a body no harm after the cleanin' up the likes of such a room on a fashtin' stummick." His explanation of the phenomenon, as well as it could be gathered from him in rare lucid intervals, was to the effect that the frequent disturbance of the cask, in subtraction of its underlying bed of coals, upset its equilibrium, producing such a redistribution of molecules as to effect a liquid sclerosis and diminution of bulk. He had always heard that no noise or commotion was ever allowed near the celebrated "*October ale*" where it reposed, on stately oaken trestles, in the college cellars. Various preventive measures were in turn suggested, and objected to or rejected. It was as true then as now that preventable diseases strongly object to being prevented. Among the remedies proposed for the atrophy of the beer-content one was to introduce, with due solemnity, into the cask $\frac{3}{4}$ oz. of the *antimonium tartarisatum*, B.P., and await the notification of acute illness in the district. This came from a disciple of Æsculapius. A pupil of Galen, who was the inventor of a thirty-ninth method of treating fractured patella, suggested that a trapdoor should be constructed in the floor through which the cask might be raised to the upper air while the club was in session and restored to its mausoleum each night before the chairman left the chair. The beer-coal-closet could not be kept locked because, in addition to the menagerie, it afforded shelter to a dilapidated slobbucket and a headless broomhandle; and the skip, in his anxiety to keep the room clean, found it necessary to have access at all times to these hygienic implements. Experience finally taught us that to keep the beer in bottles was a more convenient and economical arrangement, and it has been the method adopted during the second and third periods of the club's life.

In the three years while the club met in T. C. D. it held 110 meetings, the average attendance at which was nine, the maximum number present seventeen, the minimum three. This minimum number was in the second year (2nd Sept., 1873), when the club was meeting in the autumnal months, and when its vital force was at the lowest ebb. The greater number of the communications made were of a purely pathological nature, very few of a surgical, and still fewer of an obstetrical purport were made. The exhibition of a living specimen was unheard of.

The fourth year of the club opened in 30 T. C. D. (7th Oct., 1874), but within one month its quarters had been shifted to 212 Great Brunswick-street, where it held its first meeting on 3rd Nov., 1874. It appears that the commencement of this year found the club flush in cash, because the opening meeting concluded with a resolution, in acting on which no time was lost, that the club do adjourn without delay to D'Olier-street to eat oysters, "*at its own expense*." This method of assimilating the funds was questioned at a subsequent meeting as a misappropriation of the club property, but a motion, on the part of some of the absentees on the

occasion, censuring the ringleaders in this extravagance fell to the ground, and ended "in a great smoke." However, the symposium which inaugurated this session will, like O'Rourke's noble feast—

. . . N'er be forgot,
By those who were there, and
By those who were not.

The fifth session, 1875-76, finds the club meeting on Tuesday evenings in 212 Great Brunswick-street. Treasurer's account showed balance due to late treasurer (G. F. Yeo), of £1 2s. 7½d. At the first meeting the offices of secretary and treasurer, hitherto combined, were separated, and C. J. Nixon was elected secretary and R. J. Harvey treasurer, for the ensuing year. Hon. members, in the present sense of the term, were instituted at the opening meeting (5th Oct., 1875). A great desire to be tied and bound by rules, perhaps in consequence of the recent irregularities in the way of suppers, led to the appointment of a committee (C. E. Fitzgerald, A. W. Foot, R. J. Harvey, J. M. Purser), to manufacture fetters. The result was a code of 41, since increased to 44 rules. Ballot was altered from 1 in 10 to 1 in 7 (its present form). The enactment of penal laws reached a climax on 12th Oct., 1875, when the celebrated rule, No. XXI., called the guillotine, was adopted. This rule then read as follows:—"Any member who shall not attend at least three times in a session, or assign a satisfactory cause for his absence to the annual general meeting next following, shall, *ipso facto*, cease to be a member." A resolution was carried (23rd Nov., 1875) that every member should, in alphabetical order, make a communication to the club or find a substitute to do so, under a penalty of 5s. for the first offence, 10s. for the second, and forfeiture of membership for the third. This rule never produced much money. However, three years after it was made, at the last meeting of the session 1878-79, Stewart Woodhouse apologised for having failed to make his stated communication, and begged to offer the club half-a-dozen of best champagne in lieu of fine. The offer was accepted, without a dissentient voice, even on the part of the total abstainers, as a spirited equivalent, and it was even hinted that it would be agreeable if some of the other members would, now and then, present their communications in this sparkling form. What became of the champagne does not appear on the face of the minutes, nor would it be fair to expect it to do so. The precedent has not been at all generally followed—in fact it still remains unique; but, as history is said to repeat itself, we know not when some modern member may wish to rival the deeds of the good and great of former times.

On one evening in the sixth session (21st Nov., 1876), Dr. Brown-Séquard was present as the guest of R. M'Donnell. The illustrious visitor expressed his approval of what he saw and heard, but made no allusion to the club about his *elixir vite*.

The club had been hardly two years in Great Brunswick-street when it began to look about for other quarters, for at a special meeting (28th Nov., 1876) it was resolved to seek the permission of the College of Physicians to meet on their premises. The next allusion to the club-room is on 17th April, 1877, when the secretary announced that the Chief Secretary for Ireland had, at the request of the Council, allowed the room in which the club met to be registered under the Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876. The first death in the club occurred at the end of this session, when it lost a valued and influential member in the person of Henry Wilson, who died from pneumonia, at the age of forty, on 13th June, 1877, at his house in Merrion-square, West (now No. 94). He was not an original member, but had been over five years in the club. He was Senior Surgeon to St. Mark's Hospital, and had been for some years at the head of his department of surgery. He was universally liked for his friendly and affable manner. He made many communications to the club on the surgery of the eye. There is no record of his death in the minutes of the club, as he died the day after the closing meeting in June, and he seems to have been, like other dead men, out of mind at the beginning of the next session. There are, however, still many here and elsewhere who require no minute to call up agreeable recollections of Henry Wilson.

In the commencement of the ninth session (21st Oct., 1879), an invitation from the directors of the Carmichael School to meet on their premises in Aungier-street was declined. Two £3 10s. Leitz microscopes, with stands and lamps, were ordered to be purchased for the club (28th Oct., 1879). R. J. Harvey resigned the secretaryship and his seat on the council, and C. B. Ball was thereupon elected to the vacant seat on the council, and subsequently (at same meeting) elected secretary. C. B. Ball had been elected an ordinary member of the club (21st Oct., 1879), one week previously, though he had been an hon. member since Feb., 1872, as part proprietor of the room in T. C. D. The explanation of his rapid promotion to the council after one week's membership was his long and intimate connection with the club. In the course of this session the club lost another member in Richard Bookey, who died in Jan., 1880, of phthisis, in his thirty-fourth year. He was one of the physicians to Dr. Steevens' Hospital, to which he had been appointed only twenty-two months. He was within a few weeks of having been for six years a member of the club. He was known as a successful private teacher, and an able pathologist and microscopist. He was of a silent habit and retiring manner, but could speak with energy and to the point on any subject within his own range of knowledge. Of modest, unassuming disposition, he never obtruded his information, though always ready to impart it to any inquirer. He was minutely accurate in everything which concerned his special studies. He belonged to the class of men who do a good deal and make very little

noise about it, rather than to that of those who do very little and make a great deal of noise about it.

A month afterwards there was another loss to the club in the death of Richard Rainsford, Senior Surgeon St. Mark's Hospital. He had been in delicate health for two years, and died, at the age of thirty-two, on 17th Feb., 1880. He was the first of the original members to drop off the list. It was a remarkable fact that, within a space of not quite four years, death had three times removed the Senior Surgeon of St. Mark's Ophthalmic Hospital. For seven months Richard Rainsford had been a confirmed invalid, and his death could only be regarded as a merciful release from his sufferings. Condolences were voted by the club to the relatives of these deceased members. In this session the presence of a reporter was objected to by the members, and Professor Haughton, in consequence, withdrew his paper on the subject of the execution of Martin M'Hugh.

At the opening meeting of the tenth session, 1880-81, Dr. Gordon fell under the guillotine of Rule XXI. In this session (18th Feb., 1881), another loss occurred in the case of Edward Peele, who died, aged forty-two, on the 13th day of typhus, contracted as medical officer of High-street Dispensary. Edward Peele had been in the club nearly six years. He was a native of Durham. On first coming to Dublin he was attached to the choir of St. Patrick's Cathedral, where he afterwards was a vicar choral. He had a remarkably fine tenor voice, and possessed a sound musical training and knowledge. He gradually gave up the study of music and took to that of medicine. He was connected with the Hospital for Incurables, the Hospital for the Throat and Ear, and with the Coombe Lying-in Hospital. He enjoyed the confidence and respect of all who knew him. Funeral services in honour of his memory were held in St. Patrick's and Christ's Church Cathedrals, as well as in the Chapel of Trinity College, on Sunday, 20th Feb., 1881. A stained glass memorial window was put up to him in St. Patrick's Cathedral; and Sir Francis William Brady, Bart., was the author of the touching lines on his death which appeared in *British Medical Journal*, Vol. I., 1881, p. 488.

Hushed is the voice so lately raised
In sweetest notes of sacred song;
Those notes, that God so oft have praised,
To God, for evermore, belong.

Cold is the hand that oft has led
The weary sufferer back from death,
When, by some lonely pain-racked bed,
Each moment seemed the last of breath.

Still is the heart, so warm and true,
That ever beat at honour's call,
Whate'er was right, 'twas his to do,
To duty live, to duty fall.

The eleventh session (1881-82) opened again in Great Brunswick-street. At the annual general meeting J. M. Purser came under the guillotine of Rule XXI., but by unanimous vote of the meeting his name was retained. Communications were reopened with the College of Physicians about meeting on their premises, and notice was received from the registrar, Dr. Finny (8th Nov., 1881), that the College had granted the required permission. The club availed itself without delay of this concession, and moved there in December, 1881. Strange to say there is no notice on the minutes of this change of venue till several years after when a meeting is headed College of Physicians, Kildare-street. Dr. P. S. Abraham was elected secretary 22nd Nov., 1881. Immediately after the move into Kildare-street the club sustained a great blow in the death of another of its original members. Reuben Joshua Harvey, aged 36, died on the tenth day of typhus, caught in Cork-street Fever Hospital. He had been secretary or treasurer—sometimes one, sometimes the other, at other times both combined—for the first nine years of its existence. He had attended and joined in discussion at a meeting of the club (13th Dec., 1881), five days before he sickened. He continued to attend the hospital patient from whom he had taken the infection until his own illness had lasted at least twenty-four hours. The authorities of Cork-street Hospital considered that they had lost the services of “a most able, learned, and conscientious physician.” In the vote of condolence passed by the club to his widow (3rd Jan., 1882), he was correctly described as “one of the founders of the club, to whose untiring zeal its success was mainly due.” An obituary notice, dealing at length with his merits, will be found in vol. 73, p. 174, of the *Dublin Journal of Medical Science*.

A review of the second stage, or the Brunswick-street period, of the Biological Club, shows that the club met in that quarter for a period of seven years, holding there 257 meetings, an average of 36 in the year. The average attendance at these 257 meetings was $9\frac{3}{4}$, maximum number 19, minimum 3; this was a slight increase over the average attendance in T. C. D. During a large, and that the earlier, portion of these seven years, Dr. C. J. Nixon filled the arduous post of secretary. One of his duties, and not the easiest, was to see that the fire was properly lighted in good time on Tuesday evenings. The room was noisy, owing to the proximity of the thoroughfare of Brunswick-street, draughty from its construction, and chilly from its size, and because the condition of any fire at all depended upon the energy and punctuality of the secretary. There was also a difficulty about the disposal of morbid specimens which had not existed in T. C. D. Sometimes those who brought them down to the meeting forgot or omitted to take them away again. This did not suit, as the night after our meeting the “Association of the Amalgamated Ironmongers’ Assistants” met there to discuss matters of great import-

ance, and on the following evening the "Solicitors' Apprentices' Debating Union." The objections raised by these learned bodies to the presence of even "exquisite pathological specimens" were so marked, that a rule was made that the club would defray any legitimate expense—to be interpreted as "a car fare within the borough after 10 p.m."—incurred in their removal. On the whole the reminiscences of the comforts of 212 Great Brunswick-street are not so pleasant as those of No. 30 T. C. D. A marked result of the change from T. C. D. to Great Brunswick-street was the exhibition of living specimens. There had been a difficulty about getting such into and out of College, and besides that there was no place to store them in No. 30, while waiting, unless in the menagerie. There is no record of a "live specimen" having been brought before the club while in T. C. D.; but in the fourth session, 1874–75, the first year of meeting in Great Brunswick-street, five were brought forward: one eye, one ear, and three medical cases; in the fifth session two, the sixth none, the seventh one, the eighth one, the ninth one, the tenth four, making fourteen live specimens during the seven years the club met there, an average of two a year. The exhibition of live specimens, as they were called, was not always viewed with approval by some of the senior members of the club, who thought that the parade might be uncomfortable to the patients, and that it was also to be regarded as a ready means of arriving at a diagnosis by gratuitous consultation. T. E. Little in particular objected to it, as foreign to the nature and aim of the club, and I never remember him to have shown a living specimen himself. At the end of the Brunswick-street period the proposal to have an annual dinner at Bohernabreena, in the Dublin mountains, was discussed. It met with general approval, and the first dinner of the club took place there in June, 1881. The amusement, after dinner, used to be flying kites, shaped like hawks and other predatory fowl; then quoit-playing came into fashion; of later years the *mode* has been firing with rifles at *empty* champagne bottles; no fatal accident has yet occurred, except to the bottles. The cost of the dinner was at first shared among those who chose to dine; now a sum is annually voted from the club funds towards the entertainment.

The Kildare-street period of the club began with P. S. Abraham as secretary (elected 22nd Nov., 1881). He held this office for three years. For the seven years since he resigned office G. P. Nugent has reigned in his stead. The treasurers of the Kildare-street period have been—C. J. Nixon (two years), C. B. Ball (three years), and W. G. Smith (five years). In the first session of our meeting in Kildare-street a heavy mass of a cornice fell on an evening meeting, and several of the members—T. E. Little especially—had narrow escapes of being hurt. This period of the Biological Club, being comparatively recent, need not be entered into with much detail. The thirteenth session, 1882–83, opened

with the full number (30) of members. Professor Macalister came under Rule XXI.; his excuse was accepted. The treasurer's report showing a deficiency of £3 1s., the annual subscription was, with one dissentient voice, raised to £1. An attempt to increase the stringency of Rule XXI., by changing 3 to 5 or 6, failed, and it remained as before, till recently when it has been raised to 5. It was proposed to raise the number of members from 30 to 40; a compromise of 33 was arrived at. This number was fixed on as corresponding to the number of evening meetings, so that each member might have a night for his stated annual communication. At the annual meeting of the fourteenth session (1883-84), Professor Houghton, Professor Macalister, and H. Fitzgibbon were sentenced under Rule XXI. The club, appalled at the prospect of such a hecatomb, accepted explanations. The increased annual subscription having produced a balance in favour of the club, suggestions were made to return to the former 10s. subscription and negatived. The council, in the largeness of their heart, at the close of the session voted a sum of £10 towards the Bohernabreena dinner. This was providential, as in the next session (1884-85) the surplus (small) was lost in the Munster Bank.

There were no deaths in the club during the T. C. D. period. There were three in the Brunswick-street period—Bookey, Rainsford, and Peele. In the Kildare-street period four occurred. That of R. J. Harvey took place, as before mentioned, immediately after the change from Brunswick-street, and left a *hiatus valde deflendus*. For nearly ten years there were none, of existing members of the club, till three came in succession, like thunder claps, each most unexpected; and by these deaths the Biological constellation lost three of its stars of the first magnitude. Robert M'Donnell died suddenly, on 6th May, 1889. The meeting of the club, held on the following day, was adjourned in consequence, and a wreath of flowers was ordered to be sent on the part of the members to be laid on his coffin. He had been over seventeen years in the club. He had just completed his 61st year. He had returned from a holiday on the continent a few days before his death, and said he had not felt so well for a long time. On Sunday evening he dined with his venerable father (then aged 91), on his return home he wrote letters for some time and went to bed—at one o'clock, a.m., he was dead. His next door neighbour, Dr. Cruise, had been immediately sent for, but only to find his dear friend was past his aid. On 1st December, 1890, A. H. Corley died in his 50th year. He, like R. M'Donnell, had been over seventeen years a member of the club. About twelve months after, on the night of 9th November, 1891, Thomas E. Little died in his house, 42 Great Brunswick-street, unexpectedly, like both those who had preceded him. Though, probably, each of them was personally aware that he had not long to live, few outsiders were aware of the secret, which is

one which medical men, because they know it so well, try to conceal, if they can, even from themselves, until the dumbness and greyness of dissolution reveal it to all. Tom Little showed his interest in the Biological Club by the regularity with which he attended its meetings. For many years he headed the list of members with the greatest number of attendances. He was not an incessant contributor, but every subject he brought forward—no matter how dry or commonplace—he immediately invested with an interest unsuspected of being resident in it; he discussed it in an original way, showed it in new lights, and made unforeseen points about it; consequently whenever he spoke he was listened to with profound attention. He was an accomplished man in many ways; a Scholar of the House, as well as the holder of a medical scholarship (1863). He was a great lover of chess, delighting in “the bloodless war that breeds good will.” I have seen him, more than a dozen times, sitting down after 10 p.m. in the University Club to solve the chess problems in the *Dublin Evening Mail* for relaxation. He had that combination of chivalry and love of analysis without which no one can enjoy chess. He was a good musician, and had a sweet, flexible voice. His singing at some of the earlier Bohernabreena dinners will be long remembered by those who heard it. There were some who said of Tom Little “*plus aloës quam mellis habet*,” but while his sweetness was never so intense as to be unwholesome, there was nothing corrosive in his tartness. He was a very general favourite, and his large funeral was attended by many who wore more crape upon their hearts than on their hats. He was one of the *original* members; in fact he belonged to the club in its embryonic condition, before it had an independent habitation or a name. Dr. Duffey, Professor Purser, and Mr. Swanzy will recollect the period I allude to, when the primordial germ of the present club met at my house in 21 Lower Pembroke-street, on Thursday evenings, for more than a year before its establishment in T. C. D. Tom Little was one of those who most strongly urged a change of meeting place on the grounds that it was inconvenient to bring specimens, &c., into sitting-rooms, and also that so much smoking and the noise of animated debates are not quite suited for a dwellinghouse. Tom Little never held the post of either Secretary or Treasurer, but was almost a standing member of the Council, was for twenty years on the Committee of Reference, and was as often as possible voted into the chair at the weekly meetings.

A review of the ten years during which the club has been in Kildare-street discloses a marked expansion in two directions—(a) in the variety of refreshments provided; (b) in the exhibition of living specimens. The original light ale is replaced now by beer in variety (Lager, Bass, &c.); mineral waters in variety; coffee, cigars, cigarettes, snuff, in addition to cut tobacco of the choicest description. The number of waiting-rooms on the College premises in Kildare-street facilitated the exhibition of

living specimens by affording convenient cages for them. During the whole seven years of the Brunswick-street period the number of living specimens brought before the club was 14. In the first year alone of the Kildare-street period the number exceeded that of the previous seven years, for it was 15. Taking the first seven years of the Kildare-street period, 123 living specimens were shown—an average of over 17 each session. An analysis of these 123 shows the large preponderance of eye cases, three times as many as those of any other class—*e.g.*, eye cases, 63; skin cases, 19; medical cases, 10; surgical, 20; dental, 3; laryngeal or throat, 3; pathological, 5; total, 123. Of the 14 patients brought down to the Brunswick-street room in seven years there were—eye cases, 3; ear, 1; pathological, 1; medical, 9. The patients brought to Kildare-street in seven years were 8·7 times as numerous as those brought in a similar period of time to Brunswick-street. None were ever brought to T.C.D. These facts show the marked progress the club has made in the direction of teaching by demonstration. There have also been several exhibitions of recent years with the lantern and limelight. The obstetric element is much more forward than it was in earlier years.

The club, now in its twenty-first year, has lived down much vilification, and falsified many predictions. It was prophesied, over and over again, that it would soon fall to pieces, that so many dissentient interests could not cohere long. Instead of that, it seems to have the secret of perpetual youth—not alas individually, for some at least must say of themselves, *non sum qualis eram*. The secret lies in the fact of its being constantly recruited from the ranks of rising merit, and annually renovated with an infusion of the best and freshest blood. The fatal Rule XXI. chops off the head of each according as he becomes wilfully careless, or hopelessly effete. It has been urged that it is a disadvantage thus to lop off the seniors, as age, infirmity, or occupation interfere with their regular attendance, and that payment of their subscription might be enough to expect from them, since they are not likely to occupy the room or consume the refreshments. But still this rule, though it often prunes away some acquiring weight and influence which might be at any time needful, is a mainspring in the vitality of the club of great importance.

The Biological Club in its early years had to put up with many sneers and scoffs, not always on the part of the youngest members of the profession. It was said to be a mutual admiration society, which met to bandy compliments under a canopy of tobacco smoke. It was called a tabagie or tobacco parliament—a Tabaks-collegium; the German Band, by those who boasted of belonging to the *Old School*—a phrase generally meaning any school which seems never to have been young; the Beeriological Club, and other names suggestive of the ridicule which often is the truest homage ignorance can offer to superiority. Yet the club flourished and increased in repute and importance, so much so that it has

long been no unusual matter for papers, &c., intended for various Sections of the Royal Academy of Medicine, to be presented here for a full-dress rehearsal—to be trotted out, as it were, before the club, that their action, style, and paces might be criticised—and they are often admitted to be the better of the touching up they get before they reach the ears of the Royal Academicians, for free and friendly discussion is the essential characteristic of the Biological Club. It will be generally admitted that fear of open discussion implies feebleness of inward conviction, and that great sensitiveness to the expression of individual opinion is a mark of weakness. Truth is tough—it does not break like a bubble at a touch; kick it up and down and from side to side all day, and like a good football, it will be round and full at night. Though we have had several quiet-going members, who seemed to hold that the only condition of peace in the present world is to have no ideas at all, or at least not to express them but in reference to the most elementary propositions, yet on many occasions our discussions, when the steel and flint of trained intellects came into friendly collision, have proved a real spading-up of the ground for crops of thought.

The prediction of the speedy resolution of the Biological Club into its primary constituents has not been verified. It forms, on the contrary, an amalgamation in which religious, political, or social distinction is unknown and unheard-of. Seniors and juniors meet together in its room, though they may be far enough apart outside. Those who are firmly seated in the saddle of professional success, exchange ideas with those who are but winning their spurs. Every college, hospital, and school in Dublin is represented in it; President of Royal College and Private Teacher, Demonstrator and Professor, meet here on equal terms. The only qualification for welcome admission is to be a *bonâ fide* worker in some department of medicine, general or special. The result of the harmonious co-operation of all—*quisque in sua arte*—is the mutual benefit and instruction of each of the members of the B.C., as it is familiarly called. I remember no instance, nor have I ever heard of any personal unpleasantness arising out of a meeting of the Biological Club. It is a significant fact that, among its extensive body of rules there is not one dealing with the expulsion of a member. Had there ever been any need for such a rule, it could and would have been quickly made. There are three ways in which a member can commit a Biological *suicide*, and get out of the club in a rapid manner—by Rule 13, being in arrears of his subscription for over 12 months; by Rule 19, the third failure to make his stated communication forfeits membership; and by Rule 21, insufficient attendance without valid excuse. This last rule is the saw which removes any decaying branches before the canker can spread to the main stem.

It now only remains for me to apologise for such a prolonged trespass on the attention of many to whom the details of the distant past may be

rather uninteresting, and who would perhaps have been much better pleased had I, following the example of Stewart Woodhouse, bottled up this dry communication, and paid the penalty for doing so by a dozen of champagne.

List of past and present Members of the Dublin Biological Club.

[Originals in Italics.]

DATE OF ELECTION.			
Abraham, P. S.	-	Oct. 21, '79	- Hon. member.
Bagot, W.	-	Nov. 4, '90.	
Baker, A. W.	-	Oct. 30, '83.	
Ball, C. B.	-	Oct. 21, '79	- Sec. Oct. 28, '79; Treas. Oct. 2, '83.
Battersby, W. E.	-	April 5, '72	- Erased Oct. '72.
Beatty, W.	-	Oct. 26, '86.	
<i>Bennett, E. H.</i>	-	Jan. 6, '72.	
Benson, A.	-	Oct., '85.	
Bewley, H. T.	-	Oct. 26, '86.	
Blackhall	-	Dec. 12, '76	- Resigned.
Bookey, R.	-	Feb. 3, '74	- Died Jan. '80.
<i>Clarke, J. A.</i>	-	Jan. 6, '72	- Hon. Member.
<i>Collins, E. W.</i>	-	Jan. 6, '72	- Hon. Member.
Coppinger, C.	-	Mar. 24, '74	- Rule XXI.
Corley, A. H.	-	Feb. 3, '72	- Died Dec. 1, '90.
Cruise, F. R.	-	1876	- Resigned.
Cunningham, D.	-	Nov. 7, '82	- Resigned, Oct. 15, '89.
Drury, H.	-	Nov. 3, '91.	
<i>Duffey, G. F.</i>	-	Jan. 6, '72.	
Earl, H. C.	-	Oct. 22, '89.	
<i>Fitzgerald, C. E.</i>	-	Jan. 6, '72	- Resigned.
Fitzgibbon, H.	-	July 8, '73.	
<i>Foot, A. W.</i>	-	Jan. 6, '72.	
Franks, K.	-	Dec. 12, '76.	
Gordon, S.	-	Mar. 24, '74	- Rule XXI.
Gunn, Christopher	-	1878	- Resigned, Oct. 7, '79.
<i>Harvey, R. J.</i>	-	Jan. 6, '72	- Died Dec. 28, '81.
Haughton, Rev. S.	-	Nov. 30, '75	- Rule XXI.
Hayes, Richd.	-	Feb. 17, '80.	
Hayes, Pat	-	Oct. 12, '80	- Rule XXI.
Heuston, F. T.	-	Feb. 2, '92.	
Kane	-	Dec. 16, '73	- Resigned.
Lentaigne, J. V.	-	Oct. 14, '84.	
Little, James	-	July 29, '73.	
<i>Little, Thos. E.</i>	-	Jan. 6, '72	- Died Nov. 10, 1891.
Macalister, A.	-	Feb. 17, '80	- Resigned.
Macan, A. V.	-	Dec. 13, '72.	
M'Kee, A.	-	Oct. 26, '86	- Resigned, Oct. 14, '90.
M'Donnell, R.	-	Jan. 20, '72	- Died May 6, '89.
M'Dowel, B. G.	-	Feb. 3, '72	- Died Sept. 15, '75.
<i>Moore, J. W.</i>	-	Jan. 6, '72	- Resigned.
Neville, W.	-	Nov. 8, '81	- Rule XXI., Oct. 9, '88.
Nixon, C. J.	-	Feb. 3, '74	- Sec. '75-'78; Treas. '79-'83.

DATE OF ELECTION.

Norman, C.	-	-	
Nugent, G. P.	-	Oct. 12, '80	- Sec. '86-'92.
Patteson, R. G.	-	Oct. 22, '89.	
Peele, Edw.	-	May 4, '75	- Died Feb. 18, 1881.
Purser, J. M.	-	Jan. 6, '72.	
Rainsford, Rd.	-	Jan. 6, '72	- Died Feb. 17, 1880.
Redmond, D.	-	Oct. 21, '79.	
Redmond, J. M.	-	Feb. 2, '92.	
Scott, J. A.	-	-	1888.
Smith, W. G.	-	April 5, '72	- Resigned; re-elected Feb. 7, '82.
Smyly, W. J.	-	Nov. 7, '82.	
Stack, Theod.	-	July 1, '73	- Resigned, Oct. 5, '86.
Stoker, W. T.	-	April 19, '72.	
Stokes, Sir Wm.	-	Jan. 29, '84.	
Story, J. B.	-	-	1879.
Swanzy, H. R.	-	Jan. 6, '72.	
Thomson, W.	-	Dec. 13, '72	- Resigned, 1891.
Tobin, R.	-	Mar. 24, '91	
Todhunter, J.	-	Jan. 6, '72	- Hon. Member.
Wilson, H.	-	Feb. 3, '72	- Died June, 1877.
Woodhouse, S.	-	Dec. 12, '76	- Resigned.
Wright, W. M.	-	Nov. 8, '81.	
Yeo, G. F.	-	Jan. 6, '72	- Hon. Member, 1875; Sec. and Treas., 1874-76

THE BROOKLYN MEDICAL JOURNAL.

THIS monthly is in its sixth year, but we do not remember to have reviewed a specimen before. The November (1891) issue is before us—64 8vo. pages of professional matter, with a dense integument of advertisements. There are four original articles—one devoted to that obsolescent subject, Dr. Koch's lymph. A section is devoted to Progress in Medicine under eight heads, each in charge of a distinct reporter. From the vital statistics for July we take the following figures:—The estimated population of Brooklyn was 862,155. 2,316 deaths in July give an annual mortality, the report states, of 31·38 per 1,000. For comparison we have the annual mortality of eight other large cities deduced from July death-rate as follows:—New York, 32·85; Philadelphia, 24·18; Berlin, 18·76; Vienna, 25·18; Paris, 20·57; London, 19·76; Glasgow, 23·74; Dublin, 21·98. 52 deaths were due to "violence." Total deaths under 5 years were 1,466, under one year 1,126.

SALICYLIC ACID IN CERTAIN FORMS OF CYSTITIS.

DR. J. P. BRYSON says (*Medical News*, Philadelphia, September 26, 1891) that he uses $\mathfrak{z}$ i of a 2 per cent. solution of salicylic acid in glycerine with $\mathfrak{z}$ v of water for washing out the bladders of patients with chronic exudative cystitis. It succeeds when borax fails.