

moments," she said, "I am going to say something about wounded soldiers." It was her pleasure to pronounce the diphthong in "wounded" as we do in "rounded," and the constant repetition of this word was somewhat singular to English ears. Her career in camp and hospital seems to have been more feminine than one might have expected from so strong-minded a lady. She appeared not a little proud of the influence which her sex commanded amongst the "wounded" soldiers. Many would not submit to operation, she said, without her opinion respecting its advisability, or her presence during its performance. She described, with much woman's tact, her tender care of the wounded,—how she would convey a warrior with his head resting in her lap; and asked her hearers whether, if they had a father, brother, or son wounded or sick, away from home, they would not like to know that he was being looked after so carefully. Some of her most pathetic stories, however, convulsed the audience with laughter. She told how a poor yellow-faced soldier said to her, "Let me kiss you twice!" and when she hesitated, a fine young soldier who stood by his side said, gallantly perhaps, but somewhat illogically, "Let him kiss you; he is a nice young man; and the reason is that he has not slept for twenty-four hours!" whereupon, we believe (and hope), the request was granted.

Now all this was very kind and tender on the part of Miss Walker, but we can scarcely think that it proves either the necessity or advisability of the presence of young-lady doctors in an army. It is the sort of thing which appeals with great force to the feelings of hearers who have derived their ideas of war-suffering from pictures of a snug hospital-ward, with a fair lady smoothing the pillows of the wounded soldiers. It hardly represents the stern requirements of actual service, the physical labour and mental exertion of tending wounds, and deciding when a wrong decision may mean death. And we could not help feeling, as we listened to the fair lectress, that however good and meritorious her performance of the part of doctor had been, she was after all but an *amateur*, with all the weak points which must ever separate such a position from the hard realities of active professional work.

We cannot pass over without an expression of regret and censure the riotous conduct of some of the young gentlemen in the gallery said to be students of medicine; and we notice with pain that some of them made a subsequent and most discreditable appearance in the police-court.

THE VISITATION OF EXAMINATIONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your journal of the 3rd instant you make some important remarks on the "Visitation of Examinations" by members of the General Medical Council. You very reasonably wish to know why a member of that body should object to co-operate in these visitations; and you ask my distinguished colleague, Dr. Acland, to state his reasons for declining, if he has declined, to perform the duty.

The difficulties felt by more than one member of the Council in undertaking this duty were well described by Dr. Allen Thomson in our last session (see THE LANCET, June 9th, 1866, p. 625), when he also protested against "the assumption that all the members of the Council were qualified to fill the judicial position of inspectors."

Possibly Dr. Acland may think, with the great Duke, that it is safer simply to act upon one's own judgment than to give one's reasons for so acting. With less prudence, perhaps, I did explain my reasons for requesting the English Branch Council to excuse my taking any part in their arrangements for visitation. Those reasons found their way indirectly into print; and, after your notice of the subject, I think it better, with your permission, that they should now appear in THE LANCET. The greater portion of what I wrote was as follows:

"I have uniformly objected to the measure, both in principle and in detail; and the results of the recent visitation have in no degree removed my objections.

"Although a majority of the General Council has so interpreted the last sentence of section 18 of the Medical Act, as to found on it a resolution (April 6th, 1865) that the Branch Councils, or such of their members as may be deputed by them, shall visit the examinations, preliminary and professional, conducted by the qualifying bodies, and report thereon to the General Council,—there still exists a minority who do not so understand that provision of the Act, which, in their

opinion, is merely permissive, and not intended to supersede any more correct or efficient method of attaining the object in view.

"I believe that had it been left to each Branch Council to decide *for itself* whether it should depute its members to visit the examinations of the licensing bodies within its jurisdiction, the English Branch would not have agreed to undertake such visitation, and the Irish Branch would have peremptorily negatived the proposal. I believe that, in fact, we owe the adoption of this very questionable measure, by the General Council, to the unanimity and energy of our Scottish colleagues.

"The manifest diversity of opinion on this point among the three nationalities in the Council may, I think, justify any individual member in declining to accept his share of responsibility in this proceeding.

"But, if I am mistaken, and if it were to be decided by legal authority, not only that the minority are in error, but further that they are bound to aid the majority in the performance of these visitations, undertaken voluntarily, and on a disputed interpretation of the Act, I for one should feel it my duty—though with much regret—to resign my seat in the Council.

"I will now state, as briefly as I can, my principal objections to the present system of visitations.

"If it be granted that the examinations of candidates by any of the qualifying bodies, represented in the Medical Council, are so defective in their nature and so fallacious in their results as to require the employment of some external agency to inspect them and report to a controlling and reforming authority (which I by no means assert), it would, I think, be obvious to every intelligent and impartial observer that the *representative* members of Council ought not themselves to constitute that agency.

"Even were the theoretical objection set aside, it does not yet appear how *any* members of Council can do the work at all satisfactorily or effectively: (1) because, with their utmost diligence and their largest possible expenditure of time and labour, they can be present at only a very small proportion of the many examinations held annually by the medical licensing bodies; (2) because the same gentlemen, however able and accomplished, can hardly be expected to superintend with equal thoroughness and efficiency those examinations in all branches of knowledge—general, scientific, and professional—which, at various stages of his education, each medical student has to pass through; and (3) because the representatives of the licensing bodies, though themselves free from corporate bias or interested motive, are not likely to satisfy the requirements of the profession, the public, and the Government, by undertaking a duty *which makes them, as a body, judges in their own case*.

"Here, however, I beg not to be understood as supporting an objection which has been lately (and forcibly) made to 'reciprocal visitation by the representatives of rival bodies,' as though such attendances must necessarily degenerate into a mere exchange of empty courtesies, if not of invidious remarks. For this objection seems to assume what is not the fact—viz., that the licensing bodies are really 'rivals,' similarly constituted for similar purposes, conferring similar qualifications, and alike open to the same kind of criticism. It also implies a suspicion—not to be entertained for a moment—of the honour and justice of the visitors.

"Assuming, for the sake of argument, that the regular attendance of appointed visitors or assessors is a sound and true method of securing the thorough efficiency and trustworthiness of examinations, it follows that such visitors ought to be constantly (or at least frequently) present; each devoting his attention to those subjects with which he is most conversant, and on which his authority is unquestionable. Such a system, as I have said, cannot be carried into effect by members of the Council. Yet there is no reason why the Council should not be empowered to appoint and to regulate the duties of visitors not belonging to their body."

So far, then, I agree with you that it would be better to appoint "one or two visitors, not officials of any corporation, properly paid, properly instructed, and working on a given system."

But it cannot be denied that the grievously defective character of some of the qualifying examinations has already been proved, and the nature and extent of their defects pretty accurately ascertained, by the additional examinations which the Army and Navy Medical Boards enforce, with infinite advantage to their respective services and to medical education in general. I cannot doubt that if some such practical test of the efficiency of the recognised examinations were applied to appointments

in the civil medical service, the masses of the civil population might enjoy the same kind of protection and security against imperfect medical qualification as is now conferred almost exclusively upon the populations of the army and navy. No ordeal of this sort need be required of those "legally qualified" medical men who intend to confine themselves to private practice; nor would it be proper or reasonable to impose it on those Fellows of our Colleges (whether physicians or surgeons), or on those Doctors of Medicine and Masters in Surgery of the Universities, who, by the attainment of such higher qualifications, have met the judicious requirements of many hospital boards. But the application of a supplementary test of fitness for other public appointments, which now demand only a legal licence, would inevitably tend to raise the standards of qualification adopted by the several licensing bodies, and would effect a more real improvement than visitations or inspections of any kind. The establishment of a national examining board for the civil medical service would, moreover, supply another serious public deficiency, which none of the Universities have hitherto attempted to supply,—I mean, the want of some reliable test or certificate of fitness for the higher offices of State Medicine—i. e., for certain sanitary and medico-legal appointments. It is satisfactory to me to observe that my published suggestions on this subject have been recently supported by Dr. Farr, in his most interesting address as President of the Health Department at the Manchester congress.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Cheltenham, Nov. 10th, 1866.

H. W. RUMSEY.

Medical News.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.—The following gentlemen, having undergone the necessary examinations for the diploma, were admitted Members of the College at a meeting of the Court of Examiners on the 15th inst. :—

Bedford, William James Guthrie, Sydney.
Creaser, William Appleton, Market Weighton, Yorkshire.
Green, John, Hull.
Harris, Richard, Ashburnham-grove, Greenwich.
Holderness, William Brown, Windsor.
Jewison, Thomas William, Leeds.
Keen, William, King's-road, Chelsea.
Maberly, George Frederick, Sudbury, Middlesex.
Moon, Henry, Tottenham.
Morrisson, Stammers, Launceston, Tasmania.
Naughtin, William, Tralee, Co. Kerry.
Paterson, Alexander, Edinburgh.
Plomley, John Frederick, L.R.C.P. Edin., Maidstone.
Randall, John George, Portman-street.
Robinson, Robert, Preston.
Stainthorpe, Thomas Edward, Hexham, Northumberland.
Trubshaw, Alfred, Liverpool.

The following were admitted Members on the 16th inst. :—

Allen, Frederick Andrew, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
Brocklehurst, Thomas Howard, Manchester.
Canton, George Anderson, Great Marlborough-street.
Daniel, William Abbot, Ramsgate.
Davidson, Alex. Dyce, M.B. and M.C. Aberd., Aberdeen.
Docking, Thomas, Sydney.
Guest, John, Manchester.
Jefferson, John, Lisburn, Co. Antrim.
Orfeur, Charles Howard, Norwich.
Philpot, Charles William, Croydon.
Pollard, William Fox Branch, Demerara.
Swan, William, B.A. Oxon., Lincoln.
Trevor, Arthur Tudor Humphreys, Bangor.

At the same meeting of the Court, Mr. John Noble, L.S.A., of H.M.S. *Cumberland*, stationed at Sheerness, passed his examination for Naval Surgeon. This gentleman had previously been admitted a member of the College, his diploma bearing date August 4th, 1852.

It is stated that of the eighty-eight candidates who have been undergoing their examinations for the diploma of membership of the College during the past week, no less than twenty-one failed to acquit themselves to the satisfaction of the Court, and were consequently referred to their hospital studies for the full period of six months.

APOTHECARIES' HALL.—The following gentlemen passed their examination in the Science and Practice of Medicine, and received certificates to practise, on Nov. 15th :—

Thomas, John Davies, Bryn Villa, Swansea.
Tidswell, Thomas Harrison, Spading, Lincolnshire.

The following gentlemen also on the same day passed their first examination :—

Walter Wm. Inglis, St. Thomas's Hospital; Alex. Fox, London Hospital.

THE FELLOWSHIP.—The examination for this distinction took place on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday last, at the College of Surgeons, when twelve candidates presented themselves—viz., six seniors and six juniors. It is not, perhaps, generally known that under recent regulations candidates may offer themselves on two occasions, instead of one, as heretofore; for instance, the examinations in anatomy and physiology, with dissections, may be gone through, say in November, and those on pathology and surgery, with operations, in the following May. The list of successful candidates will not be known until next week.

THE Duke of Buccleuch has subscribed a hundred guineas towards clearing the debt on the Blackburn Infirmary.

QUARANTINE for travellers coming from France and Upper Italy has been abolished in the Roman States.

ON Saturday last, for the first time since the commencement of the epidemic in London, not a single death from cholera was reported.

LADY PALMERSTON and some benevolent ladies and gentlemen are about to build a small hospital at Romsey, in Hants.

THE Grand Jury have, we understand, thrown out the bill of indictment preferred against James Aldous, for retaining in his house a person of unsound mind, without the necessary licence or certificates.

A BOY, eleven years of age, died in the Birkenhead Borough Hospital on Thursday week from the effects of chloroform.

ARTHUR MACMURROUGH KAVANAGH, one of the members returned for the county of Wexford, has neither arms nor legs, yet is able to write and ride well.

DR. SAUNDERS has given notice that at the next court of the Commissioners of Sewers he would move for the appointment of a special committee to inquire into the sanitary condition of the dwellings of the poor in the City of London.

DR. ARMSTRONG, R.N., Deputy Inspector-General of Melville Hospital and of the Chatham division of the Royal Marines, has been promoted to the rank of Inspector-General in her Majesty's Fleet, for special services recorded at the Admiralty. Dr. Armstrong is Honorary Surgeon to the Queen, and also one of the Honorary Physicians to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

JUNIOR MEDICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.—At the first meeting of this session, held on Wednesday evening, at St. Thomas's Hospital, the following gentlemen were elected :—President: Mr. E. F. Willoughby, University College. Treasurer: Mr. W. Leigh, St. George's Hospital. Secretaries: Messrs. A. Waller (St. Thomas's Hospital) and C. Calthrop (Charing-cross Hospital). After which Mr. A. Waller, B.A., read a paper. A lengthened discussion followed. Dr. Jervis occupied the chair.

ROYAL SOCIETY.—The first paper read at the meeting of this Society, on the 15th inst., was one by Mr. J. Lockhart Clarke, F.R.S., "On the Structure of the Optic Lobes of the Cuttle Fish," largely illustrated by explanatory diagrams. A second paper by Mr. Edward Schunck, F.R.S., "On a Crystalline Fatty Acid from the Human Urine," stated that the occurrence of fatty matter in urine is a somewhat rare phenomenon, and generally considered as a symptom of disease. In most cases it is found associated with albumen, in which the fatty matter is suspended in minute particles; sometimes it takes the shape of fluid oil globules, but more frequently it is found enclosed in cells so heavy as to sink to the bottom of the vessel. It is also found in kiesserine, a substance sometimes seen in the urine of pregnant women. In the course of the experiments of the author with urinary extracts, he frequently saw drops of brown-yellow oil, and afterwards discovered a method of isolating the substance as follows :—Healthy urine is filtered through animal charcoal, till the percolating liquid ceases to be decolorised, and begins to pass with extreme slowness. It will be found that a very small quantity of charcoal will decolorise a very large portion of the liquid. The charcoal is then well washed with water to dissolve the soluble salts, dried, and afterwards treated with boiling alcohol, to which it communicates a bright yellow colour. The liquid must then be filtered, evaporated, and the brown syrupy residue mixed with water, which deposits a brown semi-fluid fatty matter, which can be separated by filtration.