

has been banished, and his health proportionately improved whilst he has been taking the following: one drachm of sodium salicylate, two drachms of compound tincture of gentian, one drachm of tincture of strophanthus, two drachms of chloric ether, and infusion of buchu to one ounce.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,
Ewell, Surrey, March 2nd, 1904. PERCY RENDALL, M.D.

THE BATTLE OF THE CLUBS AT SOUTHAMPTON.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—With reference to the article in THE LANCET of Feb. 13th respecting the battle of clubs in Southampton I beg to say that it is a tissue of false and erroneous statements all the way through. Your informant is evidently very ignorant of what he is writing about. In the first place, he states that the Dock Provident Society imported a medical man. This is untrue, as I had taken a house in Southampton before I knew of the existence of the society and it was some days after that I saw the advertisement for a surgeon in the local paper. I replied to this and was duly elected by the committee. As to the society being the means of founding the Medical Federation in the town, this is false, as the society has nothing to do with the federation and never had. So far from not having sufficient work to do I may say that I had a very busy year as this being one of the oldest registered societies in the town it led up to many others, and I may say that with a very few exceptions I have met with nothing but expressions of gratitude and many acts of kindness from all the members. With regard to the London and Manchester and the National Medical Aid I have never had anything to do with them. I believe the latter society was bought up by one of the medical officers of the federation. With regard to the female O. F. they pay the same rate as the males; if it pays the medical officer for one why not for the other? They are all young women and seldom trouble one. From what I hear many of the medical men who stuck out for 6s. 6d. are now offering to take them for 5s. per annum if they can get them. It appears to me these men have acted like a set of schoolboys instead of business men. The federation is an amalgamation of various clubs, is exceedingly well managed, and is rapidly increasing in numbers. I inclose a cutting from the local paper respecting the club question. The Southampton Provident Medical Association has attacked the smaller clubs but is afraid to attack the larger societies, which in my opinion shows its weakness. The numbers which your correspondent states have joined the association are not correct.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,
ARTHUR GRAHAM,
Surgeon to the Dock Provident Society; Surgeon to
the Medical Federation, Southampton.
Southampton, Feb. 23rd, 1904.

PS.—I wish to state that I have always been opposed to well-to-do tradespeople deriving benefit from these clubs.

* * We were informed that Mr. Graham applied for the post under the Dock Provident Society from an address in London, which certainly pointed to importation. He has since told us that he had already arranged to take a house in Southampton before receiving the appointment, a circumstance which alters the position. Our information does not bear out his statements that the Dock Provident Society has nothing to do with the federation and that the federation is rapidly increasing in numbers. With regard to the number of adherents to the Southampton Provident Medical Association the figures were obtained from a source that ought to be trustworthy and a general statement that they are not correct does not impress us. Our correspondent must point out the error in detail when, if he is right, we shall be happy to say so.—ED. L.

MISTLETOE.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—It has occurred to me that the following note may be of interest to your readers in connexion with the annotation on the subject of mistletoe which appeared in THE LANCET of Jan. 9th, p. 111. The substance of the

note is translated from a well-known work in Persian on Materia Medica, the *Makhzanu l-Adwiyā* (Storehouse of Medicines), compiled by one Muhammad Husain Khān in the year 1185 of the Hijra, corresponding to 1771 A.D. His statements concerning the mistletoe may be regarded as embodying the opinions of all the oriental authorities up to the date of his work. It will be seen that mistletoe was looked upon as injurious to the heart rather than beneficial. The author writes as follows:—

“*Dibq*,¹ called also *qusās*, and in Persian *Marvizak-i-‘Asah*’ (the honey-creeper) and *Kishmish-i-kāwāliyā* (the Cābuli raisin), is a berry smaller than the chick-pea, of a greenish colour, and when it dries its skin shrivels and turns black. It contains in its interior a glutinous moisture and the seeds are of the size of poppy seeds. The plant grows on the pear and other trees, several twigs shooting from one point. The leaves resemble somewhat those of the *múrd*² and the pomegranate; they are delicate in texture and greyish-green. The best kind when fresh are smooth and round. Their colour inside is like that of the leek and the outside inclining to greenness, blackness, and redness. Their constitution is hot in the extreme of the second degree and dry in the first degree, possessing an excess of moisture which is not glutinous. Certain authorities consider it hot and dry in the third degree. Its properties are compounded of the essence of aerial heat and aqueous coolness, with a slight admixture of earthy astringency, and after being ingested by anyone its special effects are (speedily) manifested.

Its special action and properties.—It is attenuant, discutient, and laxative—efficacious in dispersing thin and gross humours and absorbing them from the depths of the body. When it is macerated in warm water and the skin and seed are separated from the juice by squeezing, and the pure juice mixed with the kernels of the walnut or with the pulp of the fruit of the *Bidanjir*³ (which is the usual way of drinking it), it is effectual in purging away the black bile and mucous humours; also useful as a deobstruent and in sciatica, fistulous sinuses, and cold abscesses. An ointment compounded with it ripens and melts down and collects the matter in swellings and allays cold pains, while with turpentine and wax it is used for the ripening of boils, pustular eruptions of mucous origin, and phlegmatic tumours, also for softening the joints. Mixed with *zarnikh*⁴ it is also used for the last three purposes and with gummastich it is used for malignant ulcers and with arsenic and pitch it is used to extract the nails. With quicklime and grape juice and honey it is used to make the nails grow again. With henna⁵ it is used in the treatment of impetigo and dandruff, also with oil of roses for making the hair grow long. A decoction of it in lime water is useful in removing swellings of the spleen, while a paste of it made with lime is a means of removing induration of the spleen and is also useful in drawing out gross humours from the depths of the body. It is injurious to the heart, the corrector of this influence being the *Bādranjībūyah*.⁶

The quantity to be taken [? of this decoction] is up to one *misqāl*⁷; a larger quantity causes gripes and vertigo with heaviness of the limbs. In lieu of it, as an equivalent in discutient power, is half its weight of juniper berries and four *dāngs*⁸ of almonds, and in all cases half its weight of *Agir karhā*.⁹ When mistletoe berries are cooked with honey, syrup of dates, and *sapistān*,¹⁰ and made into long fine threads, it is put on the surface of trees, when any bird that settles sticks to the tree and is caught. When it is mixed with *Qirnuz*¹¹ it intensifies its (crimson) colour. It forms an ingredient also in many other colours.”

With apologies for the length of this note,

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,
GEORGE RANKING, M.D. Cantab.,
Calcutta, Feb. 6th, 1904. Lieutenant-Colonel, I.M.S.

¹ *Viscum album*.

² *Múrd*, *Myrica Gale*.

³ *Ricinus communis*.

⁴ *Zarnikh* is the name for arsenic (= *azzarnikh*) in all its forms. It is probably yellow orpiment which is here intended to be used.

⁵ *Lawsonia inermis*.

⁶ There is a little uncertainty as to what is meant by this name. By *Abdullah Shírázī*, court physician to the Emperor *Sháhjehán*, it is said to be the sweet basil, called in *Hindī Julsi* (*Oeymum sanctum*). That author also includes it in his list of cardiac tonics (*Alfāzī Adwiyah*).

⁷ The *misqāl* was equivalent to 96 barleycorns in weight.

⁸ The *dāng* was equivalent to 16 barleycorns in weight.

⁹ *Agirgarhá*, *Anthemis pyrethrum*.

¹⁰ The fruit of *cordia myxa* (*cordia sebestana*).

¹¹ *Kermes*, *coccus baphica*.