

HASTINGS FUND.

£477 invested in 4 per Cent. London and North-Western Railway
Debtenture Stock, in the name of the British Medical Association.

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| DR.]—1881. | £ s. d. |
| To Balance brought forward | 9 6 0 |
| Interest, one year, on £477 | 18 12 0 |
| | <hr/> |
| | £27 18 0 |
| CR.]—1881. | £ s. d. |
| By Balance due from Balance-Sheet | 27 18 0 |
| | <hr/> |
| | £27 18 0 |

We have examined the foregoing accounts with the books and vouchers of the Association, and find the same to be correct.
April 6th, 1882. PRICE, WATERHOUSE, & CO.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF
MEDICINE BY RESEARCH.

SIR,—Your correspondents are perhaps premature in criticising the constitution of the above Association; and certainly are in error, if they suppose that there is any exclusive feeling on the part of those who are endeavouring to form a society of such far-seeking aim, and of such paramount importance to the profession, as this is. When Dr. Ferrier's prosecution was exciting attention, it was obvious that the question at issue was not a personal one, but one in which every man of science was interested. It was competent for any one, or for the whole body of the profession, to take action at once; but those who did so considered that the best method was, not only to obtain the co-operation of the bulk of the profession, but of its great leaders and representatives; and they, therefore, framed the present scheme as best constituted for the purpose. It was obviously necessary to gain the co-operation of the universities, colleges, and learned societies, as having not only weight with the profession, but with the public. Their assistance was at once obtained; and it was then thought most desirable to place the movement in the hands of the Presidents of the two London Colleges, who should head and inaugurate it. The Presidents at once and most heartily promised their aid; and the first meeting was held, as reported in your columns. Every one has hitherto expressed his great satisfaction at the results. It was quite impossible, at this preliminary meeting, that even all the Fellows of the College could have been invited; they would at once have choked the library.

It is true that the first council will be composed of the presidents of the learned societies, and of others who will be nominated by the two presidents. They must necessarily select men who will do the work of the council in committee; and they will seek further throughout the country—at least I have been informed that, at the next meeting, the names proposed will be some of the most distinguished men of the provinces. I am sure that it has been the aim of all engaged in promoting the Association to gain the co-operation of all in the profession. The question which has given the impetus to it is one between the profession and the public; and it only requires a perusal of some recent writings to discern the animus of our opponents, and to secure the sympathy of the entire profession. Any disagreement among us will be readily seized on by them. The Association is scarcely yet formed, and no doubt changes will be introduced when experience has proved them to be useful.—I am, your obedient servant,

SAMUEL WILKS, *Treasurer (pro. tem.)*.

Grosvenor Street, April 1882.

SIR,—The criticisms of Dr. Barnes upon the constitution of the Council of this Association are conceived in so friendly a spirit, that we cannot doubt the improvements he suggests would be cordially accepted if they would make its working more efficient. But would this be the case?

Dr. Barnes agrees as to the wisdom of making the Council consist of representatives of the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, of the medical faculties, and of the medical societies; but he prefers direct election to representation by the several presidents and their nominees. It appeared, however, to those who drew up the regulations, that election would involve waste of time and energy, without really securing more efficient representation, while no one can doubt that a body composed of those who have been chosen to fill the highest offices in their

several societies on account of their general eminence, will speak with greater authority to the Government and to the public than one composed of delegates selected for a special purpose. That the presidents of the two colleges should have considerable influence on the council is nothing more than fair, seeing that they are responsible for its action.

To have secured the co-operation of the Universities of the British Medical Association, the Royal Society, and the other scientific and professional bodies enumerated, is surely a great point gained. If Dr. Barnes fear that in the Council discretion will be more apparent than zeal, he must remember that the object of the Association is not popular agitation; it is not primarily controversial. The working physiologists of the three kingdoms have expressly stated that they do not desire (at least, for the present) to attempt to abolish the Act, of which we are all ashamed, but to secure its being harmlessly administered. To speak with authority to public opinion, and to bring effectual pressure upon officials, needs other means than those which are suited to the arena of controversy: controversy with opponents who will correct Sir William Jenner upon points of medicine, Professor Huxley on science, and Dr. Barnes on gynecology. Another object of the Association is to educate public opinion; and the series of articles lately published by Paget and Wilks, Gull and Carpenter, Brunton and Yeo, prove that this has not been neglected.

With regard to the valuable letters of Dr. Thin and Mr. Hallows, on the importance of interesting the profession in local centres on behalf of the cultivation of medical science by way of research; one of the rules of the new Association provides that corresponding Members of Council shall be appointed throughout the country, who will form centres of intelligence and help to those who have so well defended "the workers in medical science against the attacks of ignorant, but persistent, opponents."

Although the eminent men of Scotland, Ireland, and the provinces, will be well represented on the Council, the main burden of business will almost of necessity fall upon the members resident in London. But there will be room for all, and welcome.

Only experience can show what future modifications may be desirable. At present a good beginning has been made, and with united action, and a wise mixture of zeal with discretion, we are certain of a good continuance.—I am, etc.,

A MEMBER OF THE PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE.

April 12th, 1882.

THE RAISON D'ETRE OF LYING-IN HOSPITALS.

SIR,—In your comment on my letter in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of to-day, you say that I do "not know the real question at issue." The letter was not meant to do so, but was merely intended as a reply to certain strictures on page 400 of your JOURNAL. There you say "the new committee will set energetically to work to bring the hospital up to the level of the obstetric knowledge of the day." This sentence, as I read it, means that the hospital has hitherto been below this level, in the opinion of the writer of the article, and is an assumption of superiority that is charming to contemplate. If you will take the trouble to read my letter again in this light, you will see that I merely endeavoured to show that, up to that date, our staff had shown as good results as those of any hospital, and that, consequently, they were not behind the time, and did not deserve censure. From this point of view, the lying-in wards of the workhouse were mentioned, and it was shown that a comparison between the results obtained in these, with those of intern maternity charities, was unfair to the latter.

The saying that "any woman, at the time of labour, may be in danger," leaving out the word "special," and arguing that all women may, therefore, fitly go into hospital to be confined, and that the manifesto alluded to concedes all this, I shall leave, and pass on to another part of your comment. You say "nothing is now more clearly demonstrated than that, by the strict application of improved hygienic and antiseptic measures, the mortality of lying-in hospitals may be kept down to a point that will bear comparison with domiciliary midwifery." Now, sir, I deny that this has been proved; at any rate before accepting the statement, you must show your proof. You surely do not expect this to be believed on your mere assertion. Moreover, the statistics of one, or even two years, will not be satisfactory proof. I ask for at least five years' statistics. In the year 1880, in the British Lying-in Hospital, there were 139 cases, and three deaths; in 1879, 169 cases, and one death; in 1877, 158 cases, and eight deaths; total, 466 cases, and twelve deaths, or one death in about thirty-nine cases. In 1881, I see there were 160 cases, and one death. This brings the total figures up to 626 cases, and thirteen deaths, or one in forty-eight. This is the kind of proof that is forthcoming from all sides, and I sub-

mit that, in face of it, the high-sounding declaration quoted above should rather be taken as the expression of a fond hope, than as a statement, in exact accordance with what is.—I am, sir, yours obediently,

J. E. BURTON.

64, Rodney Street, Liverpool, April 15th, 1882.

* The "real issue" is whether an existing hospital, subscribed for, and dedicated to the purposes of a lying-in hospital, can, with advantage, be diverted to some different purpose. The question which our correspondent raises, as to the comparative safety of hospital, workhouse, and domiciliary obstetric practice, is a side issue. As to the supposed imputation against the medical arrangement of the Liverpool Lying-in Hospital, drawn from our article, there was none made or intended. Very few lying-in hospitals have yet been fully brought up to the level of the most advanced obstetric knowledge of the day. We would, however, point to the Maternité at Paris to show what has been, and can be, done in this direction.

HOSPITAL AND DISPENSARY MANAGEMENT.

TWICKENHAM PROVIDENT DISPENSARY.

It appears, from the annual report, that the dispensary made a very slight advance last year, the number of members being 680 in 1880, and 685 in 1881. The amount contributed by members, year by year, during the five years that the institution has been in existence, shows a very satisfactory increase. At this dispensary the patients are seen by the medical officers—Mr. Alfred Clark and Dr. Martindale—at their own surgeries. At the close of the year the sum of £171 was divided between the medical officers. This included the supply of medicines. The committee are evidently fully alive to the advantages of the provident principle; and there can be no doubt that this dispensary will become a much more important institution than it now is. The report alludes to the numbers of members who have fallen into arrears during the year, and says that the subject is engaging the serious attention of the committee. The same complaint reaches us from many dispensaries, and we believe that some system of collection will be found necessary, either by the appointment of a single collector, whose business it shall be to call upon the members who are in arrears, and obtain their subscriptions; or by the appointment of a working-man collector in each district, in the manner that is so extensively practised by some of the life assurance offices.

GLASGOW AURAL HOSPITAL AND DISPENSARY.

THE first annual meeting of the supporters of what may be regarded as the youngest of the Glasgow charities, was held on March 29th. Judging from the report of the directors, the medical report, and the financial statement, submitted to the meeting, the institution has done good work since its establishment. During the year 1032, patients had come under treatment, of whom 778 were cured, 138 improved, 40 were incurable, 45 were not subjected to any treatment, and 31 were still under treatment. Great advantage was derived from the use of the fifteen beds which the charity possesses, as they allowed of the admission of serious cases which could not have been treated as out-patients. From this it will be seen that the institution has conferred benefit on a large number of sufferers from ear disease, and the directors are to be congratulated on the present condition and prospects of the charity; but it is to be regretted that the tone of the speeches at the meeting, and of the report, was such as to give the impression that no attention was given to aural diseases in Glasgow, save at this hospital and dispensary, whereas both our infirmaries possess departments fully equipped, and in every way suitable for the special treatment of these affections.

THE PAISLEY INFIRMARY.

AT the annual meeting of the supporters of the above institution, held on March 27th, a very satisfactory report for the past year was read and approved. From this report it appears that there were 549 patients admitted to the Infirmary, making, with 41 remaining at the beginning of the year, a total of 590 treated in the course of the year 1881. There were 44 deaths, 37 of which were medical and surgical patients, while the remaining 7 were fever cases. Of the remaining 546 patients, 498 were dismissed cured or improved, leaving 48 in the institution at the beginning of the year. 4,613 patients were prescribed for at the dispensary, being an increase of 173 on the preceding year. During the past year the number of in-patients was the smallest that has been admitted for a quarter of a century, and the improved health of the community is shown by there only being 54 fever cases, while in

1871 these numbered 692. The financial statement was most satisfactory, there being a considerable balance over after paying all expenses. Of the legacies received during the year, there was the very handsome one of £5,000 from the late Mr. James Clark, "to be applied to and for the benefit of out-door patients suffering from consumption."

CORK HOSPITAL FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

LAST year 1,508 patients were treated, of whom four died. Of the 182 intern patients, 110 were received free of charge, and 72 paid sums, varying from two shillings to half-a-guinea per week. The special appeal made on behalf of the hospital resulted in a sum of £219 13s. 4d. having been obtained, a concert realised £35, and the bazaar, held in November, resulted in a net gain of £707 7s. 3d. The Lord Bishop of Cork was of opinion that the South Charitable Infirmary should be able to take up the work of the Children's Hospital, in consequence of the endowments it possessed, and the large sums it received from the public revenue; but Dr. Cummins, one of the medical staff, believed that if this arrangement were to take place, it would be simply putting an end to the existence of the charity. The South Infirmary was a splendid institution, but could never do the work of the hospital for women and children. In consequence of these observations, the medical officers of the infirmary have published the following statement in reference to that institution:—That every affection from which a woman can suffer is treated in the female wards of the county hospital, and special operations are there constantly performed from the most serious known to obstetricians to the simplest; that the wards are never without a large number of special gynecological cases under treatment; that special precautions are taken to respect the privacy of the patients; and that a very large number of children suffering from the diseases incidental to infant life, are annually received into the female wards, where, as a rule, they are kept separate.

PUBLIC HEALTH

AND

POOR-LAW MEDICAL SERVICES.

REPORTS OF MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HEALTH.

BARNSELY RURAL DISTRICT.—Dr. Sadler embodies in a very able and practical report a short *résumé* of the sanitary work done during the year, and while showing that many improvements have been effected, points out the necessity for renewed activity on the part of the sanitary authority. Thus, the main sewerage scheme progresses somewhat slowly, and its extension to many parts of the district is urgently needed. The water-supply has been improved in some places, but is still imperfect in that part of the district which depends for its supply from shallow wells. During the year 870 births and 346 deaths were recorded (exclusive of 10 which happened in the workhouse), being equal to rates of 42.12 and 16.78 per 1,000 respectively, the latter rate being the lowest recorded since the district was formed. The seven principal zymotics caused 47 deaths, or at the rate of 13.58 per cent. of the whole mortality. Of these 11 were from scarlet fever, 8 from whooping cough, 6 from typhoid fever, and 22 from diarrhoea. There were also 3 deaths from croup, and 1 from erysipelas. Only 12 of the deaths from diarrhoea could in any way be classed as due to the usual autumn epidemic, whereas in 1880 there were 40 deaths in that time of the year. The health-officer is inclined to attribute this to the prevalence of wet, and consequent comparatively cool and equable weather in August and September of last year. Inflammatory affections of the lungs and consumption caused more deaths than any other group of disease; 69, or nearly 20 per cent. of the whole being due to the first, and 36 or more than 10 per cent. to consumption in different forms. Alluding to the appointment of the school-attendance officer as assistant sanitary inspector for chief part of the district, Dr. Sadler states that it has been of the greatest service in increasing the efficiency of the action taken for the prevention of the spread of infectious disease.

BURY ST. EDMUND'S.—The mortality returns of this town for the past year are highly satisfactory. Amongst a population of 16,211 souls, the total number of deaths registered was 308, being 32 less than the number returned in 1880, 24 less than the average of deaths for the five years from 1876 to 1880 inclusive, and equal to a death-rate of 19.0 per 1,000. This rate, however, includes the deaths of 24 persons not belonging to the town, deducting whom, the death-rate becomes 17.5 only, the lowest recorded since 1876. The absence of any fatal epidemic was conducive to this favourable result, since only 24 deaths of the zymotic class were registered, against 38 in the pre-