

sole and absolute right to decide when this necessity exists. It is absurd to allege that the superintendent, whose professional position empowers him to seclude his patient in a room and to administer the most potent drugs, is incapable of determining *when* it is necessary to fasten his hands.

But more valuable by far than any individual opinion are the views which the Lunacy Commissioners have been led by their vast experience to form on this subject. Their opinion is not doubtful.

They have never condemned Dr. Hills' practice nor my own. Dr. Blandford mentions ("Insanity and its Treatment," p. 211) that he has employed restraint in suicidal cases at their suggestion, and I am able to state from direct information that in the shocking case of self-injury referred to in my previous letter the commissioners who visited the asylum recommended restraint as necessary to the patient's safety. The recommendation was not adopted, and the patient, though constantly watched by two attendants, gouged out both his eyes.

Such a case as this should convince anyone, and further argument is useless.

Unnecessary restraint cannot be too strongly condemned, but to reject its use when necessary for the patient's welfare is to sacrifice the patient to a sentiment, and to degrade "Non-restraint" from the expression of a great principle into the tyranny of a mere name.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Glamorgan County Asylum,
June 10th, 1872.

D. YELLOWLEES, M.D.,
Medical Superintendent.

"CLERICAL CANVASSING."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—It is a matter for regret that the anonymous correspondent in your last number did not take the trouble to ascertain the truth of his accusation before he invited you to publish and comment upon an *ex parte* statement calculated to reflect most injuriously on my moral rectitude. It unfortunately happens that a charge of such a nature may be made against a man without just cause, which produces all the odium of a proved crime, for the simple reason that the accusation appears in a paper and is read one week, whilst a week must elapse before the explanation can be offered, which even then may not be read. In the letter alluded to I am accused of canvassing for a post at the Manchester Infirmary before there was a vacancy, and of speculating upon the death of one of the present staff. The whole charge, to which I can give a most emphatic and unqualified denial, is based upon a misapprehension of the circumstances of the case. The following brief statement of facts, which I have to request you will allow me to give, will enable your readers to judge of my position for themselves:—Some months ago, and certainly before anyone was aware of the illness of the surgeon referred to, I and others were authoritatively informed that the board of management in connexion with the hospital would, ere long, proceed to appoint a certain number of assistant-surgeons to that institution. This was quite openly spoken about, and it was pretty generally known in medical circles that such was the intention of the board. Subsequent events have proved the accuracy of my information, as at a special general board held on the 10th inst. the intention to elect assistant-surgeons was publicly announced.

The wording of Canon Bentley's letter, I beg you to note, distinctly mentions "one of the appointments," and I could adduce the testimony of at least a dozen leading medical men in Manchester who would affirm that my canvass was for an assistant-surgeon, and had no reference whatever to the post now held by the senior surgeon. I may further state that the electors are so large a body, more than 1500, that it has ever been the custom of candidates for appointment to the honorary surgical staff of the infirmary to commence a canvass long, even years, before a vacancy was likely to occur, so that in soliciting votes I was merely adopting the usual procedure.

The explanation which applies to myself equally exonerates Canon Bentley, and I feel myself called upon to apologise to him for his having been accused by you of a "want of moral sense." If a life devoted to well-doing and acts of silent charity, an ever willingness to uphold

the dignity of the medical profession, are qualifications for such a charge, then, and then only, could you speak thus of my friend.—I beg to remain your obedient servant,

Manchester, June 17th, 1872.

WALTER WHITEHEAD.

* * If Mr. Whitehead had read our observations more carefully, he would have perceived that we, at least, did not accuse him of anything. The gravamen of the charge against Canon Bentley was, that he invited subscribers to *promise their votes* before all the candidates were before them; and this seems to be unaffected by Mr. Whitehead's explanation.—ED. L.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH BILL—MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HEALTH.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The importance of this subject at the present time will, I trust, be a sufficient apology for my again troubling you with it. I gave last week three or four reasons why I consider union medical officers are unusually well qualified to undertake the duties of officers of health.

Allow me to say in addition, that by giving the union medical officers a higher status, the opprobrium which is generally attached to them (and through them to the profession generally), especially in large provincial towns, will in great measure be removed. I might enlarge on this subject, but will content myself with reminding you that they are about 4000 in number, and represent about one-fourth of the profession in the kingdom.

To show the importance of some change being made, I will merely remark that in Worcester the death-rate now is exactly the same as it was in the year 1850—viz., 23 per 1000,—notwithstanding that we have spent £71,000 or £72,000 in public matters, and are now just landed in a Chancery suit.

The opposition to the Public Health Bill altogether will, I am sure, be very great; and I trust the profession will rise to one man and support it. Domestic reforms are generally postponed until *next* session, when war breaks out, or Mr. Gladstone again mounts his political hobby-horse, or some calamity occurs, when domestic reforms again go to the wall.

We all know the saving of life and money, and other good, which has attended the Contagious Diseases Act (Animals). If Mr. Stansfeld will give us dispensaries in large towns, and make an adequate arrangement for the appointment of union medical officers as officers or deputy officers of health, we shall then have a Contagious Diseases Act (human beings), and which will doubtless be attended with the same happy result as the former.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Worcester, June 17th, 1872.

WM. WOODWARD, M.D.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I wish kindly to ask all Poor-law medical officers to send me on post-card an answer to the following inquiry, mentioning the union to which they are attached:—"Do you prefer being appointed sole health officers under inspectorial supervision of the Local Government Board; or deputy health officers, having one of your local medical men appointed as medical officer of health between you and the Board?"

I may take the present opportunity of assuring Poor-law medical officers that Mr. Stansfeld has given a complete denial to the erroneous statement which has been made, and which has had the injurious effect of getting up petitions against the Bill, that the additional sanitary duties will not be attended by increased remuneration.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

J. WICKHAM BARNES.

12, George-street, Mansion House, June 18th, 1872.

CANCER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—While search is being made for a *cure* for cancer, it will not be uninteresting to many of your readers to hear of a *palliative*. I have used as a lotion, with great pallia-

tive success, in a case of cancer of the breast, and in another case of cancer of the rectum, an American drug, "hydrastis Canadensis"; it was preferred by both patients to any other form of lotion, for its painlessness and for its power in keeping the surface in a more healthy condition and free from offensive odour. The strength in which it was used was one drachm of tincture to eight ounces of water. Finding it unknown to many practitioners, I have thought the mention of it in the pages of THE LANCET may perhaps bring an improved temporary relief within the reach of some sufferers from this dire calamity.

I remain, Sir, yours truly,

EDWIN PAYNE, M.D., M.R.C.P. Lond.
Selhurst-road, South Norwood, June, 1872.

OBLITERATION OF THE CONJUNCTIVAL SAC.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Mr. Streatfeild has contributed to your last number an interesting paper, in which, in certain cases, he recommends us, after enucleation of an eyeball, to remove the conjunctiva by dissection and caustics, and to close the resulting cavity. May I be permitted to ask him what becomes of the tears when this practice has been pursued? I suppose the lacrymal gland would undergo atrophy in course of time; but I should expect it first to give considerable trouble.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Wimpole-street, June, 1872. ROBERT BRUDENELL CARTER.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

At the last meeting of the Town Council here, Mr. John Patterson, food analyst to the Corporation, reported that since February last he had examined forty samples of wheaten flour and twenty-eight samples of oatmeal. Of the forty samples of wheaten flour examined, twenty-three were found to be pure, and seventeen adulterated with rice flour; this substance was generally present to the extent of 5 per cent., but some samples contained $7\frac{1}{2}$ and even 10 per cent.; all the samples were carefully examined for alum and sulphate of copper, but in no case was either of these substances present. Of the twenty-eight samples of oatmeal examined, eighteen consisted of genuine oatmeal, and ten were found to be adulterated with various proportions of barley-meal; about one-fourth of the meal in many cases consisted of barley-meal, and even a larger portion than this was occasionally present. I am sorry to say that the Council treated this report in a very light manner, and so tender were some of the members of the feelings of the fraudulent mixers of food that it was decided not to publish their names until due notice of the intention had been given. The Mayor "thought it was a question whether barley-meal was not better than oat-meal, and whether rice was not better than flour." But it is a matter of very great importance to many of the poorer inhabitants of our town, to say nothing of the slur cast on the commercial morality of the place by the evidence of such practices. It might also become a question of high importance to the Mayor himself had he to purchase and subsist principally on this adulterated food.

Dr. Heath, in some able letters to the daily papers here a short time since, suggested the establishment of a training-school and home for nurses in connexion with our infirmary. The great want of such an institution here has been long apparent to all practitioners in the district, and we are much indebted to Dr. Heath for setting the project in motion. On Friday last a large and influential meeting of ladies and gentlemen favourable to the establishment of the home was held in the infirmary, under the presidency of Sir William Armstrong. Many promises of support were received from the profession and from wealthy families in the district, and a committee was appointed to draw up a scheme for the carrying out of the project, and to report to another meeting of those interested in the movement by the middle of next month.

Newcastle-on-Tyne, June 10th, 1872.

LIVERPOOL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THE financial results of the grand Fancy Fair and Bazaar, held in Sefton Park, in aid of the funds of the Royal Southern Hospital, were published on Saturday last, and prove most satisfactory. A net result to the credit of the hospital of £20,050 is an announcement which has elicited from the public and the press a unanimous expression of approval; the more so because a feeling had begun to manifest itself that we were likely to find again, as in the Stanley Park Bazaar, the expenditure had been enormous. The management, however, has been very different in this case; and the close supervision which was exercised by each sub-committee over the work allotted to them prevented any extravagant outlay. The particulars may be summarised as follows:—Receipts: Entrance to park, £5967; bazaar, £12,134; amusements, £1321; flower show, £1083; music, £361; fancy dress ball, £400; sale of guinea tickets, £520; refreshments, £3243—making a total of £25,029. The expenditure was under £5000, and its largest items are in the erection of tents, a grand stand, and the flower show.

The assistance rendered by all Liverpool to promote the success of the fair was very great, and was most heartily acknowledged by the chairman of the committee at its final meeting. To mention only one department—that of refreshments: to this the contributions were simply enormous; columns of the daily papers were for many days before the bazaar filled with advertisements acknowledging them. An auction of the surplus stock was held last week, and included more than a thousand dozens of wine and spirits, most of them of the finest quality, besides casks of beer, kegs of butter, hams and cheeses innumerable. This auction alone realised £1500. The handsome presents to the various stalls of the bazaar is shown by the sum taken in this tent. There were twelve stalls, and upwards of £12,000 was taken at them.

The hospital for which all these successful efforts were made is not as yet open for the reception of patients. The reorganisation of several departments for the better working of so large an institution has been decided upon by the committee—amongst others, that of the nursing department. Until this latter is completed the transfer from the old to the new building will probably not take place.

June 19th, 1872.

THE VOLUNTEER MEDICAL SERVICE.

A MEETING of Volunteer Medical Officers was held at the Grosvenor Hotel on Thursday last under the presidency of Mr. H. Spencer Smith, to consider the obnoxious regulation recently issued by the War Office with reference to the auxiliary force. Among those present were Mr. Edward Cock, Mr. J. C. Burrows, Dr. Mayo, Dr. Carr, Dr. Squire, Mr. W. P. Hoare, Dr. Burke Ryan, Mr. Harry Leach, Dr. Tulloch, Dr. Wood, Mr. Richard Davey, &c. Dr. John Murray officiated as secretary. About forty officers were present, and the following resolutions were carried unanimously:—

1. Proposed by Mr. Cock, and seconded by Dr. Squire—"That any one diploma sufficient for registration under the Medical Act, 1858, should admit to the Board examination."

2. Proposed by Dr. Carr, and seconded by Mr. Hoare—"That it be respectfully suggested to the authorities that Clause 43 on medical attendance ought to be expunged."

3. Proposed by Dr. Tulloch, and seconded by Dr. Wood—"That this meeting respectfully protests against any order indicating that medical examinations should be retrospective."

4. Proposed by Mr. Cordy Burrows, and seconded by Dr. Matthew Barnes—"That a deputation to the Right Hon. the Secretary for War be appointed from this meeting, consisting of the Chairman, Brigade Surgeon C. Burrows, Surgeon Cock, Surgeon Carr, and any other member and members of Parliament willing to attend, and that Dr.