

responding quarter of 1866. Small-pox carried off 378 persons. During the past month he examined water obtained from some of the parish pumps, which have been closed since the outbreak of the cholera in the summer of last year. In each case water has been pumped out for twelve hours previously to taking a sample for analysis. The results are unfavourable. In all the waters the quantity of solid impurity is considerable, whilst the organic and other volatile impurities appear in no degree diminished since last summer. The water from the Bryanstone-square pump appears to be unusually impure. In each gallon of this water he found 90·08 grains of solid matter, of which 4·80 grains were dispelled by incineration. The quantity of ammonia in a gallon amounted to '323 grain. Dr. Whitmore adds that the water from these parish pumps may be made available for street-watering, for the flushing of sewers in dry seasons, and for some other useful and sanitary purposes; but never, in his opinion, will it again become potable.

ON the afternoon of Saturday last, Commodore William Edmonstone, C.B., and Dr. Bryson, Medical Director-General of the Navy, paid an official visit, by order of the Admiralty, to the *Dreadnought* Hospital Ship. The superintendent and Dr. Rooke, the surgeon, being unavoidably absent at committee, the Commodore and Dr. Bryson were conducted through the wards by one of the junior medical officers. A close examination was made of all the hospital decks, officers' quarters, water apparatus, &c.; and many questions were put by the Director-General as to the nature of diseases received, their comparative numbers, the proportion of British to foreign seamen admitted, and many other particulars. The inspection lasted upwards of two hours, and is believed to be connected with the approaching move of the *Dreadnought* authorities into Greenwich Hospital.

ON Saturday last Mr. J. Wood and Mr. Henry Smith were re-elected assistant-surgeons, and Dr. W. S. Playfair assistant physician-accoucheur, to King's College Hospital.

THE meeting of the Medical Council, fixed for the first week in May, has been postponed in consequence of Mr. Walpole not having as yet intimated his intention respecting the introduction of a Bill into Parliament to amend the Medical Act of 1858.

It is accredited in the medical circle of Paris that the condition of the Prince Imperial has somewhat improved. At any rate he was allowed by his medical attendants to witness, from one of the windows of the Tuileries, the review which took place last week in the Place du Carrousel.

THE Commissioners in Lunacy are again in correspondence with Mr. Baker Brown. They state that when they addressed their former letters to him they were unacquainted with his book on the treatment of hysteria, epilepsy, &c.; they ask for further explanation. Mr. Brown has replied that he was not aware that in admitting women with hysterical mania for cure by surgical operation he was infringing the law.

AT the meeting of the Medico-Chirurgical Society on Tuesday next two important papers on the pathology and treatment of cholera will be read. It is expected the discussion of the papers will be of unusual interest.

DR. GARROD ON GOUT.—We find that this work has lately been translated into French by Dr. Augustus Ollivier, clinical registrar and assistant librarian at the Faculty of Paris. Notes have been appended to the work by Dr. Charcot, the eminent assistant professor, and it is published by Delahaye.

## The Royal College of Physicians.

### SIR THOS. WATSON'S ADDRESS ON RETIRING FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL CHAIR.

WHILE I yet have the honour of being the President of this College—before I cease to be so, as in a few minutes, upon the election of my successor, I shall cease—I ask your permission to review, very briefly, as has hitherto been my custom, and for the last time, the events and proceedings of the College during the official year which this day brings to its close; to note what we have been doing, to count our losses and gains, before the rush and hurry of modern life efface or render indistinct even the recent footprints of a single twelvemonth. I know not whether you will accept it as a justification, or as an apology, for this custom on my part, that it did not originate with me, but has simply been revived after long disuse. In the earlier annals of the College, which were kept in the Latin language—now, I am sorry to think, less cultivated and less used among us,—you will find it constantly recorded that the out-going President retired “*brevi oratione habita*.” Such a retrospect as I propose to take ought not to be altogether uninteresting nor unsuggestive.

Some of our incidental doings have assumed an annual character, and need not be dwelt upon, having become almost matters of course. Thus we have again been glad to house the Medical Council, and to give up our rooms for a day to the Medico-Psychological Association.

There has been the customary interchange of complimentary messages and requests, shall I call them tasks, from her Majesty's Government, and of gratuitous service on our part in return.

The labours of the Leprosy Committee have been completed, and their results embodied in a comprehensive report of great interest and value.

At the instance of the Privy Council we have drawn up rules for the guidance of the captains of merchant vessels, respecting the measures to be adopted in any sudden outbreak of cholera on board ship.

I had hoped that the much-looked-for report on the Nomenclature of Disease might have been presented to the College during my presidency; but it is not quite, though it is very nearly, ready.

It will be satisfactory to the College to know that a Warrant has recently been issued in full conformity with the recommendations of the committee which was appointed last year—mainly at the instance of this College—to inquire into the pay and precedence of the medical officers of the army.

The portraits which were lent by the College last year for the National Portrait Exhibition at Kensington have been duly and safely returned; and other portraits, of a later period, have been lent for the forthcoming exhibition of the present year.

The College has granted a contribution of £25 towards a statue recently erected at Boulogne in honour of our countryman, Dr. Edward Jenner.

We have received many valuable presents: books, as usual, in large numbers; the portrait in marble of the late Dr. John Conolly, which will be presented to-day; the portraits of the late Dr. Spurgin, from his widow, and of the late Dr. Gooch, from his daughter; and some admirable drawings illustrative of the pathology of the cattle disease, from the Cattle-Plague Commissioners.

The statutory lectures have been delivered before the College—by Dr. Reginald Southey, Dr. Andrew Clark, and Dr. Russell Reynolds; and they were all, in my judgment, who heard them all, able, interesting and instructive discourses, and worthy of our body.

Dr. Burdon-Sanderson has also, in a supplementary lecture, explained and illustrated some important points connected with the arterial pulse, and the mode and duration of the heart's contractions in health and disease; and Dr. Anstie has

yet one or two lectures to deliver on the same or on similar subjects.

Our losses from death among the Fellows, during the past year, have been unusually heavy and grievous—not only from the number, but from the quality also of those who have died. Of this there is significance enough in the mere fact that all of them were or had been physicians or assistant-physicians of hospitals in London. All too, with a single exception, were graduates of one or the other of our old Universities of Oxford and Cambridge; a class which, I may be permitted, without offence I hope, to declare my individual regret, is becoming comparatively less and less numerous among us.

Let me notice rapidly, and in outline, some of the characteristic features that distinguished these men—taking them in the order of their seniority in the College list: Seymour, Babington, Jeaffreson, Sutherland, Barlow, Brinton, Woodfall.

Dr. Seymour was not much known, I think, except by the older Fellows of the College. Yet he was at one time, and for many years, in large repute and practice. He began as a physician in Florence, where he made many influential English friends, who were afterwards of great service to him in London. Broken health, and broken fortunes, obscured his latter days. He possessed in no common degree the enviable gift—whether it be of voice, look, manner, or I know not what—of securing at once the confidence of those who consulted him; a gift which has made the fortune of many a physician of much less talent and information than Dr. Seymour, and the want of which has hindered the progress and marred the prosperity of many of far greater attainments than his. Dr. Seymour wrote on several subjects; and, by a not very unusual, but to me a puzzling inconsistency, he wrote less well than he spoke. He was much consulted, and his judgment was deservedly esteemed, in cases of insanity. He held, indeed, for some time the office of Commissioner in Lunacy. He was one of the first who used opium freely in the treatment of that terrible form of disease.

Dr. Benjamin Guy Babington was the worthy son of a most worthy sire, who was himself a Fellow of this College, and whose shrewd and benevolent features are faithfully and admirably expressed in the marble bust beside us. The son was originally a midshipman in the Royal Navy, and served, together with the present Lord Chancellor, in that capacity at Copenhagen. But he soon transferred himself to the civil service in India, where he passed much of his earlier adult life, and where he acquired an accurate grammatical knowledge of the Eastern languages. Though he came late into our profession, and was of a modest and unassuming character, he achieved considerable distinction as a physician in London. His name will live as the founder, and for many years in succession the president, of a society which has for its end the elucidation of one of the most interesting, important, and obscure subjects of medical inquiry—the sources, constitution, and laws of epidemic diseases. Among various other contributions to medical science, he gave to English literature an admirable translation of Hecker's "History of the Epidemics of the Middle Ages." He possessed great versatility of talent. Excelling in those things that require perfection of the senses—accuracy of eye, agility of limb, delicacy of touch—he was, in sportsman's phrase, a good shot, a skilful billiard player, and no mean modeller. Nor was the inventive readiness of his mind less marked than were his bodily facilities. To take one instance only: he could claim the credit of having been the first to devise, nearly forty-five years ago, a method for bringing the organ of the human voice within the ken of the human eye—of being the inventor of that ingenious instrument with which, in a greatly improved form, we have since become familiar, under the untunable name of laryngoscope.

The valuable life of Dr. Jeaffreson was prematurely lost while he was engaged in actual conflict with disease, and in the conscientious discharge of his professional duty. He died of a fever, which he caught from one of his patients. His practice in the City and its neighbourhood became early both extensive and fertile. He was a successful physician in both the meanings of success. But expending the whole force of his mind in the practical business of his calling—for he wrote nothing, though an hospital physician he never lectured,—he has unfortunately left the world no record of his accumulated and ripe experience; but he *has* left behind him, among all who knew him—among friends, companions, and patients alike,—a widely-felt, well-founded, and abiding sense of profound esteem and affectionate regret. He was one of the most kind-hearted and popular men within our body. It was lately remarked to me by a distinguished Fellow of the College who

had known them well that he had never heard either Dr. Babington or Dr. Jeaffreson say an unkind thing of any man.

The last four years of Dr. Sutherland's life were passed in the gloom of hopeless disease. In that department of practice which he specially cultivated, and in which his name had hereditary weight and distinction, his mature experience, his discriminative skill, his wise discretion, and his honourable nature have been greatly missed by many a sorrowing family; for these are qualities which are peculiarly needful and precious where mental disease is present in its varying shapes of misery and terror, and they were conspicuous qualities in Dr. Sutherland. It is to be added to his great credit and praise, that twenty-five years ago he persuaded the governors of St. Luke's Hospital to revive the practice—for it was not altogether novel—of admitting a certain number of selected students to the wards of the hospital for the purposes of study and instruction. St. Luke's was the first hospital, in this country at least, where that wise and salutary privilege was granted. It was obtained by Dr. Battie about the middle of the last century; but it had long fallen into absolute disuse. For several years Dr. Sutherland gave gratuitous lectures there, illustrating them clinically by actual examples, upon the supremely interesting subject of insanity.

Dr. Barlow was a quiet, undemonstrative, yet withal an able, full, and accomplished physician, of which, were there no other evidence, his well-known Manual of the Practice of Medicine would furnish ample proof. Pursuing the even tenour of a blameless, beneficial, and laborious life, displaying "the power of art without the show," Dr. Barlow's career presented—may I not say for his own sake, *happily* presented—no very prominent points upon which to hang even such hasty shreds of biography as alone I have time, or dare presume, to attempt.

I have spoken of the death of Dr. Jeaffreson as untimely; indeed I might with truth say the same of almost all of those whose departure from this world it is my melancholy duty to commemorate to-day. But most emphatically may that epithet be applied to the death of Dr. Brinton, who was taken away in the very prime of his life, when, having overcome many obstacles, he had just begun to taste that fruit of fame, with its attending rewards and privileges, for which he had earnestly wrought, and which he so eminently merited. I cannot claim him as one of my own pupils at King's College; I am too old, or rather he was too young, for that; but he was a most distinguished student in that school, and I may, perhaps, venture to say he was somewhat hardly used there. He graduated at the University of London. Dr. Brinton was endowed by nature with all the main elements of success: a clear and acute intellect, untiring and methodical industry, great tenacity of purpose, a remarkable facility in acquiring and in imparting knowledge, and very engaging manners. Among numerous contributions to the literature of our profession, his writings on the diseases of the alimentary canal are the most prominent and the most original. He was the first to teach the true pathology of faecal vomiting, and to settle, for all time, the nice and anxious management of intestinal obstructions. His accomplishments were many and various, and he put into his very recreations the same spirit and energy as were manifest in his scientific pursuits. He was ready and expert with his pencil; a clever caricaturist I have been told, yet assuredly not an ill-natured one. An active and ardent explorer of Alpine scenery, he constructed, on a large scale, diagrams—by which I have myself profited—of some of the most remarkable and least frequented passes in the mountains of the Tyrol. He was, moreover, though this does not seem to have been so generally known, a poet. I have in my possession a translation by him of Burger's "Lenore," which, as I have been assured by one of our Fellows thoroughly competent to judge of such matters, is, in reference to the original German, equal, if not superior, to the well-known version of the same poem by Sir Walter Scott.

The last of the Fellows whose death we have to deplore is Dr. Woodfall, beneath whose unpretending and even shy outward demeanour lay hid a fund of good sense, intelligence, and high and honourable feeling; hidden, I mean, from the observation of those with whom he was not familiarly intimate, yet sure to be recognised and appreciated in the end by all with whom he came into closer contact. He was one of those men, to whom I have already adverted, who, through a lack of self-assertion, are not adequately estimated by their fellow-men. After some attempts to settle himself in London, he retired to Maidstone, where his worth became known, where his death is even now a recent sorrow, and where (I use and echo the words of one of his professional brethren who wrote

to report to me his loss) he was widely esteemed "as a kind and amiable gentleman and a good physician."

These were men whom the College, while it mourns them, must sorely miss. On the other hand, we are not left without solace and compensation. During this year of disaster in our ranks we have not failed to ingraft upon our stock fresh names, which I need not rehearse—names of younger and vigorous workers, by whom, in due time, I feel confident the serious losses we have been lamenting will be amply repaired.

Eleven new Fellows have been admitted: our whole number is increased therefore by four. Seven Members of the College have died within the year, and sixteen have been added to the list; making an increase of nine.

It only remains that I should attempt to do that which I feel to be well-nigh impossible—to embody in any form of words that I can devise, the deep and inextinguishable sense of gratitude with which my mind is full, for that kindness and trust which have placed me, year by year, on five successive occasions, at the head of the College of Physicians; in other words, at the head of the medical profession in this great country. According to my estimation, already more than once expressed, there is no nobler position in medicine, whether I look before me and around me, to the body of men from whom it comes—or backwards to the splendid list of names of those who have preceded me in the presidential chair. Linacre, Caius, Glisson, Sir Wm. Browne, Pitcairn, Sir George Baker—these, to go no later, are but a few of the eminent men and sound scholars with whom it may well be deemed a proud distinction to have one's name in any way associated. But besides this great and repeated honour—the greater because so repeated—I have much else to thank you for. I have to acknowledge your indulgence towards the many shortcomings of which I am but too conscious. I have to express my thanks for your constant support and counsel in all difficulties, for your unvarying courtesy and deference, for the friendships which my official intercourse with you has formed or strengthened, and most especially for that recent signal and touching evidence of your approbation and esteem, shown by your wish to possess within these walls some pictorial remembrance of my unworthy person. Of this high and generous compliment I can never, while life and reason remain to me, be otherwise than most gratefully, and I hope pardonably, proud. Further, I have to rejoice that the happy lustrum during which I have presided over your affairs has been harmonious and peaceful—disturbed by no unseemly quarrels or serious differences among us—stained by no scandal arising within our proper body, and productive, through your exertions and self-sacrifice, of something at least of benefit to the common weal. If I find anything to regret, it is that I have not taken larger advantage of the opportunities which you have confided to me of promoting the interests of the College, and of our useful and noble profession. Still, I must cherish the hope that the College has suffered no abatement of its ancient dignity and renown through my occupation of the office which I now respectfully render back into your hands. And so, without encroaching further upon your time, and in redemption of the pledge which I gave you last year, I bid you, as your President, one and all, a cordial, affectionate, and final farewell.

## THE MORTALITY OF LONDON HOSPITALS.

It is now some five years since Dr. Guy advanced the proposition that, within the limits of the same capital city, the mortality of hospitals is mainly due to causes which determine the nature and severity of the cases admitted within their walls. On Tuesday evening Dr. Guy again entered fully into the same question, in a paper read before the Statistical Society, which embodied a mass of information collected together from the general hospitals of the metropolis. One of the most important circumstances that influence the rate of mortality in hospitals is the proportion of medical to surgical cases, which is twice as high amongst the former as the latter. In this respect King's contrasts with the Royal Free Hospital, which has a larger amount of surgical cases as compared with the medical, and, consequently, a lower death-rate. Hence comparisons to be just must be corrected to an equivalent in each instance. Another cause is the sex of the patients. St. George's Hospital, in the four years 1862-65, admitted 3 males to every 2 females; the London Hospital 2 to 1. The aggregate mortalities were respectively 88 and 94 per 1000; but for

an equal proportion of 500 males and 500 females the death-rate at the London Hospital becomes 91, that of St. George's 86. The existence of special wards for patients more or less strongly contrasted in the character of the diseases from which they suffer, is a third influence. Age cannot be disregarded. In King's College Hospital the proportion of deaths is comparatively much greater in persons over than in those under twenty-five years of age; and the disparity is more marked in females than males. It is curious, also, to observe that there is a greater death-rate amongst patients admitted by governors' letters than by free admission. There appears to be no very direct relation between the mean residence of patients and the severity of the death-rate. As a general rule, however, severe cases and long mean residences, less severe cases and short mean residences, go together. Dr. Guy dwelt particularly upon the errors likely to arise from a comparison of the death-rates of different years with each other: and pointed out that the mortality of the same hospital is subject to considerable fluctuation, even in short terms of years; that it varies in different hospitals, both in medical and surgical cases; and that the highest and the lowest death-rates which have occurred during the last five years have been in 1864 and 1862 respectively, the hospitals involved being St. Thomas's, London, Westminster, King's, and St. Mary's. And it is interesting to note that the highest and lowest rates of mortality in the London hospitals bear some relation to the rates in the several London districts and in the public institutions of the metropolis, as well as to the prevalence of certain diseases and groups of diseases to which the greatest number of deaths are attributed in the reports of the Registrar-General. This coincidence seems to establish the fact that one element in the mortality of our hospitals is the population by which they are surrounded; and the connexion would be more readily traceable were the admissions into the hospitals those of people residing in the immediate neighbourhood of those institutions. With regard to the diseases that specially swell the excessive mortality, it is evident that phthisis and bronchitis, aggravated or induced by inclemency of the season, are the chief causes; erysipelas and pyæmia, and accidents the consequence of new works or the erection of public buildings, also aid. Dr. Guy then arranged under different heads the causes affecting applicants for admission, the causes influencing the selection of cases, and the causes determining the fate of patients admitted. He concluded by an analysis of prison statistics, which showed the great fluctuation in the mortality of prisons due to causes similar to those which operate in great hospitals, and the excessive fatality amongst convicts from the development of phthisis. The paper as a whole, to which we have done scant justice, fully vindicated the usefulness of hospitals, and completely answered the depreciatory remarks of some objectors opposed to their establishment. Dr. Guy conclusively showed that it is unjust in the extreme to attribute varying death-rates of hospitals to any difference in the aggregate skill and ability of the professional staff.

## Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

MR. I. BAKER BROWN.

THE Rev. J. P. GELL presents his compliments to the Editor of THE LANCET, and begs to submit for publication a copy of the letter addressed to Mr. Isaac Baker Brown by the clergy visiting the London Home. A copy has been sent to the Council of the Obstetrical Society.

The Home is within Mr. Gell's parochial charge, and the clergy of the three neighbouring parishes are included among the visitors.

St. John's Lodge, Notting-hill, April 16th, 1867.

(COPY.)

Notting-hill, W., April 15th, 1867.

SIR,—We have received the proceedings of the Obstetrical Society of London, on the 3rd inst., as published in THE LANCET and Medical Times, resulting in your removal from the Society by 194 votes to 38.

We regret the character of Mr. Haden's attack on you, part of which was only uttered to be withdrawn by himself, and