

journal, on the admission of ladies to medical classes in the University of Edinburgh. The Graduates in Medicine of that University might have had an opportunity given them by their Alma Mater of expressing an opinion on the proceeding. The first intimation of such a proposal as the Senatus seems to contemplate, came to me through the medium of your pages. The feelings it originated within me were—firstly, one of surprise that a profession should be courted by women (happily, only by a few) which, in the majority of its relations and bearings, must tend oftentimes to place them in indelicate positions, both as regards their patients and themselves; and, secondly, one of pain that my University should, after the refusal of London and other schools, be persuaded to accede to the proposal.

When will woman cease to emulate the stronger mind and more powerful organisation of man? Many and noble are the tasks allotted to her in this life; but can any unimpassioned thinker bring himself to believe that the career of a medical man is one of them? Can he bring himself to believe that the comparatively delicate frame, and refined mind, usually attributed to woman, were ever meant to contend in a course of studies which often try to the utmost every sense we possess? And if the studies be passed, can he imagine her to excel in a profession which imperatively demands such qualities as energy, promptitude of decision, courage, and power to sustain protracted fatigue?

Moreover, I cannot but think that many will agree with me when I say, that amongst those of womankind whom I have heard refer to the subject, rarely have I met with those who speak in favour of there being "lady doctors." I allow that in obstetric practice, so far as a natural labour is concerned, woman's services are not only quite sufficient, but perhaps most appropriate; but surely, as your correspondent has remarked, a licence for this portion of our profession can be obtained by a suitable attendance at any lying-in hospital.

I am no alarmist, and least of all fear any rivalry in our profession from the opposite sex, but I do think that the University of Edinburgh will take a foolish step if it throws open its medical classes, or even portions of them, to would-be lady doctors. I can only trust that, should the matter in question require the sanction of the General Medical Council before it can pass into effect, that body will view the proposal of the Senatus in a somewhat different light.

I hope, in conclusion, that all such graduates of the Edinburgh University as are anxious to see maintained the old *prestige* of their school, will stir in this matter.

Apologising for trespassing to such a length on your space, and enclosing my card,

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

F. G.

THE ADDRESS TO MR. SYME.

PROFESSOR SYME has forwarded the following reply to the Address of the Border Medical Association:—

1, Shandwick-place, Edinburgh, Aug. 30th, 1869.

MY DEAR DR. TURNBULL,—I have received with more pleasure than it would be easy to express the kind expression of regard from so many of my respected brethren which you have had the goodness to transmit. Nothing could be more gratifying to me, and I beg that you will express to the members of your Association my best and most sincere thanks.

Yours very truly,

Dr. Turnbull.

(Signed)

JAMES SYME.

EDINBURGH.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THE site of the new Infirmary may be said to be now definitely settled. The Governors of Watson's Hospital are members of the Merchants' Company, and, after a meeting with representatives of the Infirmary management, recommended the Merchants' Company to dispose of the site of Watson's Hospital, and the building itself, to the Infirmary for £43,000. A general meeting of the Company was held to-day, when the recommendation of the Hospital Governors

was adopted at a full meeting by a majority of six. This is the second time the site of Watson's Hospital has been sold to the Infirmary.

Edinburgh, Sept. 9th, 1869.

PARIS.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THE DISCUSSION ON ANIMAL VACCINATION AT THE ACADEMY OF MEDICINE.

THE discussion on Animal Vaccination at the Academy of Medicine, which had at first been restricted between MM. Jules Guérin and Depaul, has taken a wide extension, and is now the subject of those interminable discourses which characterise the debates of our Gallic neighbours. Instead of coming up with a few short, sensible, and practical remarks, exclusively to the point, and summing up the result of their views and experience, French debaters must needs expatiate for hours upon a subject, take up the question *ab ovo*, relate the opinions of Hippocrates, Galen, and others, show off their oratorical skill and ability, sprinkle their harangue with telling phrases and witty remarks, and vigorously assail their adversaries. What is expected from them, and what they aim at attaining, is not the scientific and practical elucidation of a question, but an exhibition of talk and oratorical power, in the development of which the debaters and the listeners seem to take equal delight. Occasionally, however, the listeners have the worst of it. The result is, that whenever a question of great importance is taken up for discussion at the Academy, whatever of value and interest turns up in connexion therewith must be patiently sought for amid the lengthy harangues which are delivered on the occasion, and with which the French medical journals, like so many *moutons de Panurge*, fill up their columns. One would say that the French debaters have plenty of time to spare, and the French journals abundance of unoccupied space to fill up.

Of course, these remarks are quite general, and are marked by some exceptions as far as the orators are concerned; but, alas! how few these exceptions! You doubtless remember what a deluge of fine talk and speechifying there was at the Academy at the time of the discussion on Villemin's experiments on tuberculosis. What a waste of time and paper and printer's ink that debate entailed! I dare say I should not be far from the truth in reckoning that several hundred columns were devoted in the local journals to the reproduction *in extenso* of the Academical debates. Perhaps there will be less display of oratory in connexion with the question now under discussion. *Mais cela marche bien*, as they say here. M. Jules Guérin having given three long speeches on the subject, which occupied as many sittings of the Academy, M. Depaul, who had been freely handled by his adversary, would not be behindhand with him, and was determined to speak quite as many times, and at just as great length. So he did, of course. Other orators have followed in the wake. Replies from the preceding debaters must be expected, and so on.

It would be practically impossible for me to follow each orator in his excursion through the question. Perhaps when the whole business is over, I may be able to sum up the debates for the benefit of my readers,—at least I will attempt to do so. I wish, however, whilst awaiting the time, just to mention what is the present state of the question. Three points have formed the chief of the discussion, and have given rise to some difference of opinion—namely, the degeneration or non-degeneration of human vaccine, the existence of vaccinal syphilis, and the value of animal vaccination. With regard to the first of these questions, the majority of the orators have expressed themselves in favour of non-degeneration. Neither M. Ricord nor M. Jules Guérin nor M. Bousquet considers the human vaccine, first developed by Jenner, as having lost its active preservative qualities. They consider those who believe in degeneration as having "allowed themselves to be misled by certain appearances." The facts which these pessimists invoke may be explained satisfactorily. According to M. Hérard, they may be accounted for by the necessarily limited preservative virtue of vaccine (which requires to be refreshed by revaccinations) as well as by certain changes which have