

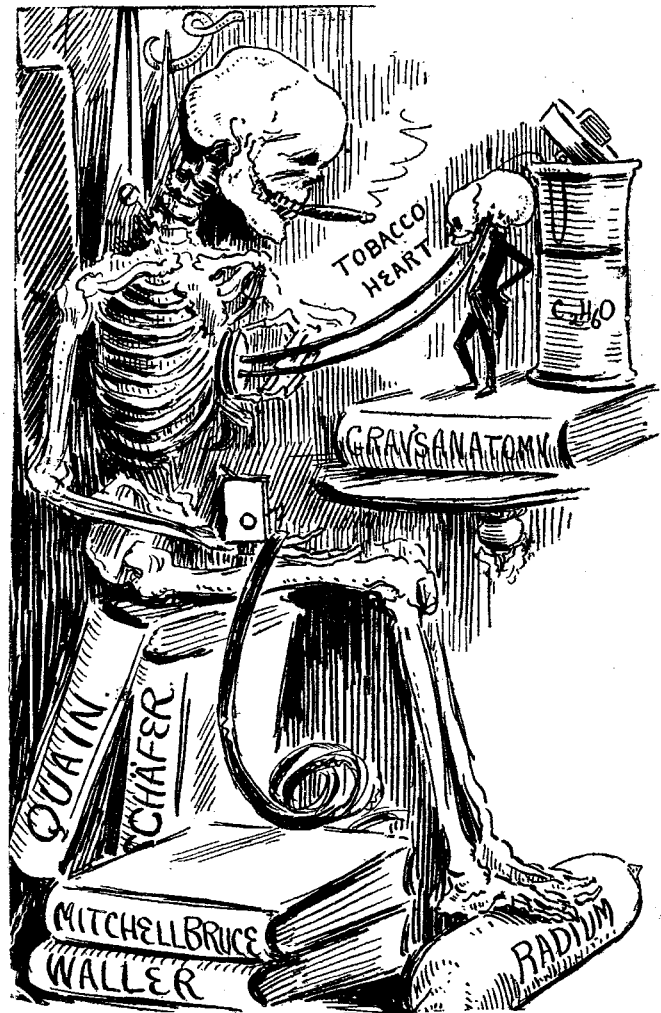
a legacy of £500 to the "Royal Home for Incurables, Streatham, S.W." She had subscribed during her lifetime to the "British Home and Hospital for Incurables" at Streatham and also to the "Royal Hospital for Incurables" at Putney. In her diary she had described the former as the British Home for Incurables and the latter as the Royal Home for Incurables and there was evidence as to her subscriptions of varying amounts to the two institutions which had to be considered in order to ascertain her probable wishes. The executors had paid the amount named to the Royal Hospital for Incurables at Putney, but Mr. Justice Kekewich was able to come to the conclusion from the facts laid before him that the British Home and Hospital for Incurables at Streatham was intended, in which, taking the indication of locality into consideration, he was pretty clearly right and the legacy will now go to that institution. It is a matter of regret that litigation should be necessary upon such a subject. In this particular case and in others the circumstances of necessary haste in which wills sometimes have to be made may account for errors and excuse them. Solicitors, however, who have any leisure to draft a will properly should take the opportunity to verify all names of charities submitted to them as objects of the testator's benevolence. With their accuracy in other matters we are not concerned. Hospitals and benevolent institutions of all kinds are properly described in the "Annual Charities Register and Digest" (published for the Charity Organisation Society by Messrs. Longmans and Co.) and in other accessible works of reference. Testators are known to be inaccurate, almost unaccountably so; they have at times described their relatives by wrong or by wrongly combined names, they have called their first cousins once removed second cousins and their step-children their children. It may sometimes be possible and desirable for the secretary to a charitable institution to whom a subscription is paid which is wrongly addressed, or accompanied by a letter describing the charity under a wrong name, to call attention to the error without giving offence.

A Dead Body as a Bequest for Anatomical Purposes.

There is no "property" or right of ownership in a human body and no man consequently can own the dead body of his relative or of any other person in such a way as to be able to sell it or to leave it by his will to anyone so as to make it that person's property. He cannot even so dispose of his own remains by any bargain or will made during his life but when he is dead it will be the duty of his executors to afford his body such burial as is suitable to his estate. There is an apparent exception to this created by the Anatomy Act (2 & 3 William IV., c. 75). The seventh section of this statute makes it lawful for an executor or any other person, not an undertaker, having lawful possession of a dead body to permit it to undergo anatomical examination unless either the deceased has in his lifetime desired otherwise or his surviving relatives object, and by the eighth section, "if any person either in writing at any time during his life, or verbally in the presence of two or more witnesses during the illness whereof he died, shall direct that his body after death shall be examined anatomically, or shall nominate any party to make such an examination then the party having lawful possession of the dead body shall direct such examination to be made" unless a husband or wife or other near relative shall object. Recently at an inquest in London a document left by the deceased was read which expressed his desire that his body should be handed to the authorities at St. George's Hospital for dissection in the medical school and the coroner made the observation that the gift was invalid and that the deceased could not leave his body as he wished. The section quoted was apparently overlooked by the coroner and the man who said in his letter expressing his wish, "I have the right to dispose of my body," was right so far as the particular mode of disposition selected by him was concerned. There does not appear to be any recorded case where anyone to whom a body should have come for anatomical purposes under Section 8 ever sought to enforce that right against an unwilling executor, but the wording of the section appears to leave the executor no choice in the matter so long as the relatives do not object. The phraseology used would apparently include post-mortem examinations made for the purpose of elucidating the cause of death (but not ordered by a coroner) as well as the handing over of a body for dissection in a medical school.

LEEDS MEDICAL SCHOOL: A SMOKING CONCERT.

A SMOKING concert was recently given by the Leeds Medical School under the chairmanship of Mr. W. H. Brown



when a programme of 17 items, all songs but four, was successfully carried out. The bill of the evening was very happily drawn by Mr. Fred. Reynolds, as may be seen by our reproduction of the principal figure upon it.

VITAL STATISTICS.

HEALTH OF ENGLISH TOWNS.

IN 76 of the largest English towns 7950 births and 5092 deaths were registered during the week ending Nov. 28th. The annual rate of mortality in these towns, which had been 16.2, 17.9, and 17.4 per 1000 in the three preceding weeks, increased again last week to 17.6 per 1000. In London the death-rate was 17.4 per 1000, while in the 75 other large towns it averaged 17.7 per 1000. The lowest death-rates in these towns last week were 8.0 in Hornsey, 8.1 in Wallasey, 8.7 in Hastings, 9.0 in Stockton-on-Tees, 9.3 in Waltham-tow, 9.7 in Leyton, 10.3 in Croydon, and 10.6 in Smethwick; the highest rates were 23.0 in Coventry, 23.2 in Bootle, 23.6 in Warrington, 23.7 in Preston, 24.7 in York, 25.1 in Swansea, 26.2 in Burnley, and 29.6 in Sunderland. The 5092 deaths in these towns last week included 430 which were referred to the principal infectious diseases, against 419, 432, and 436 in the three preceding weeks; of these 430 deaths, 114 resulted from measles, 99 from diphtheria, 92 from whooping-cough, 49 from diphtheria, 42 from "fever" (principally enteric), 30 from scarlet fever, and four from small-pox. No death from any of these diseases was registered last week in Croydon, Hornsey, Hastings, Bournemouth, Norwich, Devonport, Handsworth, Smethwick, Grimsby, Wallasey, Huddersfield, Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees, or Tynemouth; while the highest death-rates from the principal infectious diseases occurred in Willesden,