

other tests, which might be highly successful,—or else they were simply chosen as scapegoats, a thing to which they would never accede, as, not only was it wounding to their self-respect, but it was tantamount to asking a soldier to throw down his arms whilst hopefully and courageously doing a good fight on the battle-field. They therefore refused to accept these terms, at least two of them did, and the jury was therefore compelled to reserve them. Of course, they would not be named, nor did they expect to be named, but they continued to the end, and, it is said, have now lodged a complaint with the Minister of Public Instruction, showing the illegal proceeding of the *concours*.

It will be remembered that at the last *concours*, at the Assistance Publique, for the nomination of two gentlemen to the post of physician to the Paris hospitals, there was also much grumbling. This is very much to be regretted, as it reflects hurtfully on the system of *concours* in public competition, which is really a valuable institution, and which, if properly conducted, would be certainly the fairest means of putting the right man into the right place. Happily, the *Revue des Cours Scientifiques* tells us that some important changes, intended to regulate the proper working of the *concours*, are now in contemplation. One of them, and an excellent one it would be, will consist in having two juries instead of the one which now takes cognisance of all the necessary tests. There would be a first series of tests with a jury—these tests being eliminative only, the candidates reserved, and sent to the second and last jury, which would then judge *en dernier ressort*.

I was forgetting to mention that the six gentlemen who have been successful at the last *concours* are Messieurs (1) Bouchard, (2) Ollivier, (3) Chalvet, (4) Lecorché, (5) Brouardel, (6) Cornil. They are, I repeat, distinguished workers in the field of science, and have already given proof of much learning and ability; but one regrets to see that the list does not include such names as Leven and Lancereaux.

The subject of medical education is so much *à l'ordre du jour* that you may like to know how the courses of lectures at the School of Medicine are distributed according to the sessions. I therefore note down the programme of the summer session of the Paris Faculty, to commence on the 1st proximo:—Botany (with herborising excursions into the country): Prof. Baillon.—Physiology: Prof. Longet, who will lecture on the Functions of the Nervous System.—Therapeutics and Materia Medica: Prof. Gubler, recently appointed, will inaugurate his teaching by a course of lectures on the Historical and General Details of the various means of Introducing Medicaments into the Economy.—Surgical Pathology: Prof. Dolbeau, also recently appointed, will lecture on General Diseases, Diseases of the Tissues and Systems, Fractures and Luxations.—Forensic Medicine: M. Tardieu's course will include all the questions in connexion with the different kinds of Violent Death.—Pharmacology: M. Regnaud.—Accouchements: Prof. Pajot, on the Difficulties of Parturition.—Pathological Anatomy: Prof. Vulpian, on Alterations of the Blood.—Medical Pathology: Prof. Hardy, Lung and Heart Diseases.—Hygiene: M. Bouchardat, on Heat, Light, Ground, and Atmosphere; the Excretions; Contagious Diseases; General Hygiene.—Medical Clinique: Professors Bouillaud and Sée at La Charité; Béhier, at the Hôtel Dieu.—Surgical Clinique: Professors Laugier and Gosselin (Hôtel Dieu), Broca (Charité), Richet (La Pitié). The above details may also be of use to students or medical men visiting or about to visit the Paris Faculty and hospitals.

The Emperor has been suffering from a slight attack of *grippe*, or influenza, which he caught on Wednesday last, having remained to a late hour in the garden, inspecting various experiments with gas-light. On this account, the last Council of Ministers, appointed for Saturday last, did not take place. But he is now much better. The Council is convened for this day (Monday), and it is fully expected that it will be presided over by the Emperor.

Journalism and severe criticism do not seem to agree with the ruling scientific bodies of Paris. M. Guardia, on account of a very sarcastic article published in the *Gazette Médicale* (and from which perhaps he should have abstained, on account of his position at the Academy), has lost his place of Under-Librarian at the Academy of Medicine; whilst M. Pouchet, the son of the well-known naturalist and promoter of the spontaneous-generation theory, on account of

a critical article published in *L'Avenir National*, has been dismissed from his post of *aide-naturaliste* at the Museum.

Paris, March 22nd, 1869.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

SUPERANNUATION ALLOWANCES TO MEDICAL OFFICERS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I should feel obliged if you would permit me, through your journal, to make an appeal to members of the Poor-law Medical Officers' Association especially, and Poor-law medical officers generally, under the following circumstances.

In December, 1868, I was deputed by the Council of the Association to write to the secretary of the Irish Medical Association, and tender an interchange of good offices in furtherance of the objects of the respective Associations. This offer was gladly accepted by the Council of the Irish Association.

The time has now arrived when English Poor-law medical officers can afford a practical demonstration of sympathy with their Irish brethren. On the 7th of April the Bill to provide for Superannuation Allowances to Medical Officers of Poor-law Unions and of Dispensary Districts of such Unions in Ireland, introduced by Dr. Brady, will be read a second time. The object of the Bill is fully described in its title, but, in order to make it more plain, I may state that it is intended thereby to provide, "with the concurrence of boards of guardians and the Irish Poor-law Commissioners, superannuation allowances to any medical officer or officers of a union or dispensary district who shall at any time after his or their appointment become incapable of discharging the duty of his or their office with efficiency, by reason of infirmity of mind or body or old age, upon his or their resigning or ceasing to hold office, such annual allowance for his or their lives not exceeding in any case two-thirds of the income derived by such office or offices," &c.

Having communicated with Dr. Brady and others, they agreed with me in considering that great assistance might be afforded at the second reading if English and Welsh Poor-law medical officers would at once write to such members of the House of Commons as they may be personally acquainted with, and urge them to vote for the Bill. With a view to afford in a ready form the material of such letter, I would suggest the adoption of part of the speech of Mr. B. Baker at the last quarterly meeting of our Association, on moving a resolution upon this subject: "Our education costs us much; we devote much time and thought in our department; our work is most difficult and most ungrateful, and fraught with much personal risk to ourselves and families. We work seven days a week, oftentimes at night, all the year round. There is no provision made for a vacation. The parish doctor is never supposed to be idle—never to be tired—never to want a change from the monotonous duties of his office; if he leaves his appointment, it must be at his own risk and cost."

The argument used against superannuation of Poor-law medical officers is that they do not give the whole of their time. To this it may be replied that the salaries paid are wholly insufficient to enable them to do so; but they are expected to be ready at all times, even at the sacrifice too frequently of other more remunerative interests.

I may further state that a direct appeal will be made, through the Council of the Association, to those English and Welsh members who, to the number of ninety, replied favourably to our circular letter at the late election. But I must urge upon gentlemen the desirability of supporting our application by immediate oral or written request to those they can influence.

In conclusion, let me remind Poor-law medical officers that our Irish *confrères* are not likely to be wanting in grateful recognition of our services; and if they are afforded on this occasion, we shall have the right to ask and be sure to obtain a similar service from them when the time arrives

to make that parliamentary appeal with regard to grievances the redress of which it is the object of the Poor-law Medical Officers' Association to secure.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Dean-street, March 22nd, 1869.

J. ROGERS.

ARMY MEDICAL ADMINISTRATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Permit a few words of comment on Dr. Stallard's letter in your number of Feb. 13th.

Mr. Cardwell must be aware, although the public may not, of the fact that the War Office authorities are not content with an Army Medical Department, composed of doctors from every medical school and university in the kingdom, a Director-General with a separate head of the sanitary branch of the War Office, and a professor and assistant-professor of hygiene at Netley, but they must have, in addition, a special sanitary adviser drawing a salary of £1200 a year. The authorities ought to abolish that department and retain their present official adviser, on the score of economy. To be sure, there is foreign service to be undertaken and disease to be treated, but the withdrawal of our colonial troops will relieve them of the first difficulty; and as their adviser manages to gauge the causes and describe the course of epidemics some time after they have passed away better than those who were eye-witnesses of the facts, there is no reason why he should not equally well treat patients whom he has never seen with remedies drawn from the depths of his moral consciousness, and issued from the War Office according to a sealed pattern. Moreover, as he never exposes himself to the causes of disease on the one hand, and possesses unsurpassed knowledge of sanitation on the other, it may confidently be anticipated that he will never require a Government pension on the score of ill-health. I happen to know a great many medical officers who regard it as absurd to supplement a large and expensive medical service by a separate appointment of this sort, and I agree with them so far; but a logical consistency ought clearly to lead the authorities to abolish the large department in favour of their War Office adviser, with whom the power appears to reside, if not the responsibility, of administering all matters affecting army sanitation.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

ONE ACQUAINTED WITH THE SERVICE, THOUGH NOT IN IT.

EQUALISATION OF THE POOR-RATES IN THE METROPOLIS.

A NUMEROUS deputation of gentlemen from all parts of London waited upon the President of the Poor-law Board to request that the Government "will introduce a Bill to accomplish what philanthropy and statesmanship, as well as justice and morality, demand—the Equalisation of the Poor-rate in the Metropolis." On the whole, the answer of the Right Hon. Mr. Goschen must be regarded as satisfactory. He admitted that the arguments in favour of such a measure were irresistible, but found the whole difficulty to rest in giving local bodies a pull out of the common purse without intervention or control. He observed that anyone who would offer a solution of that difficulty would be doing good service, and the matter would soon be settled. We fearlessly call upon Mr. Goschen to be that great benefactor to the poor and to the ratepayers of the metropolis. Let him establish a small representative Board for the management of that common purse, with a competent chairman and responsible representative of the Poor-law Board. Depend upon it, such a Board would be able to devise some form of supervision over the expenditure in every part of the metropolis; and, by reorganising, without destroying, local action, would economise in management, consolidate and classify the sick and in-door poor, and inaugurate a system of dispensaries, which, as our correspondent, Mr. Blanchard Jerrold, proves, is the back-bone of an efficient administration for the relief of pauperism.

Medical News.

APOTHECARIES' HALL.—The following gentlemen passed their examination in the Science and Practice of Medicine, and received certificates to practise, on March 18th:—

Argles, Robert, Maidstone.
Budd, Samuel Punnett, Plymouth.
Hunt, Tom Oliver, Hockley, Birmingham.
Lister, Charles Henry, Royal Free Hospital.

As Assistant in Compounding and Dispensing Medicines:—
Loggin, Chas. Frederick, jun., Stratford-on-Avon.

At the meeting of the Metropolitan Association of Medical Officers of Health, on Saturday last, Dr. Vinen stated the result of the application which had been made to medical men for returns of the number of cases of scarlatina what had come under their notice during 1868. No very satisfactory data have been obtained. It will be recollected that we entered fully into this matter a few weeks since. A discussion followed on the out-patient system of hospitals, in which opinions adverse to the present unchecked distribution of relief were expressed.

THE Central Committee of the Royal Albert Idiot Asylum for the Northern Counties have received from the Misses Cort, of Kirkby, near Liverpool, the munificent donation of one thousand guineas.

At the annual meeting of the supporters of the Stanley Hospital, Liverpool, held last week, it was stated that the liberal donations and subscriptions received had enabled the committee to extend the scope of the hospital, which was originally limited to the treatment of chest diseases and of women and children. The Earl of Derby has promised a site for a new building.

A BUTCHER at Hull was lately detected in removing from a knacker's premises a sackful of horseflesh, which he intended to "work up" into "polonies." The knacker stated that he held a commission to supply the "polony" man with three dead horses per week. The carrion-purchaser has been sent to take his trial for his vile traffic.

MACKENNA v. PARKES.—On appeal to the Lords Justices, Mrs. Parkes (Miss Amy Sedgwick), widow of the late Dr. Parkes, of Great Marlborough-street, has obtained an addition of £170 to the amount ordered by the Vice-Chancellor on a former hearing, to be paid her by Dr. Mackenna in satisfaction of a disputed claim arising out of the partnership agreement entered into between himself and Dr. Parkes shortly before the death of the latter.

YELLOW FEVER IN SOUTH AMERICA.—Official notice has been sent to the Collectors of Customs that yellow fever prevails at all the ports of the departments of Moquega and Arequipa, with the exception of Arica, in Peru. The same fearful disease is also reported to be very prevalent at Caraccas, in Venezuela.

A LADY APOTHECARY.—A young woman named Doumergue has just passed an examination before the Academy of Montpellier in the section of pharmacy, and been admitted, with one of the first numbers, to follow the lectures on botany, chemistry, toxicology, and elementary physics.

VICTORIA PARK HOSPITAL.—The twenty-first anniversary of the City of London Hospital for Diseases of the Chest was celebrated on the 16th instant at the London Tavern. Lord George Hamilton, M.P., presided. Subscriptions to the amount of £3600 were announced during the evening, somewhat more than two-thirds of the sum required for the work of the current year. On an average the hospital contains 90 in-patients, and each week gives relief to some 1200 out-patients.

WEST KENT MEDICO-CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY.—On Friday evening, March 12th, the sixth annual meeting of this Society was held at the Royal Kent Dispensary; Dr. J. C. Thorowgood, President, in the chair. Dr. James Louttit was elected an ordinary member of the Society. Dr. Barnes read a paper on Abdominal Shock and some forms of Peritonitis. After reading cases illustrating retro-uterine hæmatocele, menstrual hæmatocele, extra-uterine gestation,