

of the nerve at that point in an adult. I closed the wound accurately, and endeavoured to keep the limb in as perfect a state of rest as was possible in the man's condition.

Beyond a little numbness of the little and ring fingers, he never complained of the slightest impairment of sensibility or movement in the hand or forearm, and in a few days resumed his occupation of a chimney-sweep, none the worse for his accident.

I had no opportunity of testing the muscles supplied by the ulnar nerve with the galvanic current, and I cannot be quite positive that the whole thickness of the trunk was divided; but it struck me at the time as most remarkable that such a lesion to a large nerve should not be followed by more serious results.

Mr. Erichsen, in his work on Surgery, mentions a case of divided ulnar nerve, where paralysis and loss of temperature existed twenty-one weeks after the injury. He remarks also, "If a portion of nerve have been actually excised, there is no restoration of function, as was shown long ago by Haighton." Delpech and Earle are mentioned as having divided the ulnar nerve in this situation (Chelius's Surgery, ii., 887) for the cure of neuralgia; but the result is not stated.

No doubt M. Richet will throw some light on this subject, which appears to have been always a "questio vexata."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Princes-square, W., Dec. 1867.

HENRY W. KIALLMARK.

ROYAL MEDICAL AND CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY: DR. FULLER'S PAPER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I trust you will allow me to correct some errors in your report of the discussion which took place on Nov. 26th at the Medical and Chirurgical Society.

Dr. Fuller, in the course of his paper, had pointed out that when nitric acid is added to a sample of urine containing an excess of urea copious effervescence occurs. Of this effervescence I suggested the following explanation. When urea is in excess, so also, as a rule, are the colouring matters of the urine; these are oxydised at the expense of the acid, and thus nitrous acid is formed, which decomposes some of the urea, and, as the result of this decomposition, bubbles of carbonic acid and of nitrogen make their escape. I added that it might easily happen that so much urea was thus decomposed as to prevent crystallisation of nitrate of urea occurring, even when the urea had been originally present in excess.

From your report it would be supposed that I had attributed the effervescence to bubbles of nitrous acid; and, secondly, that I had described urea as being excessively "soluble" in nitrous acid. I should be sorry to remain credited in your column with either of these statements.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Clarges-street, Dec. 10th, 1867.

WILLIAM OGLE.

THE CLINICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

THE adjourned meeting of this Society for the election of officers took place on Monday evening last, Dr. Headlam Greenhow being in the chair. The following gentlemen were balloted for, and duly elected on the Council of the Society:—President: Sir Thomas Watson, Bart. Vice-Presidents: Dr. Acland, Dr. Alderson, Dr. Burrows, Dr. Jenner, Dr. Walshe, Dr. Williams, Sir W. Fergusson, Bart., Mr. Cæsar Hawkins, Mr. Hilton, Professor Humphry, Mr. Paget, and Mr. Simon. Treasurer: Dr. Greenhow. Council: Dr. Anstie, Dr. Marcet, Dr. Murchison, Dr. J. W. Ogle, Dr. Peacock, Dr. Quain, Dr. Russell Reynolds, Dr. Sibson, Dr. Southey, Dr. Weber, Mr. A. Bruce, Mr. Campbell de Morgan, Mr. Durham, Mr. Hart, Mr. C. Heath, Mr. T. Holmes, Mr. Hulke, Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. Sydney Jones, and Sir H. Thompson. Hon. Secretaries: Dr. Burdon-Sanderson and Mr. Callender.

The Society now consists of 110 members, and the names of twelve or fourteen gentlemen in addition were formally proposed for election, and will be balloted for in January. The first meeting for the proper business of the Society is to be held on Friday, January 10th, at 8.30 P.M. It is intended to hold meetings at the same hour on the second and fourth Friday in each month from October to May. We learn that the Council of the Medico-Chirurgical Society have obligingly

placed their rooms at the disposal of the Society for the first two meetings, pending ulterior arrangements. Members are invited to send in contributions of cases for the first meeting. These must be of the character described in the scheme of the Society, which has been forwarded to each member, and must be sent to the secretaries a week at least before the meeting.

BEAUMONT MEDICAL SOCIETY.

AT a meeting of the above Society, held on the 5th instant, there were ten members balloted for and elected. After the balloting, Dr. R. E. Swyer opened a discussion "On the Abuses of Medical Charity in connexion with the Out-Patients' department of the various Metropolitan Hospitals." Dr. Swyer believed that general practitioners, living in the neighbourhood of an hospital, suffered in their practices very considerably through the loose and indiscriminate way in which hospital charity was administered; that it was not the really poor who benefited by the charitable labours of the hospital staff, but those who were in comparatively good circumstances, and in many cases well-to-do individuals. These evils, he thought, had greatly increased since "special diseases" were treated on special days, as a vast field was, to a large extent, taken from the general practitioner. Directly a patient had an attack of ophthalmia, he had only to get an hospital letter (and the better his circumstances the easier the task), and he was treated by a "consulting surgeon" at the moderate cost of a "quart bottle" or a "gallipot." So with affections of the skin or ear. As there was no inquiry into the circumstances of the applicant, every encouragement was given to imposition. In fact, it was with the greatest difficulty that a truly poor person could get a letter for the hospitals at the east end of London, as the bulk of them were given to persons who had some little interest with the governors in the way of business, and so the unfortunates for whom the charity was instituted were excluded from its benefits.

Mr. Maunder (London Hospital) quite agreed with Dr. Swyer's remarks; in fact, he had frequently tried to shame those who came to him for gratuitous advice when he considered they were able to pay a general practitioner's fees. He thought the treatment of special diseases in the various hospitals was a step in the right direction, and of great importance in the education of medical students. The fault of well-to-do persons taking advantage of such charity did not rest with the medical officers, as they were obliged to prescribe for a patient if he had the requisite letter signed by a governor. He quite felt it was necessary that some inspection of the out-patients should be periodically made, so that the really poor might be the only recipients of hospital charity.

After an animated discussion, in which Messrs. Buss, Davey, Rose, Reilly, Richards, and Richardson took part, the following resolution was moved by Dr. Swyer, seconded by Mr. Maunder, and unanimously agreed to:—

"That the members of this Society are of opinion that the almost indiscriminate admission of persons to the out-patients' department of our various hospitals is detrimental to the interests of the medical profession, and an abuse of the charity instituted for the sick poor; and they earnestly desire the co-operation of hospital physicians and surgeons in effecting a reform of such an evil system."

THE POOR-LAW INQUIRY AT THE FARNHAM UNION.

THURSDAY, DEC. 5TH.

MR. JAMES SIMMONS (of Cherrimans), a guardian of Farnham union for many years, was next called. He denied the general accuracy of the report contained in THE LANCET, and expressed a decided opinion that the fact of workhouse officers knowing they could not be discharged by the guardians without some gross case being proved against them, tended to make them less effective in their general duties. He also thought it tended to operate against the guardians making charges against their officers, lest they should be unable to substantiate them. It was generally considered that if a charge were made, and an officer suspended, and the Poor-law Board refused to confirm