

ROYAL MEDICAL AND CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY.

THE following is a copy of the report read at the last meeting of this Society from the delegates of that body appointed to attend at the recent International Congress at Philadelphia:—

To Sir JAMES PAGET, Bart., *President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society.*

DEAR PRESIDENT,—As the delegates nominated by you to represent the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society at the Medical Congress held at Philadelphia in September last, we beg leave to offer a brief report of our mission.

We all reached Philadelphia in time to take part in the active business of the Congress, but not in time to assist in settling the preliminary arrangements or the appointment of officers. We were, therefore, agreeably surprised to find that by a graceful act of courtesy of our American brethren two of your delegates had been elected presidents of sections—namely, Dr. Barnes of the Obstetrical Section, and Mr. Brudenell Carter of the Ophthalmological Section.

The President of the Congress, you are aware, was Professor Gross, a man whose commanding reputation as a surgeon and whose eminent personal character could not fail to secure the first essential of success, a splendid gathering of fellow-workers animated with scientific zeal and cordial sympathy.

A programme of the Constitution of the Sections and of the business transacted accompanies this Report. It will be sufficient to state here that there were sections for Medicine, Biology, Surgery, Dermatology and Syphilology, Obstetrics, Ophthalmology, Otology, Sanitary Medicine, and Mental Diseases. Addresses were delivered, in Medicine, by Dr. Austin Flint; on Hygiene and Preventive Medicine, by Dr. Henry J. Bowditch; in Surgery, by Dr. Paul F. Eve; on Medical Biography, by Dr. J. M. Toner; on Obstetrics, by Dr. Theophilus Parvin; on Medical Jurisprudence, by Professor Stanford E. Chaille; on Mental Hygiene, by Dr. John P. Gray; on Medical Literature, by Dr. T. G. Richardson; and on Medical Education and Medical Institutions, by Professor N. S. Davis.

The Sections held their meetings in the new University of Pennsylvania, a handsome and well-appointed building, admirably adapted for the work and comfort of the members.

Four hundred and forty-seven delegates attended. Of these, seventy-one were foreigners. The Sections were literally thronged to overflowing with delegates, members, and visitors who had flocked together from every part of the vast continent of the United States and Canada. And although scientific gatherings so constituted often find it difficult to sustain the due state of philosophical abstraction from competing social attractions, the meetings were marked by the most earnest and steady attention to the business throughout.

Judged by the elevation of tone and ability displayed in the addresses, by the selection of topics for discussion, by the learning and masterly grasp by which the memoirs were distinguished, by the numbers and prominence of the men who led the discussions, and by the scientific yet practical value of the results, the great Medical Congress of Philadelphia must be pronounced a splendid success, deserving to be remembered as an epoch, not alone in American, but in cosmopolitan medical history.

All this, knowing as we do the great position held by our American brethren in the medical world, might have been predicated with confidence. It may seem superfluous for us to say it, but strong feelings will have utterance. We cannot refrain from expressing our admiration for the completeness and harmony of the conception and design of this Congress, and for the strength of purpose and working skill with which the whole was carried out to the full realisation.

At the last general meeting of the Congress an address to the President was presented by Dr. Hare on behalf of ourselves and the other British delegates, congratulating him and the several committees on the complete success of the Congress, and heartily thanking them for the unbounded kindness and hospitality with which we had been received. But we cannot conclude without attempting to convey to you, Mr. President, and through you to the Society which it

was our good fortune and privilege to represent, how warmly we appreciate the unceasing exercise of all those marks of thoughtful kindness and consideration so grateful to visitors in a strange country, which were so successful in making us feel we were at home, and which contribute so much to make up a store of pleasant memories.

In addition to numerous private receptions, a public reception, in the Judges' Hall in the Centennial grounds, was presided over by his Excellency the Governor of Pennsylvania (Governor Hartranft), which was attended by a large contingent of ladies and other visitors.

We feel that our faith in the strong sympathy, kindred and professional, of our American brethren, warrants us in conveying to our fellow-members of this Society the assurance that the like cordial welcome awaits any of them who may be tempted, as we hope many will be tempted, to seek a playground on the other side of the Atlantic.

We have the honour to be, dear President,

Yours faithfully,

ROBERT BARNES, M.D.,

CHARLES J. HARE, M.D.,

R. BRUDENELL CARTER, F.R.C.S.

London, November 13th, 1876.

THE SOCIETY OF APOTHECARIES AND
MR. WITHERINGTON.

IN the Exchequer Division of the High Court of Justice, on Tuesday last, the 21st November, 1876, before Baron Pollock and a common jury, Sydney Herbert Witherington, a registered member of the Pharmaceutical Society, carrying on business at 410, Wandsworth-road, Surrey, was sued by the Society of Apothecaries, at the instance of the East London Medical Defence Association, under the Apothecaries' Act, for the recovery of a penalty of £20 alleged to have been forfeited by the defendant for illegally practising as an apothecary. Mr. Lewis Glyn (instructed by Messrs. Green and Pridham) represented the plaintiffs. Witnesses were called by the plaintiffs, who proved that the defendant had attended and prescribed medicine for their children and themselves, and that they had obtained several bottles of medicine from his shop. The defendant, in his defence, relied on a deed of partnership made between himself and a registered member of the Royal College of Surgeons, England, and contended that he had only attended the witnesses as an assistant to the said surgeon. His lordship, on perusing the deed, which had been handed in by the defendant, said that it made the plaintiffs' case stronger, inasmuch as it recited that the defendant and the qualified surgeon had entered into partnership to carry on the practice of general medical practitioners. No further evidence was offered on the part of the defendant, and after a careful summing-up by the judge, the jury immediately returned a verdict for the plaintiffs for the amount claimed, and his lordship ordered judgment to be entered accordingly with costs.

Correspondence.

"Andi alteram partem."

SCURVY AND THE ARCTIC EXPEDITION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—There appears to be just now in some quarters a tendency to relegate to alcohol the place which was formerly occupied by salt meat as a supposed active agent in the production of scurvy, and with even less foundation on fact. It should not be forgotten that in its campaign in the Caucasus during the winter of 1855-56 the army of Omar Pasha suffered terribly from scurvy. At Trebizonde shiploads of cases came into hospital under the care of the British medical staff (on which I was then serving), recalling, in their intense severity, the descriptions of the disease contained in the voyages of the early navigators. "Large numbers," as I have mentioned in the article *Scorbutus*,

Reynolds's System of Medicine, "died upon the sea-passage, in their transit from the shore to the hospital, and soon after their admission." These Mussulmans had eaten no salt meat, and, it is scarcely necessary to add, had not tasted any form of alcoholic liquor, but they suffered very much more severely than did the English and French troops in the Crimea at the same date, who consumed both these articles of diet. The simple explanation is that the Turks were very imperfectly fed, and had not any fresh vegetable food or lime-juice.

With many others, I am looking with anxious interest for an explanation, not of the cause of the outbreak of scurvy in the sledging parties of the recent Arctic Expedition, because surely that must have arisen from the supply of fresh vegetable juice having been defective in quantity or quality, but of the circumstances under which such a disastrous failure in necessary provision occurred.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Grosvenor-street, Nov. 21st, 1876.

THOMAS BUZZARD.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Pending the publication of the Medical Report of the Arctic Expedition, there is, to my mind, nothing unsatisfactory in the particulars furnished by Captain Nares respecting the outbreak of scurvy. The fact of the heavy labour of sledge-travelling developing the scorbutic condition in men deprived of a form of food essential to the maintenance of health and vigour is obvious. A man might be filled with all the good things provided for the Arctic expedition, but, lacking one thing needful, he would be certain to be starved when he came to put forth his strength continuously; and there was nothing, or not sufficient, to supply the waste. The "one thing needful" was, as Dr. Rae has pointed out, certainly not alcohol; whether it was or was not lime-juice I shall be glad to offer my testimony towards explaining when the medical report of the expedition has appeared.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

THOS. A. ROE,

Toines, Nov. 21st, 1876. Late Med. Inspector for the Board of Trade.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Permit me to add my humble testimony to the truth of Dr. Rae's remarks in your last number on the debilitating effects of alcohol. When travelling two years ago in the upper Sikkim Himalaya, at elevations above 12,000 feet, I several times took small quantities of whisky, not above half a wineglassful at a time in about six ounces of water, to counteract, as I imagined, the wearying effects of strong exertion at high elevations and at a low temperature. Each time the consequence was the very reverse of what I anticipated; for very soon after the spirit had been taken there came on an almost overpowering sense of drowsiness and lassitude, lasting an hour or more. I very soon substituted strong cold tea, with the happiest result; for not only did it refresh one's flagging energy, but also quenched distressing thirst effectually, and produced a feeling of exhilaration and capacity for renewed efforts; and ever after my spirit-flask contained nothing but tea. My natives not only never used spirituous drinks while on the march, but very seldom drank even water, which they said weakened them and affected their wind. Sportsmen in India well know the prejudicial effects of spirits in impairing steadiness of aim and powers of endurance, and many of them therefore use tea only when in the jungle.

I remain, Sir, yours faithfully,

Fletching, Nov. 21st, 1876.

W. J. TRENTLER, M.B. Edin.

THE LODGING-HOUSE SYSTEM AT THE UNIVERSITIES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In an article in THE LANCET of Saturday last upon the Lodging-house System at the Universities, after making comments on certain allegations of the Dean of Chichester with respect to lodging-houses at Oxford, the writer asserts that "neither at Oxford nor Cambridge do the

Lodging-house Syndicate trouble themselves about sanitary arrangements, either upstairs or downstairs," &c. It is not my intention to trouble you with any remarks on the Dean of Chichester's paper, which will be answered elsewhere; but the accusation brought against the Universities in your columns is in itself so serious, and the publication of it in your journal secures for it so wide a circulation, that I trust you will afford me space for an immediate and emphatic denial, so far as Oxford is concerned, of the whole of the charges made, generally and in detail. There is not one of the points in which negligence is alleged to exist which has not had, and does not receive, systematic and minute attention. One of the first measures adopted by the Oxford Lodging-house Delegacy, when it was appointed in 1868, was a careful inquiry into the sanitary conditions of every house then used for university lodgings. In 1871 the services of a highly qualified medical gentleman, since appointed to be a County Inspector of Nuisances, were engaged. He inspected and reported upon every house licensed, or proposed to be licensed, and continued to act as medical referee to the Delegacy until he left Oxford a few months ago. At the present time, when application is made for a licence, the house is inspected by one of the delegates, usually by myself. The drainage, water-supply, ventilation, and cleanliness are all attended to; inquiry is made as to the number of inmates, with a view to prevent overcrowding; every sink and closet is examined, and the soil-pipes of in-door closets are required to be ventilated. If an infectious disorder occurs in a house, no undergraduate is allowed to reside there until a medical certificate has been received that the premises have been properly disinfected. I enclose a leaf of my note-book, to exhibit the form in which the particulars relating to each house are recorded.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

GEO. S. WARD, M.A.,

One of the Delegates for Licensing Lodgings.

Hertford College, Oxford, Nov. 22nd, 1876.

INTRA-THORACIC CANCER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Dr. Burney Yeo, in his clinical lecture on Mediastinal Cancer, in your last week's issue, says that "the vocal cords were seen to be white and natural, and free from any thickening or ulceration; but the left vocal cord was flaccid and motionless, in a position between adduction and abduction." Further, he adds—"I am not aware that any one, in this country at least, has hitherto demonstrated a paralytic affection of the vocal cords as observed accompanying thoracic cancer."

Without claiming any particular credit for it, permit me to draw Dr. Yeo's attention to a case of intra-thoracic cancer, published by me in THE LANCET of October 24th, 1874, in which it is stated that on examination by the laryngoscope it was found "the left vocal cord was found to be paralysed, while the right was acting normally. Both were free from any visible disease, as was also the larynx and trachea, so far as could be seen."

Further cases will doubtless serve to indicate the diagnostic value of the paralysis mentioned.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Glasgow, Nov. 20th, 1876.

M. CHARTERIS.

SANITARY GYMNASTICS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—My attention has been called to an interesting record, in THE LANCET of last week, by Mr. Edmund Owen, F.R.C.S., &c. &c., of a "Gunshot Injury to the Musculo-spiral Nerve" successfully treated by the Swedish system of "manual treatment," commonly called "the Movement Cure." In that record, which I hope will be widely studied, it is implied that the so-called "Swedish Institution" of Dr. Kellgreen, in Pimlico, is the only place in London where this mode of treatment can be found; and as I am a great admirer of the system, and also a lover of justice, I hope you will allow a space in your next impression for this statement, that the "Movement Cure,"