

## BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION,

*Exeter Hall, Nov. 3, 1840.*

DR. WEBSTER, President, in the chair.

THE minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed. The following gentlemen having been duly proposed and seconded, were elected members of the association:—

W. H. Hoyland, Esq., Lower Berkeley-street.

W. Ifill, M.D., Welbeck-street.

Lloyd Pinching, Esq., Walthamstow.

Nicholas MacCann, Esq., Parliament-street, was elected to be on the council, in the room of Dr. R. E. Grant, made an honorary member.

A letter was read from H. C. Attenburrow, Esq., secretary to the Nottingham branch of the British Medical Association, which the secretary was directed to answer.

A letter was read from Dr. Barlow, of Bath, condemnatory of Mr. Warburton's intended Bill, as a measure calculated to carry out an efficient measure of medical reform.

A letter was read from Dr. Nugent, a corresponding member.

A letter was read from W. H. Rumsey, on parochial medical relief, when, after some discussion, it was resolved unanimously,

"That a committee be appointed to watch the subject, and take such steps as may appear to them desirable; and that the following gentlemen form the committee, with power to add to their number:—

Wm. Farr, Esq.	Wm. Eales, Esq.
Wm. Rendle, Esq.	Dr. J. R. Lynch.
Ed. Evans, Esq."	

The subject of quackery having been brought before the meeting, it was resolved unanimously,

"That the members of the association, and of the profession, be invited to forward to the secretary any cases of malpractice by chemists, quacks, or other unqualified persons, which may have come within their notice."

Some conversation having taken place on Mr. Hawes's Medical Bill, a copy of which was on the table; the mature consideration of which was deemed so desirable, that it was resolved unanimously,

"That at the next meeting of council the provisions of Mr. Hawes's Medical Bill be taken into consideration, to ascertain how far they coincide with the heads of the Bill of this association."\*

DR. WEBSTER, pursuant to notice, brought under the notice of the council, the subject of remuneration to medical men from in-

\* The discussion on the Bill to take precedence of all other subjects.

surance-offices for granting certificates of health, or otherwise, to persons having their lives assured; together with the feasibility of forming a "Medical and General Life Assurance Society," &c.

The consideration of the latter, however, was deferred, owing to the lateness of the hour, whilst, as regards the former, it was resolved unanimously,

"That Dr. R. D. Thomson and the secretary draw up a letter on the subject, embodying the pledge given by this association at the late general meeting, to return all applications unless accompanied by a fee; and that a copy of such letter be sent to the secretary of every life-assurance office in the kingdom."\*

An application having been duly made by the widow of a deceased medical practitioner to the Benevolent Fund, and satisfactory evidence been given, under the signatures of five medical practitioners (four of whom are members of the association), that the applicant is in distress, and worthy of relief, it was resolved unanimously,

"That the sum of five pounds be presented to her."

The meeting was then adjourned to Tuesday, November 17.

## WESTMINSTER MEDICAL SOCIETY.

*Saturday, October 31, 1840.*

MR. GREGORY SMITH, President.

## DISEASED BLADDER—RETENTION OF URINE.

MR. HARVEY, in answer to a question, stated, that his chief reason for supposing the disease, in the case he had detailed last week, was congenital, was the fact of the whole of the structure of the bladder being involved in the formation of the cyst.

MR. H. JOHNSON related a case, which, though not exactly similar to Mr. Harvey's, he considered embraced one or two interesting particulars. An officer in the army, about fifty years of age, and in good health, became subject to retention of urine some time since. This difficulty was increased by a campaign in Canada. Mr. Johnson was called to him four months ago, and found that he had not made water for twenty-four hours. The bladder was much distended; but there was little or no pain. There was some difficulty in passing a catheter, owing to the presence of a false passage in the urethra. When the urine was drawn off, it was found to be of a strong ammoniacal and offensive odour, containingropy mucous and albumen, and was alkaline. Up to the present time, a

\* It might be mentioned, that the association is not unaware that some of the existing insurance-offices *invariably* remunerate medical men for their services.

period of four months, he had never been able to pass his urine spontaneously, and never felt any inclination to make water, which was drawn off by the catheter night and morning. Under the use of the mineral acids, *pariera brava*, &c., the urine was soon restored to its healthy character. If the water remained in the bladder more than twelve hours it again became alkalinised, and loaded with mucus. In this case there was no mechanical obstruction in the urethra; the prostate, however, was slightly enlarged. There was no suspicion of any cerebral or spinal affection. A large instrument could be passed into the bladder.

MR. SNOW related a case, in which an old man became affected with retention of urine, without any assignable cause. The retention continued for a long period, and caused much distention of the bladder. He could not pass his urine, spontaneously, for several weeks afterwards. In this case there was no mechanical obstruction.

MR. WADE suggested, that in Mr. Johnson's case there might be chronic thickening of the neck of the bladder.

DR. G. BIRD alluded to the plan of restoring the contractile power of the bladder by the passage of electric shocks through the pelvis. He related the case of an elderly woman, who had inability to pass her urine. There was no symptom of spinal or cerebral affection. Various remedies were used without success. By passing an electric shock through the bladder, by placing one of the balls of the director at the end of the sacrum, and the other just at the upper part of the vulva, and repeating the operation for several times, the functional powers of the bladder were restored.

MR. CHANCE related a case in which there was some paralysis of the legs, and in which the patient was submitted to an electric shock. This was followed immediately by total loss of power over the function of the bladder, which had continued to the present time, a period of nearly seven years.

DR. G. BIRD had used electricity as a remedial agent in hundreds of cases, and had never known it produce retention of urine.

We have been unable to find room for the discussion on the "Causes of Sudden Death" this week; it shall appear in our next.

## MEDICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

*Monday, November 2, 1840.*

DR. CLUTTERBUCK, President.

### OSSIFICATION OF THE OVARY.

MR. PILCHER exhibited a morbid specimen, consisting of the uterus and appendages of

an elderly woman who had died suddenly, and with the previous history of whose case he was unacquainted, except that she had been barren: one of the ovaries was completely ossified; the other very much enlarged, and contained a cyst filled with a chocolate-coloured matter. There was other organic disease present, but none of a remarkable character.

The discussion on asthma was resumed, various members taking part in it. The opinions generally were opposed to those advanced by the worthy president, although it was admitted that a certain degree of bronchitic inflammation might and did accidentally coexist with asthma. It was considered that the late experiments of Dr. Williams had proved that the ramifications of the bronchial tubes were contractile, and would therefore be liable to spasm. It was contended, that the fact of the occurrence of asthma being prevented by venesection, proved nothing in favour of the doctrine of inflammatory action, for the loss of blood was of service, also in spasmodic disease, and might in the cases related, have afforded relief by the subduction of the spasm. The remedies used in asthma were likely to aggravate inflammatory symptoms.

## MIDDLESEX MAGISTRATES AND LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

THE meeting of the Middlesex magistrates on the 29th ult. was attended with considerable interest to the medical profession, and some curious facts were elicited which will not easily be forgotten. One of the magistrates, a governor of Bethlem, asked the chairman if, in consequence of the abandonment of restraint, a patient had not committed suicide at Hanwell?

The CHAIRMAN replied, that it was from the imperfect state of the shutters, and that the worthy magistrate must, as a governor of Bethlem, know that it could not be because of Dr. Conolly's system, for that a patient at Bethlem had recently hung herself in her own strait-waistcoat. Surely it behoves the directors of the Hanwell Asylum to take care that the shutters are in a proper state, and the governors of Bethlem that their strait-waistcoats are properly fastened. Then a magistrate stated, that the breakage of glass was terrific at Hanwell, since the abolition of restraint there; and another