

THE MORBID CHANGES IN CHRONIC BRIGHT'S DISEASE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A drawing of the fundus oculi in Bright's disease, which I showed at the meeting of the Pathological Society on the 20th ult., is erroneously described in your report of the meeting. Mr. Higgens has based on that report a criticism of my remarks, and I shall be glad, therefore, to correct the mistake.

The drawing was not one "in which white threads were depicted on the sides of the arteries." Three of the primary branches of the retinal artery were connected, each by a broad band of white tissue, which extended, on two of the vessels, for a considerable distance from the disc. The band was about the same width as the normal artery. It was interrupted here and there, and ended suddenly, and, in the intervals and at its termination, the artery was quite normal in appearance. One artery so changed passed beneath, another over, a vein, without the vein being implicated. Another artery, which was normal at its origin, presented, a considerable distance from the disc, a similar change for a short extent; but the white band here was narrower than the normal vessel, and just behind this part the artery presented two small aneurisms. The retina presented other appearances of ordinary albuminuric retinitis.

The condition was thus distinctly one of periarterial change, hypothetically "fibrosis," and may be regarded, from its associations, as the consequence of the advanced renal disease from which the patient was suffering.

Most persons who use the ophthalmoscope are, I suppose, familiar with the change to which Mr. Higgens alludes, both as a physiological condition and also as, in some cases, unquestionably the result of disease.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

April 2nd, 1877.

W. R. GOWERS.

BIRMINGHAM.

(From our own Correspondent.)

THE annual meeting of the governors of the Queen's Hospital, held last Monday under the presidency of Lord Leigh, was more than usually interesting, owing to the fact that the committee for the first time had an opportunity of reporting on the working of the "free system" which was adopted at this hospital, with considerable doubts and misgivings, at the beginning of the year 1876. The ordinary income in 1875 was £5817; in 1876 it amounted to £7137, showing an increase of £1319; while from legacies there was an increase of £880, and from donations and benefactions of £548. The total expenditure in 1876, owing to greater economy in administration—for the number of in-patients had increased,—was £8761, being £1221 less than that of 1875. The committee have just cause to congratulate themselves on this state of things, and with remarkably good taste they state that "the great change of system had given them but little, if any, extra trouble and anxiety, and they attributed this to the zeal and fidelity of the officers of the institution, upon whom, in the treatment and nursing of the patients and in the control and management of the house, they had had to rely. They wished in particular to speak in the most grateful terms of the support and help to a good understanding they had derived from the medical committee."

The "free system" has also, according to the medical report, "proved in many respects a great success. The cases admitted into the hospital have been more numerous and more urgent, and yet the average time of detention in the hospital has been shorter;" and the medical staff in conclusion express their intention of giving a loyal and thorough trial to the new system. With such accord between the governing body and the medical staff, the free system may be carried out in almost any hospital, and is almost sure to meet with approbation from the public, and to prove a great success.

A public inquiry has been held at the Guildhall, Walsall, by Colonel P. Cox, C.E., as to the proposal on the part of

the Town Council to apply the Artisans and Labourers' Dwellings Act to a part of the town which, according to the evidence of Dr. Maclachlan, the medical officer of health, stands in urgent need of sanitary improvement. Three-fourths of the 110 dwelling houses which it is proposed to pull down are, according to his account, unfit for habitation, and the death-rate in the houses in question is about 40 per 1000. The inspector obtained in all probability sufficient evidence to justify him in supporting the application of the Act to the town of Walsall, and it would be gratifying to hear of its being soon carried into effect.

The annual meeting of the National Medical Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts was held on March 28th, under the presidency of Dr. Nevins, of Liverpool, and the attendance of the medical profession of the town was invited. Discussion as to the future policy and work of the Association and on the medical aspect of the question at issue took place, but the meeting evoked little interest, and very few members of the profession in Birmingham attended the meetings, and still fewer took any part in the proceedings, or gave any encouragement whatever to the society in question.

The West Bromwich guardians have been for some time in the habit of allowing the authorities of Queen's College to have the bodies of unclaimed paupers for the purposes of dissection, but some over-sensitive members of that body have foolishly conceived an objection to this course being continued. The common sense of the majority of the members has, however prevailed, and the sentimental aspirations of these objectors have met with the fate they justly merited.

Birmingham, March 31st, 1877.

PARIS.

(From our own Correspondent.)

HEALTH OF THE FRENCH PREMIER AND OTHER PERSONAGES.

SOME exaggerated rumours have been lately current touching the health of the French Premier. It was said that his health was very much broken down, and that he had had a fainting fit, which had lasted very long and had proved exceedingly alarming. The fact is that Monsieur Jules Simon has merely been suffering from symptoms of temporary fatigue and anæmia. The arduous and responsible duties which he has recently had to perform, under very delicate and trying circumstances, produced a general condition of physiological depression, which manifested itself in various ways. One of the symptoms of this state was the supervention of a bad whitlow on one of the fingers of the right hand, which caused severe pain and necessitated an operation. The health of the Premier is now fully restored. At his reception last week at the Ministry of the Interior he showed me his finger, which was quite healed, and gave me the best assurances touching his general health. He has regained his usual liveliness and cheerfulness of manner, and is making preparations to pass a fortnight at Venice for rest and change of air.

The convalescence of Marshal Canrobert, whose illness I mentioned in my last letter, has been interrupted by a slight return of the gouty attack in an arm. He is otherwise doing better.

The brother of the Maréchal de MacMahon, the Duke de Castries, has been recently so very ill as to give the most serious anxiety to his sister and family. He is a sufferer from valvular affection of the heart, and the dropsy and other complications were lately very severe, but have since subsided.

DEATH OF DR. ROUDIL.

The head-physician to the Paris Prefecture de Police, Dr. Roudil, was buried yesterday. The Prefect of Police and several of the municipal authorities were present at the funeral. Dr. Roudil, who was most highly esteemed, had formerly occupied an eminent post as surgeon in the army, from which he retired to be appointed to the Police Prefecture.

MEETING OF THE CLINICAL SOCIETY OF PARIS.

At the last meeting of the Clinical Society, which took place on Wednesday last, under the presidency of Professor Peter, several important papers were read. M. Quinquand