

doubtful cases of typhoid. I am desirous, therefore, of advising my professional brethren to forbid the use of tobacco, at all events, during the prevalence of an epidemic of typhoid fever. I would at the same time mention that I have found the vegetable astringent catechu the best counteracting remedy against diarrhoea when arising from tobacco.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Nayland, Dec. 30th, 1856. T. HARROLD FENN, M.R.C.S.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Your correspondent, Mr. M'Donagh, states, in THE LANCET of last week, that, in a long residence amongst the Turks, he met several old and hale men; and he thereby concludes that smoking is *not* injurious. He presumes that the ill-effects in this, and other countries, is owing to the weed being stronger than the Turkish, and likewise to its being greatly adulterated with us. In this last opinion, I freely coincide with him. But he forgets, while on the subject, to state that the Turks, when smoking, or indeed at any other time, (as is the case with other nations,) never partake of beer or spirituous liquors!

Let me now enter on my reply to the above query: "Is tobacco injurious?" Is it not a provocative or incentive to strong drinks, as the supposed derivation of the word signifies, *Τὸ Βαχχῆ*—(*To Bacchus*)—by drying up the stomach, (this is particularly the case with the paper cigarettes), and thereby causing cardialgy, palpitation of the heart, and a hurried circulation of that organ? Is it not the cause of muscular debility, jaundice, cancer of the tongue, nervous debility, weakness of the extremities, the tottering knee, trembling hands, and, in very many cases, of insanity? (See Reports of Lunatic Asylums.) Mr. M'Donagh likewise forgets the difference of climates: that what may be requisite in the one, is poison in the other—as in the case with wines!

Dr. Solly rightly traces paralysis to smoking; and Dr. Webster states that, in the post-mortem examinations of inveterate smokers, cretinism is always present. Are not certain workmen—hair-dressers, masons, grinders, &c.—subject to pulmonary complaints from the fact of inhaling certain particles of dust, &c.? Are we not cautioned against the unhealthiness of London smoke? And what is this last, compared with the daily acro-narcotic smoke the smoker inhales? Mr. M'Donagh must likewise remember, that the Turks never use cigars or short clay-pipes, both of which are much stronger than their long hookahs; by using which last, the smoke becomes cool before it reaches the lungs.

In fine, I think I can trace the true cause of consumption (transmitted from patients to their offspring) to this one curse of "smoking." Is not the habit becoming, in the United States, "small by degrees, and beautifully less"? In veterinary works, I find tobacco described as "an acro-narcotic poison, principally used as a wash for the mange, and to destroy lice and fly in sheep;" but it is not altogether safe, as it is apt to be absorbed. In some parts of France, jockeys are said to stupefy vicious horses for sale by tobacco infused in spirits." This has reference to *chewers* of tobacco. My own observations have led me to notice that smoking may possibly have the effect (I have my doubts) of soothing the constitution for a time; but that immediately after the sedative effects have passed away, only to render the constitution doubly irritable. One thing I am certain of—it is suicide to the sedentary.

Perhaps some M.D. will inform me, whether "longevity" is to be found amongst the everlasting-inveterate smoking Spaniards or Frenchmen?

Brevis esse laboro
Obscurus fio—

Your obedient servant,

December, 1856.

J. B. NEIL.

P.S.—I must here add, that drinking cold water, or water slightly acidulated with tartaric or citric acid is an efficacious corrective for the headache and ill effects caused by an over-indulgence in tobacco-smoking!

ROYAL MEDICAL RENEVOLENT COLLEGE.

[We have been requested to publish the following letter:—]

Cheltenham, December 23rd, 1856.

MY DEAR MR. PROPERT,—Will you be kind enough to inform me when and where the special general meeting of the governors of the R. M. B. C. takes place, in order that I may,

if practicable, be there to give your committee, and yourself in particular, my feeble support on that frivolous and vexatious question, the very moderate charge of £40 per annum for the education, board, &c., of the exhibitors. Let those that are dissatisfied with such reasonable terms reflect that if, through false economy, they refuse to strengthen the hands of your committee, they must put up with an ill-paid and inferior class of teachers, and that the education of our sons will be second- or third-rate, instead of being, as we all desire it to be, equal to that of the best of our public schools.

I quite concur in the sentiments of Mr. Stilwell, "that by kind consideration and liberal assistance to strengthen the hands and cheer the minds of those so anxiously engaged in establishing and promoting the well-doing of so valuable an institution," we shall simply be doing our duty to the rising generation.

I have much pleasure in accepting the terms of £40 per annum, and trust that my youngest son, Owen Dalton, may be permitted to become an exhibitor immediately after the vacation.

I would also beg to propose, as a standing rule of your excellent institution, that you follow the example of our excellent college in receiving the exhibitors' fees for education in *advance*. On no account whatever permit the expenses to fall below £40 per annum; and by all means insist upon prepayments. I would suggest that £10 be paid quarterly in advance, for the convenience of all parties.

At the Cheltenham College, payments are made half-yearly in advance. It is estimated by the parents of boys at our college that the entire expenses of board, education, stationary, travelling, &c., average £100 per annum. Here there is a saving of at least one-half.

Pray make what use you like of my letters, and believe me, my dear Sir, to be amongst the members of our profession who owe you a deep debt of gratitude. Faithfully yours,

J. PROPERT, Esq.

WM. DALTON.

P.S. The expenses for board and education at the Swansea Grammar School are £64 per annum.

Obituary.

DR. PARIS, PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS.

It is with very sincere regret that we announce the death of this excellent and distinguished man, which occurred on the morning of the 24th ult., at half-past eight o'clock, at his residence, in Dover-street. Few men have run so long and at the same time so honourable a career. For half a century precisely Dr. Paris had practised as a physician, and had risen to the very highest honours which it was in the power of his professional brethren to bestow. He was born at Cambridge on the 7th of August, in the year 1785, and at twenty-two years of age he was elected physician to the Westminster Hospital—a most distinguished honour for so young a man; and he continued in the active exercise of his professional duties until within a fortnight of his death. For fifty years, then—a considerable period even in the history of a nation—was the gentleman to whose memory we would fain offer a slight tribute of respect actually engaged in the alleviation of suffering and in the relief of afflicted humanity. To Dr. Paris, as is well known in the profession and to all persons more intimately acquainted with his career, the office of physician was no hireling's work, to be hurried through for the purpose of accumulating a fortune or earning distinction. It was the business and glory of his life. When but fourteen years of age he commenced his studies for the arduous profession on which he was about to enter, and followed them up with a zeal incredible in so young a person; when he had attained the ripe age of three-score years and ten, the old man, true to the resolution of the boy, voluntarily took upon himself the arduous duties of President of the Medical Council of the Board of Health, and with his own hand wrote the introductory report on the cholera of 1854. His personal history may be dismissed in a few brief sentences. Born at Cambridge, as we have said, in 1785, he became a member of Caius College, in that University, and graduated when very young in medicine. Amongst his contemporaries he was distinguished for the extent and elegance of his classical attainments. The Classical Tripos was not then in existence, and so, independently of the exigencies of his medical degree, he had not