

DR. LANKESTER ON FOOD.

IT cannot be denied that the human body is influenced at least as powerfully by the food we take as by the medicine which we more rarely and unwillingly swallow. A course of lectures on food, therefore, seems a most useful and important preliminary to a course on *materia medica*. This subject is, however, usually slurred over, or very imperfectly handled, by lecturers on *materia medica*. The natural result is, that the study of food is considerably neglected by medical men, while by the general laity it is almost wholly ignored. Dr. Lankester has long been a prominent and eloquent exponent of the chemical, economic, and dietetic relations of food; and when the elevation of Dr. Lyon Playfair to the Chemical Chair in the University of Edinburgh rendered vacant the office of Superintendent of the Animal Product and Food Collections at the South Kensington Museum, Dr. Lankester was named as an able successor in that office. With characteristic energy, he set himself to forward the active development of these most interesting collections, and has resolved to make them as fully available as may be for general instruction. By the permission of the Committee of the Council of Education, he has initiated a course of six lectures on Food, to be delivered in the Lecture Theatre at South Kensington on Monday evenings, the 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th of May, and 6th of June, at eight o'clock, at a merely nominal fee. The object of the course will be to explain the nature and sources of human food; and, with this view, the chemical properties of food are demonstrated, and the natural history of plants yielding food described and illustrated. The first lecture has been delivered: the subject was Water. It is difficult for those who are not personally cognizant—as, however, so many are—of the admirable endowments which the lecturer possesses, to imagine the eloquence, the humour, the philosophic generalizations, and the occasional touches of gravity, which rendered this lecture as attractive to the audience as it was replete with sound views and valuable teachings. The subsequent lectures, including the doctrines of nutrition and of animal heat, with an examination of all the botanical and biologic relations of starch and sugar, flesh-forming foods, alcoholic compounds, tea, coffee, and chocolate, will deal with subjects which might furnish ample material for a much fuller course. We commend these lectures, and the very interesting collections at South Kensington, alike to the notice of students and practitioners.

REGULATIONS OF THE EDINBURGH COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS.

[THE following letter has been addressed by the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh to the President of the London College of Physicians, in reply to the resolution and remonstrance of the latter College on the new regulations for the Edinburgh licence:—]

To the President of the Royal College of Physicians, London.

SIR,—The Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh begs to acknowledge the receipt of a letter dated the 19th of April, and addressed to it, through the President, by the President of the Royal College of Physicians of London, under authority of his College, relative to recent regulations by the College of Edinburgh for admission of licentiates into its body.

The College regrets that, although the letter in question arrived in Edinburgh on the morning of the 20th, the College has not had an opportunity of considering, until this day, a document of so much importance and urgency.

The College begs to tender to the Royal College of London its thanks for the temperate terms in which the President of the London College has couched the remonstrance of his constituents regarding a subject which this College can easily understand may have excited strong feelings amongst them.

These feelings it is fortunately in the power of this College materially to allay. And it is the earnest hope of the College that, when the following statement has been calmly considered, the objections of the London College, which have been communicated by its President, will be greatly removed, and that harmony will be once more restored between the two institutions.

The College has, in the first place, to express its extreme regret, that owing to an inadvertence and precipitancy, the causes of which it is unnecessary to enter into, the new regulations respecting licentiates were made public before having been duly considered, according to practice, and when they contained articles in a shape which may have been distasteful to the London College of Physicians. Since this premature publication, the regulations have undergone revision, according to law, at three separate meetings, at which the following alterations have been made:—

1. Licentiates can become such only after having been subjected to the ballot by the fellows of the College, besides having, as the original regulations proposed, successfully undergone an examination, first on preliminary education, and then on professional subjects.

2. The professional examination, instead of being single, will consist of three series of examinations, which will be generally taken at considerable distances of time.

3. During the year for admission of licentiates without examination, and without a university degree, no one will be admitted without a licence from some other medical corporation; and persons in practice for fifteen years without any licence, who were admitted under the original resolutions, will not be allowed to apply for the licence of the College at all.

4. All candidates under this act of grace, besides producing testimonials of character and experience, and being subjected to the scrutiny of the Council of the College, must be submitted to the ballot by the fellows, of whom two-thirds must concur, otherwise the candidate will be rejected.

With these restrictions, and under a conscientious application of all the rules, the College ventures to hope that no person will be admitted into its list of licentiates who does not deserve to be enrolled as a licentiate of a College of Physicians. The only material difference subsisting between the regulations of the College of London and the revised regulations of that of Edinburgh, for the admission of licentiates, regards the age of candidates, and the experience presumed to be connected with age. On this point the College of Edinburgh ventures to submit the following statement to that of London:—

Since the commencement of the present century there has gradually sprung up in Scotland, under the demands of society and an entire forbearance on the part of the medical corporations from enforcing their exclusive privileges, a class of practitioners, now numerous, of high importance, of much public consideration, and as yet comparatively little known in England. These gentlemen practise essentially physic; some of them, the minor operations of surgery; a few, midwifery; but none, pharmacy. Some of them in the course of time become consulting physicians. Their fees are intermediate between those of the ordinary class of general practitioners and those of consulting physicians. They are physicians to all intents and purposes, far more than anything else, though they are not physicians according to the legal acceptance of that term in England. Amongst them are many of the most esteemed practitioners in Scotland. The late Dr. Abercrombie, a consulting physician for the last twenty-four years of his life, was for eighteen years previously a practitioner of the denomination now described; many of the present fellows of the Edinburgh College of Physicians belong to the same class with him.

This class of practitioners, in the humble opinion of the Edinburgh College, may belong to a College of Physicians quite as fairly as that class who practise only as consulting physicians: indeed, if this College has not been misinformed, there are not wanting practitioners of the same denomination in the London College of Physicians itself. It is surely a class which ought to be fostered in this empire by every reasonable encouragement, and by no means kept down by narrow corporation prejudices. But, in truth, it is a class of such importance to the country, that it will continue to grow in esteem and multiply in number, especially under the shield of the Medical Act, in spite of all coldness, and in face of all opposition, on the part of the corporations.

It is out of this class that the Edinburgh College desires to constitute, in part, its order of licentiates. Under changes in medical organization in Scotland, which it is unnecessary to specify here, the order of licentiates of the Edinburgh College of Physicians has died out entirely. The College at present

consists of fellows alone. It desires to re-establish an order of licentiates, and to constitute it, in part, of the practitioners in question. The College is unanimous in this desire.

Unfortunately, a serious difference of opinion prevails amongst its fellows as to whether the stamp of physician ought not to be more distinguishingly impressed on such licentiates by requiring them all to be graduates of a university. A majority of the College, however, has lately ruled that this shall not be a necessary condition, and are of opinion that respectable practitioners may be enrolled in its ranks, although not possessed of a university degree.

There is no difference of opinion, however, as to the necessity of leaving the licence of the College open to all candidates, whether graduates or not, at an earlier age than that proposed by the London College for its licentiates.

The College is not particularly wedded to the age of twenty-one; but it is the natural limit of manhood, and on that account, probably, it is the age which has hitherto been adopted in Scotland for entering on the learned professions—for the church, for the bar, and for medicine as well as surgery. It is the minimum; it can be, and will be, rarely taken advantage of; but inasmuch as there may be medical men, no less than philosophers, politicians, soldiers, &c., whose talents and assiduity place them, at the age of twenty-one, on a level with others at thirty or more, the College cannot see why an arbitrary corporation rule should deprive such men of the advantages with which Providence may have been pleased to bless them. From former experience, the College believes that very few candidates for its licence will come forward until at least two years later in life. But it deprecates any rigorous rule on that head, as being calculated to obstruct the progress of talent, and to interfere with the public usefulness of a College whose purpose is to foster, and not to obstruct, merit.

The London College is, therefore, entreated to consider that the views of this College, in regulating the admission of its licentiates, rest on the organization of the medical profession, and the practice of the other learned professions in Scotland, with neither of which does the organization and practice of England precisely accord, but towards which, nevertheless, that division of the kingdom tends in both respects. With a medical profession so organized as in Scotland, a College of Physicians cannot now exist, if it is to be composed only of consulting physicians, as the London College seems to desire.

Hence, if the London College should still retain its objections to the regulations of this College for its licence, as finally altered on the 20th instant, it may be necessary for the College of London to require something more than the simple Edinburgh licence for establishing an *ad eundem* admission into its body, such as a greater age, more opportunities of study, and the like. Nor will this College make any factious opposition to such new legislative measures as may be shown by the London College to be necessary, or advisable, for that purpose.

But at the same time, as this College has taken in good part the remonstrance and good advices of its sister College, so may it hope to find that College not unwilling to listen in its turn to a suggestion—viz., that it may be already full time to consider in England too, whether, under the operation of the Medical Act, a class of practitioners be not certain to arise, or be not already arising, akin to that which has been extensively established in Scotland, with great benefit to the nation, and which, consisting of men differing little from physicians in a simple and liberal interpretation of the word, ought to be encouraged in its growth in England by every reasonable persuasion to attach itself, through the medium of the licence, to the Royal College of Physicians of that country.

I have the honour to be, Sir, yours very faithfully,
(Signed) ALEXANDER WOOD, *President*.

Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh, April 26th, 1859.

WESTMINSTER ELECTION.

THE following letter from Mr. WAKLEY, rendered necessary by the requisitions which had been presented to him, was published in *The Times* of the 26th ultimo:—

"To the Electors of the City and Liberty of Westminster.

GENTLEMEN,—When it was anticipated a few weeks since that there would be a dissolution of Parliament, it was very generally reported that one of your late members would not again offer himself for re-election. Acting under the influence of impressions thus derived, a considerable number of your body earnestly solicited me to become a candidate for your

suffrages. Now, however, both of your late representatives being again in the field, it is only respectful to you and due to them to state that it is not my intention, on this occasion, to solicit the great distinction of representing you in Parliament.

Heartily and gratefully do I acknowledge the powerful support which has been tendered to me at this juncture. Should it be renewed with equal fervour at the time of the next vacancy in the representation of your politically renowned city in the Imperial Legislature, I shall then unhesitatingly place my humble services at your disposal.

Believe me to be, Gentlemen,

Your faithful servant,

Reform Club, Pall-mall, April 25th, 1859."

THOMAS WAKLEY.

HEALTH OF THE INDIAN ARMY: REPORT ON CLIMATE.

(Report by Dr. Bernard Kendall on the "Meghassani" Hill, situated in the territory of the Rajah of Moharbhunj, in latitude 21°38' north, and longitude 86°24' east. Height above the mean sea level, 3821 feet, as given by Major Strange, and distant from the port of Balasore about forty miles in a direct line.)

1st.—For the first few miles after leaving Balasore there is a good kutchra road, but this ceases at the village of Rewnah (about eight miles from Balasore), and from thence to the foot of the hills there is a tract or path practicable for bullocks or doolies only; this path leads through dense jungle, except at intervals where villages exist, and the ground for some distance around them is cultivated. The country is chiefly level or only slightly undulating, and along the path I continually saw the ferruginous gravel used in this station and at Midnapore for metalling roads, as well as beds of "kunker" or limestone. There are only one or two small streams to be crossed, and these at this season are nearly dry.

2nd.—In ascending we first crossed a low range, and then again ascending reached a large plateau of many miles in extent, and crossing this for two or three miles we came to a stream of running water, and we encamped for the day in an open spot close by. I found afterwards that this stream joins a larger one to the east, a little below the place of our encampment. Early the next morning we again set out, and, after traversing the plateau to the foot of the Meghassani (a distance of two or three miles), we again commenced ascending and had to wind around the hill, so as to reach the summit from its north-western aspect, it being precipitous on its south-eastern side.

3rd.—The summit of the Meghassani, on which the platform is built, is of small extent, very rocky, and not well suited for building purposes; but it slopes gradually down to the valleys beneath on its north-western aspect, and on this slope there is plenty of room for building.

4th.—To the north-east of the platform, and distant as the crow flies from half a mile to a mile, are several peaks and ridges, on which capital building sites are available. One peak especially deserves notice, it being on the same level as the platform, and having an extensive area on its summit, quite clear of trees or jungle, and free from rocks, small boulders only being scattered here and there; the slope from this is gradual on every side, and it commands an extensive view.

5th.—The soil seems to have been originally a rich but light marl, but as you descend into the valleys it loses this character, from the large quantity of vegetable mould which has accumulated. I should think that all vegetable products would thrive most luxuriantly, the soil being rich and well suited to their culture, and there being great variety of aspect.

6th.—I found several small streams of water in the valleys beneath; the nearest stream being rather more than a quarter of a mile distant from the summit of the hill. The water was clear and limpid, very soft and sweet, but, not having the necessary reagents, I am unable to give a chemical analysis of it.

7th.—The climate was cool and bracing, the mornings and evenings, together with the nights, being very cold; during the time I was on the hill there was a constant breeze from the north, and I spent the greater part of each day in examining the topography of the district, and during this time I did not feel oppressed either by the heat or the sun's rays, although taking a great deal of exercise, to which I was accustomed, and this at all hours of the day. After sunset we had always a large fire within a few yards of the tent, which was kept burning during the night, as well as the numerous fires of the camp—