
The London College Of Physicians

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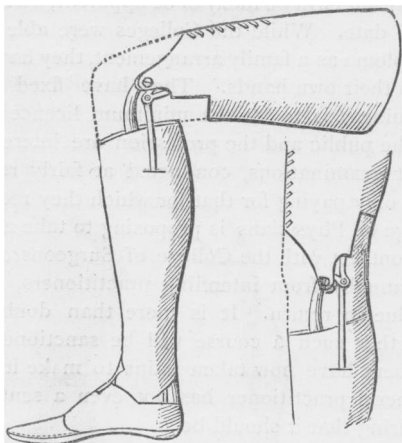
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turned out of a manufactory. We believe that the American hospitals, appreciating their high merits, have recently entered into large contracts with this firm.

Artificial Limbs are exhibited by Messrs. MASTERS AND SONS, of 210, New Kent Road.

One of the most important improvements effected in artificial limbs during the last twenty years is a new arrangement of the tendon in the leg for amputation below the knee. It was invented by Mr. Masters, and has stood the test of experience thoroughly. The woodcut is intended to illustrate it. Another leg in the same case shows the old arrangement; and it will be seen that, in bending the knee, the tendon always bends in the same place, giving rise to an eventual fracture. Moreover, as it does not remain straight, the foot has no support when the leg bends. A third disadvantage consists in the distance between the knee-joint and the point at which the catgut is attached above the knee. In bringing the leg erect after a step, there is necessarily a considerable counterpoise, which has to be overcome. Mr. Masters's improvement has none of these disadvantages. The tendon never bends,



is always in a state of tension, so that the foot is always supported; and, working on its own axis so near the main joint, the counterpoise in bringing the leg up is neutralised.

An old leg, also shown, was made fifty years ago by Mr. Potts. This invention has since been known as the "Anglesey" leg, as Mr. Potts made it first for the late marquis. Very few real improvements have been made in this limb, and these are shown in another leg for amputation above the knee. Mr. Masters has adopted a new flexible toe instead of a wooden joint, and one or two minor alterations.

The arm for amputation above the elbow is particularly worthy of examination. Mr. Masters has arranged it so that, by a slight movement of the opposite shoulder, the arm flexes itself, and the hand turns round simultaneously to the natural position for carrying anything to the mouth or face. This invention, which is principally constructed on the principle of the inclined plane, is particularly adapted to cases where both arms are gone. Patients can even write well with these arms.

Another arm has an arrangement by Mr. Masters by which the act of extending the arm opens the thumb and two next fingers sufficiently to grasp small articles; *e.g.*, a book, ball, or brush. One advantage in this improvement is, that no catgut is employed.

Some of Mr. Masters's other improvements are, the "feather-edged" joints in the fingers, which do not exhibit the unsightly ridges seen in other hands; the spring in the wrist-plates; the arrangement of the elbow-joints; etc.

NOTES ON BOOKS.

The Botanical Companion to the British Pharmacopœia. By HYMAN MARKS, L.R.C.S.I. Longmans, Green, and Co.; Fannin and Co.—This little book supplies a want which the student of medicine has long felt—namely, that of having a handy book in which he could at once put his finger upon everything connected with the various plants which occur in the *British Pharmacopœia*. The classification of the natural orders in the first part, and the alphabetical arrangement in the end, in which is also included the official part of the various plants, render the matter so simple, that we would recommend it to the notice of every student.

BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION: SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1873.

SUBSCRIPTIONS to the Association for 1873 became due on January 1st. Members of Branches are requested to pay the same to their respective Secretaries. Members of the Association not belonging to Branches are requested to forward their remittances to Mr. FRANCIS FOWKE, General Secretary, 37, Great Queen Street, London, W.C.

BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL.

SATURDAY, JULY 5TH, 1873.

THE LONDON COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS.

THE President and Council of the Royal College of Physicians received on Wednesday evening the Fellows and Members of the College, and invited guests, including leading members of our own and other professions, at a *soirée* at their house in Trafalgar Square. The guests were received by Dr. Burrows (the President), Dr. Farre (the Treasurer), and the Censors. The rooms were well filled, both with interesting objects and notable men; but other attractions of a like kind, which were numerous on that evening, drew off a large contingent of the guests. There were many visitors from the provinces, some from afar, including Falconer, of Bath; McEwen, of Chester; Wardell, of Tunbridge Wells; Paget and Humphry, of Cambridge; Harris, of Redruth; Gray, of Oxford.

Seeing these, and bearing in mind the forthcoming meeting of the British Medical Association, which will presently again bring most of them to London, and which was the subject of much conversation, the singular course taken by the Council of the College in deciding against the postponement of this *soirée*, or the invitation of the members of the Association to a special *soirée*, was freely debated in the room. It seems pretty clear, as we suspected, that the Council, or those who acted for it in the matter, have taken a very unpopular and damaging course. It can, of course, matter nothing to the Association or to the London Reception Committee, who desired to have a free evening for other purposes, whether the College proffered hospitalities or not to the great body of medical men (including a large contingent of its own fellows, members, and licentiates), who will in the first week in August be welcomed in town by some sign of attention by nearly every other medical institution in London, and by every medical man. It mattered, however, very much to the College of Physicians that it should not make itself conspicuous on such an occasion by a discourteous and unwarrantable omission. The excuse suggested, of want of funds, is not considered a very creditable or a very well discovered reason. It is perfectly understood that there was no real want of funds for the purpose, and that means were readily at hand for avoiding any undue strain on that tender organ, the College chest. The fact appears to be, that there cling still to the College, very closely and very continuously, some antique and narrow influences which have on more than one occasion lately compromised its best and widest interests in hugging too closely a present or supposed advantage; and it is to these influences that many are disposed to trace a decision which leaves the College in the unfortunate position which it occupies in this matter.

At the moment when the Colleges, Medical Societies, and

great Hospitals of London are with due courtesy and cordiality considering how best they may render the stay of the intending medical visitors to London agreeable and instructive, and how they may most adequately testify their natural goodwill to the old pupils, members, and friends who will gather from afar, the Royal College of Physicians of London, which aspires to be the head of the profession and the new Alma Mater of the general practitioners of the future, and which proposes to be allowed to mulct them in the annual sum of £1200 for the greater honour and glory of the College—the enterprising representatives of this liberal and aspiring institution, proud of its great part and flushed with confidence in the golden dawn of a still brighter future, put their hands in their pockets, carefully button them, and whistle to the classic tune of *vacuus viator*. To the intimation conveyed to it of the time at which it was intended to hold the meeting, the College alone of the very few institutions to which that special and altogether exceptional compliment was paid, replied by a blank stare. The coming of five or six hundred or more provincial medical men to stay for a week in London, and to gather in congress for objects scientific, professional, and social, may concern the Lord Mayor, the College of Surgeons, the Benchers of Lincoln's Inn, the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society, University College and King's College, the Obstetrical Society, the newspapers, and the leading members of the profession; but it is nothing to the College of Physicians, which has no remark to make on the subject, and is not concerned to show itself interested in a matter so foreign to its taste, constitution, and personal relationships. The peculiar dignity of such a position is obvious; its courtesy, wisdom, and right-mindedness not less so. Except to the College itself, the subject is one of absolutely no further interest at this moment.

But to the College it is of very great import. Just at this moment it is aspiring to an intimate connexion with the backbone of the profession, the work-a-day men who toil and labour without any of those high adornments of power and place, which so well become the typical Fellow of the College of Physicians, and which sometimes persuade him that a sufficiently Brahminical strictness of caste is not observed in respect to his fellowship. Nothing could more clearly show what course would be pursued by the guiding spirits on this occasion—and we are happily ignorant, and desire to be so, as to who they may be. They could not have chosen a more thoughtful manner or a more happy time of showing the fraternal spirit in which they regard the great professional fraternity. A reception of so much warmth and friendliness, attentions so exquisite, and courtesy so well-modelled and devised, as that which they have (not) offered, will be accurately appreciated. The spirit which dictated it is deserving the attention of the fellows and members, as it calls for the admiring and friendly recognition of the profession at large.

Just as it stands, it is a phenomenon which it may be possible to explain, but of which it would be very interesting to hear an excuse. Unless we misjudge the matter gravely, this particular act—unimportant in many aspects, but important as an outward sign of the inward spirit of exclusiveness, narrowness, and something worse than either, may count for much in the future history of the College. It will inspire distrust, and weaken confidence, just when and where they will be most needed.

The new College schemes, although well laid, are not yet completed. They weigh hardly on the general practitioner, whom they propose to mulct in a large annual sum, altogether apart from the expenses of his examination, for the pure benefit of the funds of the College. The College will pocket £1200 a year, as we last week pointed out, just because it is the College, It proposes to give nothing in return, not even, as it now appears, civility or brotherly warmth and just respect to those whom it intends to mulct. It is just one of those arrangements which depend upon goodwill. The only return which it could make for what it is proposing to take for its own good, would be a friendly, sympathetic, personal interest in its contributories, which would be repaid by affection and by trust. It has gone out of it way to manifest and to provoke a precisely opposite feeling; and the results will be likely to be apparent, whether quickly or at a far off date. While the Colleges were able to propose their joint diploma as a family arrangement, they had the matter very much in their own hands. They have fixed a very high fee—thirty guineas is to be the minimum licence for general practice. The public and the profession are interested in getting the best examinations, conducted at fairly remunerative rates, and in only paying for that for which they receive value.

The College of Physicians is proposing to take advantage of the private contract with the College of Surgeons, to extract a large sum annually from intending practitioners, for which it offers no value in return. It is more than doubtful, in our opinion, whether such a course will be sanctioned; and the College advisers have now taken pains to make it quite clear that the general practitioner has not even a sentimental interest in desiring that it should be.

RECRUITING IN THE ARMY.

It has always been the peculiar province of after-dinner orators to assure us that our army, if small, is thoroughly efficient, and that, if the men are few in number, they are made of good stuff, fit for action in any part of the world. And although some allowance was necessarily made for the rosy tints imparted by civic or other hospitality, the general public seemed fairly entitled to believe that recruiting was going on vigorously and well, and that our regiments only required an increase to their numbers to be ready to take the field at any moment. Army medical officers, however, knew that there was something unsound about all this semi-official congratulation, for their experience showed them that the recruits admitted within the last few years have been sadly inferior to the old standard, and that stunted ill-developed lads, containing too often the seeds of constitutional disease, were rapidly filling up the ranks. And now the bubble has burst, and those in authority have been obliged to confess the humiliating fact, that the much-vaunted improvements in our system of recruiting have failed to attract the superior set of men so confidently expected, and that large numbers of raw lads below the regulation chest-measurement of thirty-three inches have been passed. In other words, so impossible has it been to rival the attractions of well paid labour, and so unpopular has the short service system proved, that, in order to prevent our battalions from melting away altogether, it has been thought advisable to fill them up with material totally unfit for real military service of any kind. Painful as this necessity must have been, the country would have sympathised with the difficulty of the position, and might willingly have assented to some experimental lowering of standard, had they been frankly taken into the confidence of ministers, and asked to suspend their verdict until better times should come. But in place of this, it now turns out that measurements below the regulation standard have been entered in some