

Recording Secretary, Dr. Walter E. Anthony, Providence; Corresponding Secretary, Dr. Edward M. Harris, Providence; Treasurer, Dr. Timothy Newell, Providence (Dr. F. H. Peckham, Jr., declining a reelection); Board of Censors, Drs. Ariel Ballou, James H. Eldredge, George Baker, Otis Bullock, Sylvanus Clapp, Welcome O. Brown, David King, J. W. C. Ely.

Dr. O. C. Wiggin, delegate to the annual meeting of the New Jersey Medical Society, reported briefly upon various medical questions discussed there, and of the fraternal attentions received, which made his visit a very pleasant one.

Dr. O. C. Wiggin then delivered the annual address before the society upon the subject of *The Causes of Discrepancy in Medical Testimony given in the Courts of Law*. The paper of Dr. Wiggin was an able presentation of its subject, showing the difficulties that attend medical and other expert testimony when given in courts, and that discrepancies must exist in such testimony in the very nature of things.

On motion of Dr. C. Parsons the thanks of the society were voted to Dr. Wiggin for his able paper, and a copy requested for publication.

On motion, the meeting then adjourned to the Horse Guards armory to partake of the annual dinner.

The Annual Dinner. — About half past two o'clock, soon after the adjournment of the business session, nearly a hundred fellows of the society met at the Horse Guards armory and sat down to their annual dinner, furnished by Café St. George, with an excellent bill of fare, to the order of the dinner committee, and devoted an hour to a very pleasant experimental discussion of the food question, with practical illustrations, and with good digestion waiting on appetite.

Dr. George L. Collins, anniversary chairman, presided, and called the company to order, while Rev. Carl W. Ernst asked for the divine blessing upon the feast, which all were then invited to partake of, and which they soon properly and very satisfactorily disposed of, each and all pronouncing it a very good "diet" for the occasion. Dr. Collins acted as toast-master.

MEDICAL NOTES.

— The following is an extract from Dr. Holmes's address at the recent public meeting in favor of a park:—

"You will not ask for rhetoric or eloquence in the few remarks upon a vital subject to be offered you by a member of the silent profession. What could be so eloquent as the hollow voice which announces the Boston annual death-rate as being 26.18 against 23.7, that of the great paved nation of London; against 19.3, that of Philadelphia, and approaching that of our two unhealthiest cities, New York and New Orleans? This high death-rate has been shown to be largely due to the excessive mortality among infants and children under five years of age. The most fatal of the diseases which assail them is that destruction which wasteth at noonday, to which our American practitioners give the name of cholera-infantum. And this disease prevails chiefly, almost en-

tirely, from June to October, the season when all out-of-door influences are most tempting and most needed. The weekly record of August and September is that of a pestilence. The destroying angel carries off the first-born, and oftener still the last-born, out of almost every household in certain districts, as in the heaviest curse laid on Egypt. Thousands have fled the city as they deserted London in the season of the plague, but thousands are left to follow in the funeral procession of those who were the hope of their households.

“A considerable part of this mortality, it may be feared, is unavoidable. Our climatic influences are permanent factors, and must always count in the bills of mortality. But there are certain agencies which we can, to a great extent, control. We can and do submit the dwellings of our citizens to inspection and sanitary regulation; we can and shall provide our city with proper drainage; we can and do inspect the food in our market, and condemn it if unfit for use; we can and must secure for our citizens the influences of unroofed and unwallied nature — air, light, space for exercise and recreation, the natural birthright of mankind.

“Of the uses of these larger breathing-spaces which we call parks, for the relief of the imprisoned dwellers in crowded streets, for the recreation of poor and rich alike, for the health of mind and body which they offer to all, it seems almost needless to speak from the medical point of view, for all know what cities would be without open areas where children can play in the shade and old people warm themselves in the sun. I wish to call your attention to a single point intimately connected with the alarming fact of the excessive death-rate of which I have spoken. That point is the influence of the air they breathe on the health of children, with the bearing of this on the question before us.

“If a child is found to have been starved to death in a cellar or an attic, a cry of horror is raised over it. If two or three wandering boys, as it happened the other day at Lowell, come upon some noxious roots, and, in obedience to their omnivorous instinct, devour them and pay the forfeit, the whole country hears of it. If a family or two get hold of some ill-conditioned meat and suffer for it, the groans of their colics are echoed all over the land. If a milkman misrepresents his honest cows by falsifying their product, the chemist detects him and the press puts him in the pillory. If the Cochituate or Mystic water is too much like an obsolete chowder, up go all noses and out come all manner of newspaper paragraphs from ‘Senex,’ ‘Tax-payer,’ and the rest. But air-poisoning kills a hundred where food-poisoning kills one.”

— At a recent meeting of the Société de Chirurgie, as reported in *La France Médicale* of May 13, 1876, M. Depaul reported a case of cancer of the testicle in an infant of ten months. When eight months old the child, of healthy appearance, was brought to M. Depaul. He then had a cylindrical tumor, solid, situated in the left of the scrotum, continuous with the cord and therefore appearing to lie in the left testicle. It was three centimetres long and two broad. The skin over the testicle was movable, and there was not any effusion into the tunica vaginalis. The diagnosis being doubtful, M. Depaul treated the tumor with resolvents. The infant continued to thrive. He showed no signs of pain, not even when the tumor was touched. One day

the skin of the scrotum became red and adherent to the tumor at one point. Later an abscess discharged at this point, and there remained a fistulous opening, which, gradually enlarging, permitted the protrusion of nearly a third of the tumor. On consultation with his colleagues M. Depaul determined to operate at once. Castration was performed without anæsthesia. It was easily done, the cord being rapidly cut through with the *écraseur*. There was no hæmorrhage. The age of the child at this time was ten months. Fifteen days later the cicatrization of the wound was nearly complete. The tumor, examined immediately after the operation, showed a wrinkled surface in the protruding part, but it was smooth on its upper aspect. On section it showed a yellowish-white tissue, of which the scrapings gave a cancerous juice. On microscopical examination it was shown to be of a cancerous nature, but of a mixed variety. It was sarcomatous in a portion of the tumor, but for the most part scirrhus.

— *The Medical Press and Circular* states that the *Paris Médicale* discusses the treatment of obesity by the administration of sea-water combined with a residence at the sea-side. Sea-water, taken internally, acts like diuretic and purgative salts, a remarkable fact being that the diuretic effect increases when the purgative diminishes. The water should be obtained, when possible, from some depth, and far from the shore. It is then to be left to settle for six to twelve hours, and filtered. It is to be taken three times a day in doses of a small glassful, or in half that quantity at a time with fresh water or milk. It is stated as a fact that sea-water thus used facilitates the oxygenation of the blood, and that it hastens the elimination of effete materials. In combination with this treatment sea-water baths are to be taken, free exercise is to be carried out, and at the same time fattening foods are to be avoided. Cases which have resisted other measures are stated to yield to this treatment.

— Drs. Humphreys and Fenner, of Seguin, Texas, report to the *American Supplement of The Obstetrical Journal of Great Britain and Ireland* for May, 1876, a case of a complete septum of the vagina. The patient, a German lady aged nineteen, stout and plump, was taken in labor January 11th. They saw her four days afterwards, and learned that she had been in labor all that time under an old lady's care. She was greatly fatigued, but not exhausted. The head rested above the brim, was in good position, occiput to left, and was freely movable. The os tinæ, dilated to about half the full size, covered the right parietal bone. They changed her position, and presently found the os covering the left parietal, and it was some little time before they noticed that there were two vaginas and two mouths to the womb, with the head resting centrally and heavily against the septum.

The two passages were exactly similar in every respect, and it was clearly impossible to deliver the child through either. Neither the forceps, version, nor craniotomy was available, and the Cæsarean section could hardly be justified where the child showed no sign of being alive. They decided to cut the septum, although they could recollect no authority or precedent for it. The head was pushed back, two fingers passed between it and the septum, a curved, probe-pointed bistoury, carefully guarded, was used, and the septum divided about an inch. A few pains brought the head against the septum, when an-

other inch was cut, and so on until the septum was cut through and the child expelled by the natural efforts. The hæmorrhage from the cut was only an ounce or two, and the woman recovered promptly and without a bad symptom. The child, apparently dead, was revived after long efforts.

The septum was placed antero-posteriorly, commencing at the arch of the pubis, passing down to the fourchette with a free edge, flush with the labia minora, and attached to the perinæum, the walls of the vagina, and the lips of the os uteri, holding the latter nearly in contact. It was about $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide. Its free border in front was almost a feather edge. Higher up it was of uniform thickness, of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ lines in the centre, growing thicker each way to its junction with the vaginal walls. Under the knife it had a fibrous feel, as if composed of sewing-threads. The part between the lips of the uterus was spread out a half-inch wide, either naturally or by the long-continued pressure of the head.

— An association to be known as the American Gynæcological Society was organized in New York on June 3d by the following gentlemen: F. Barker, T. G. Thomas, J. M. Sims, E. R. Peaslee, T. A. Emmett, E. Noeggerath, J. E. Taylor, W. T. Lusk, P. F. Munde, of New York; J. Byrne, A. J. C., Skene, of Brooklyn; W. L. Atlee, W. Goodell, R. A. F. Penrose, E. Wallace, A. H. Smith, T. M. Drysdale, J. V. Ingham, of Philadelphia; C. E. Buckingham, A. D. Sinclair, G. H. Lyman, W. L. Richardson, G. H. Bixby, J. R. Chadwick, of Boston; H. P. O. Wilson, W. T. Howard, of Baltimore; T. Parvin, of Indianapolis; E. W. Jenks, of Detroit; R. Battey, of Rome, Ga.; W. H. Byford, of Chicago; G. J. Engelmann, of St. Louis; S. C. Busey, Taber Johnson, of Washington; E. Van de Warker, of Syracuse; J. P. White, of Buffalo; J. M. Trask, of Astoria; J. C. Reeve, of Dayton, Ohio; H. F. Campbell, of Augusta, Ga.

The officers for the first year are as follows: President, Fordyce Barker; vice-presidents, W. L. Atlee, W. H. Byford; secretary, J. R. Chadwick; treasurer, P. F. Munde; council, J. M. Sims, W. Goodell, T. Parvin, G. H. Lyman. The first meeting will be held in New York on September 13, 1876.

— The condition of medical education in Maine is very flourishing. A large and uncommonly good class has recently graduated at Bowdoin, and the Portland School of Instruction has opened with an increased number of pupils. An examination for admission will hereafter be required. The Maine Medical Society met on June 27th and 28th. We hope to give some account of the meeting.

— We take from the *New York Medical Record* the following account of the murder of the superintendent of an insane asylum: "Dr. George Cook, the medical superintendent of Brigham Hall, Canandaigua, was fatally stabbed in the neck by an insane patient on the morning of June 12th, dying the same evening. The patient was a farmer by the name of Benson, who had been but recently admitted, and was not considered dangerous. He seemed to have been impressed with the idea that people were trying to poison him, and that Dr. Cook was endeavoring to administer the poison. Yesterday morning the doctor, in making his usual rounds among his patients, met Benson in his room or in one of the halls. Benson immediately struck the doctor in the

face and neck with a knife. Help was soon at hand and physicians summoned, and strong hopes were entertained for a time that the wounds would not prove fatal. All that medical and surgical skill could devise was brought to bear in the case, but failed, and the doctor died about five P. M. His age was about fifty years. Benson had evidently prepared the knife for the attack on the doctor, as it was found to have been recently sharpened, and he had wound cloth or paper around the handle, so that he could retain a firm hold of the instrument of death."

— We have received a copy of resolutions adopted by a committee of the Abingdon Academy of Medicine on the death of Dr. John P. Mettauer, whose name will be familiar to our oldest subscribers as a contributor to the JOURNAL.

Dr. John P. Mettauer died at his residence at Worsham (the old court house of Prince Edward County), Va., November 22, 1875, in the eighty-eighth year of his age. He entered upon the practice of his profession when about twenty-one years of age, and continued constantly at his post until, a few days before his death, he was seized by the fatal attack of disease, all the while enjoying a large and lucrative practice. During his long life of active labor he won for himself at home and abroad an enviable reputation. By careful study he was enabled to keep pace with the advances of science, with the latest changes in which he was thoroughly familiar. He was highly respected by his professional colleagues, as the accompanying resolutions will show:—

Resolved, That in the death of Dr. John P. Mettauer the medical faculty has lost one of its most distinguished men, the country in which he resided an able and safe practitioner, and the State one of its brightest ornaments in medical science, and his family the honored and revered head.

Resolved, That the Abingdon Academy of Medicine will ever entertain the most profound respect for the memory of Dr. Mettauer, for his high moral and medical character, his great ability as a practitioner and writer, and for his many virtues.

Resolved, That a copy of the preamble and resolutions be sent to the family of Dr. Mettauer, and also to the editors of the *Virginia Medical Monthly*, *Southern Medical Record*, and *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*.

W. F. BARR,

F. D. KERNAN,

J. S. APPERSON, *Committee.*

LETTER FROM BALTIMORE.

BALTIMORE is situated on the river Patapsco, and at the same time is washed by the waters of the Chesapeake Bay, which, reaching Locust Point (where a narrower passage is formed by the proximity of the opposite shore, Canton), makes a large sweep, extending right up into the heart of the business portion of the city. This is called "the basin," and although filled with steam and sail craft of all sizes and descriptions is shallow, dirty, filthy, muddy, stinking, a bane and an eye-sore to all. For years plans and suggestions, with contrivances of all kinds, from councilmen, merchants, doctors, scientists, have been proposed, some rejected, some tried; but still this horrible nuisance exists