

Mr. Roberts's letter, although several of his further statements are temptingly open to criticism; but I must add, that unless his anthropometric observations have been conducted with more care than his calculations in his letter on Sex in Education, they cannot be regarded as authoritative.—I am, etc.,

Queen Anne's Mansions, S.W. JAMES CRICHTON-BROWNE.

#### GUY'S HOSPITAL DENTAL SCHOOL.

SIR,—Will you kindly allow us, through the valued medium of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, to call attention to the remarkable conditions under which the examination for the diploma in dental surgery is conducted? For the sake of brevity and clearness, we propose to range our criticism under two heads.

In the first place, we take exception to the constitution of the specialist side of the Examination Board. Six hospitals send up candidates, one only is represented. On the other hand, hospitals possessed of no dental history or reputation, such as the London and University College Hospitals, are represented. We respectfully suggest that their claims, if any such exist, ought not to supersede those of the Dental School of Guy's Hospital, or those of any other recognised dental school.

Secondly, the privilege of representation is unduly exercised. The Dean of the Dental Hospital of London, by virtue of abuse of his position upon the Board, examines candidates who are educated at his own hospital. Further, the candidates' *incognito* is imperfectly maintained; he is addressed by his name, and a knowledge is shown of the hospital from which he comes. And, though we are unwilling even to hint at so disastrous a condition as the existence of any incompetence upon the part of the examiners, we are nevertheless bound to state that, in the mechanical section of the examination, the candidate's work is referred to the curator of the laboratory of the Dental Hospital of London, a gentleman against whom we will say nothing except that he holds no appointment in connection with the examination, and that he is a salaried official of the teaching institution that prepares the majority of the candidates.

We consider that these conditions constitute an anomaly which is unparalleled by any other examination, and which calls for speedy reform.—We are, etc.,

#### THE DENTAL STUDENTS OF GUY'S HOSPITAL.

FRANK G. ALLWORTH	FRITZ MÜHLENKAMP	S. H. LONGHURST
FRANK E. PRITCHARD	G. S. F. MANTON	EDWARD CLAYTON
GEOFF. WHITWORTH	R. E. WOODCOCK	F. H. WALLIS
ALFRED CAHILL	H. TURNER	SYD. HARRISON
C. HARRY ORAM	L. F. MORRIS	W. H. LYNE
ARCH. R. HENRY	W. R. BUTLER	H. P. TAYLOR
E. S. KNIGHT	ALFRED J. MAKEPEACE	S. CARPENTER
W. R. WOOD	EDWIN MORGAN	J. BRODRIB PARFITT
THOMAS S. DAVIDSON	H. COOK	A. V. BRIMMER
F. E. L. LAMBERT	M. MITCHENER	S. R. APTHORPE
W. T. O. DAWSON	E. S. LANGTON O'BROWN	W. H. PILCHER
CHAS. HY. CHARTER	A. H. H. HUCKLE	R. THORNTON
E. HUTSON	W. H. SAUL	P. F. HENRY
F. C. BROMLEY	G. N. WILLIS	S. KEELE
L. MUSGRAVE	G. KEAY	ERNEST PICNOT
FRANK HARRY CARPENTER	J. PILCHER	W. E. HILLS
HAROLD STONER	G. WILLIAMS	F. C. CONSTANT
	G. WILLCOX-JONES	JNO. W. PARE

#### UNQUALIFIED ASSISTANTS.

SIR,—I should feel very much obliged for information on the following points: Does the General Medical Council recognise the right to employ unqualified assistants at all? If so, might I employ one directly under my own supervision, principally for dispensing, and might I send him sometimes to see how a case is getting on; might I get him to occasionally attend a natural midwifery case? And, if pressed, would it be right to ask him to see a case for the first time until I could attend myself? If the General Medical Council would issue distinct instructions to practitioners upon the point of unqualified assistants I think it would be of great benefit. At present one is in doubt; and some practices are so poor as to necessitate either unqualified help or the refusal of aid in many cases to poor people when one would be considered unkind in refusing to attend.—I am, etc.,

J. B.

\* \* We refer our correspondent to the article on the Disciplinary Action of the Council in the present number of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL.

#### THE ST. CECILIA GUILD.

SIR,—I have been requested by several members of the St. Cecilia Guild to express their thanks for the favourable words used in a recent article respecting the work of this society. During the winter time, owing to illness and severe weather, no visits to hospitals could be made, but considerable attention has been given to what Professor Tarchanow considers to be of the first importance, namely, the quality of the music that should be used for the several classes of invalids. Opinions obtained from some 150 patients last autumn showed clearly that soft, slow music only should be used for those who are seriously ill, and that the brisk exhilarating dance music recommended by Mr. Herbert Spencer must be reserved for convalescents.

With respect to the causation of sleep by music, that subject appears to be entirely untrodden ground. Neither Macnish, nor Durham, nor Hammond, nor even Michael Foster (of whom England is so justly proud) has at all touched upon it. It may be rash therefore for a layman to suggest what seems to be evident—that the pleasurable fatigue of the senses induced by a slow musical measure has much to do with producing the effect. As the physiology of sleep is of general interest, one may hope to see, ere long, an article upon this theme either from your pen, Sir, or from that of one of your most experienced contributors.

Our Committee at the present moment are desirous of carrying out a suggestion made by Sir Richard Quain, that when voices with instrumental accompaniment cannot be obtained, soft music may be supplied to patients by what are known as "musical boxes." The only drawback to these as at present made is that they require winding up every 15 or 20 minutes, which in cases of stubborn insomnia would render them well-nigh useless. But Messrs. Brush and some other experts who have been consulted say that this defect can be remedied by the application of an electrical motor, which will keep the cylinder revolving for any length of time. The cost of one of these improved instruments would, it is estimated, be £20, or possibly £25; and it may be hoped that ere long the liberality of some wealthy person, whose name might be connected with this gift, will enable our Committee to benefit sleepless invalids by means of this useful instrument.

May I say further that the Committee of the St. Cecilia Guild are desirous of proving how far music may be useful for the alleviation of acute pain, and will feel grateful to those who will draw their attention to any very severe case which has hitherto baffled every usual remedy.—I am, etc.,

Dean's Yard, Westminster.

FREDERICK K. HARFORD.

#### POISONING BY HENBANE SEEDS.

SIR,—That henbane seeds could be sold in mistake for celery seeds must be a matter of surprise and interest to medical men. By a mere accident I discovered that henbane seeds are a popular remedy for toothache, and are sold at a cheap rate for the purpose. While writing a prescription recently in a druggist's shop in Kensington, a man purchased some henbane seeds, and I asked the druggist when he left what use he was likely to make of them. The druggist, who had warned the man that they were only for external use, told me that they were largely used for the cure of toothache, and were supposed to kill the "worm" which caused the pain. Seeing Dr. Stevenson's report of the poisoning cases in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, I told him what I had heard of the popular use of henbane seeds, and although at the time he had not heard of it, he has since made inquiries and sent me the following interesting account of the matter.

"I have made inquiries about the use of henbane seeds. I find that their use as a cure for toothache is well known by those who have had pharmaceutical experience in the country; and the mode of application may interest you. A glowing coal is taken from the fire and put on a plate. The seeds are then sprinkled on the embers, when steam and vapour are given off, and the patient holds his open mouth to receive these. Then, holding his open mouth over a glass of water, the "worms" are seen to drop on to the surface of the water. The seeds are, of course, dicotyledonous, and are ruptured by the heat; and the embryo, or rather its radicular end, is projected mechanically into the mouth, whence it

falls on to the water, and is clearly visible to the naked eye, and is vulgarly called a 'worm,' which it much resembles."

Dr. Stevenson goes on to say that, according to Dr. Ransome, the seeds contain about the same quantity of alkaloid as the leaves, and a teaspoonful of the seeds contains about  $\frac{1}{2}$ th of a grain of hyoscyamine. That some relief to tooth-ache might result from the application of the vapour of burning henbane seeds either locally or constitutionally is not improbable, but that it should be attributed to the destruction of the "worm," and not to the anodyne qualities of the drug, carries us back to the medical theories of the Middle Ages, and indeed, in a sense, anticipates the bacteriological theories of caries of our present day dentists.—I am, etc.,

Eccleston Street, S.W.

C. ROBERTS.

#### OVARIOTOMY IN OLD AGE.

SIR,—In the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL for April 23rd, 1892, Dr. Edis reports a case of ovariectomy in a patient aged 81 as the oldest on record.

By turning to the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL for July 14th, 1888, page 86, he will find a reference to a case in which the patient was 82, or to be more exact, 82 years and 4 months old. This is not an important matter, but it is interesting, and if you will kindly give this correction space in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL I shall feel much obliged. By a letter just received, I learn that my patient is still living and in excellent health, four years and four months after her operation.—I am, etc.

Boston, U.S.A.

JOHN HOMUNS.

#### CYSTS IN TONSILS.

SIR,—Drs. McBride and Batho have, in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNALS of May 14th and 28th, called attention to the rarity of cysts in the tonsils. I was much surprised on reading this, as in my experience they are fairly common. Among my more recent cases of large cysts was one of a lady, sent to me by Dr. King, of Ludlow; and another a patient sent to me at the Great Northern Central Hospital by Dr. Barber, of Finsbury. Both of these had large cysts, which had all the characteristics mentioned by Dr. McBride. I completely destroyed them with the galvano-cautery without any trouble. The reason I have not recorded any of my cases is that I have always presumed these cysts were sufficiently common, and thus did not justify me in taking up the value space in the JOURNAL. May not this reason have acted upon others, and hence the assumed rarity of the cysts?—I am, etc.,

Devonshire Street, W.

W. R. H. STEWART.

## NAVAL AND MILITARY MEDICAL SERVICES.

### NAVAL MEDICAL SERVICE.

STAFF-SURGEONS RALPH WESTROPP BRERETON and ISAAC HENRY ANDERSON, M.D., are promoted to be Fleet-Surgeons, the former from May 13th, the latter from May 19th. They were appointed Surgeons September 30th, 1871, and Staff Surgeons September 30th, 1883. Dr. Anderson was surgeon of the *Salamis* during the Egyptian war of 1882 (medal and Khedive's star), and was also engaged in the operations near Suakin in 1884 (clasp).

Fleet-Surgeon HENRY C. WOODS, M.D., of the Royal yacht *Victoria and Albert*, has relieved Dr. Reid in medical attendance upon the Queen at Balmoral.

The following appointments have been made at the Admiralty:—JOHN F. NEWLAND, to be Surgeon and Agent at Kingstown and Dalkey, May 26th; GEORGE T. BROATCH, M.B., Surgeon to the *Thrush*, May 27th; WALTER C. AXFORD, Surgeon to the *Caledonia*, May 27th; WILLIAM SPRY, Surgeon, to be lent to the R.N. Rendezvous, Spring Gardens, from May 31st to June 13th.

### ARMY MEDICAL STAFF.

SURGEON-CAPTAIN A. L. BORRADAILE, M.B., from the Bengal Presidency, is appointed to the medical charge of the Hong Kong Regiment.

Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonel O. F. MOLLOY and Surgeon-Captain J. S. ENGE, serving in the Bengal command, have leave of absence, the former for six months on medical certificate, the latter for six months on private affairs.

Brigade-Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonel G. ANDREW, M.B., serving in the Madras command in medical charge of the North Station Hospital, Bangalore, is posted to the medical charge of the South Station Hospital, Secunderabad.

Surgeon-Major G. D. BOURKE, serving in the Madras command in medical charge of the South Station Hospital, Secunderabad, is posted to the medical charge of the Central Station Hospital, Secunderabad.

Under instructions from the Horse Guards, it is notified that Surgeon-Captain W. J. CROFTON has been struck off the strength of the Bombay command from April 7th.

### INDIAN MEDICAL SERVICE.

The services of Surgeon-Captains F. A. ROGERS, F. P. MAYNARD, M.B., and W. J. BUCHANAN, M.B., all of the Bengal Establishment, are placed temporarily at the disposal of the Government of Bengal.

Surgeon-Colonel J. G. PILCHER, Bengal Establishment, Administrative Medical Officer and Sanitary Commissioner, Central Provinces, is appointed to officiate as Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, North West Provinces and Oude.

Surgeon-Captain W. C. VICKERS, Madras Establishment, is appointed Civil Surgeon of Shwebo, Burmah, *vice* Surgeon-Captain T. W. Stewart.

Surgeon-Captain A. W. D. LEAHY, Bengal Establishment, is appointed to officiate as Professor of Midwifery, Medical College, and Obstetric Physician, Eden Hospital, Calcutta.

Surgeon-Major C. W. OWEN, C.M.G., C.I.E., Bengal Establishment, is appointed Surgeon to the Commander-in-Chief in India, *vice* Surgeon-Captain W. R. EDWARDS, M.D., resigned, April 10th.

Surgeon-Lieutenant W. C. SPRAGUE, M.D., is brought on the strength of the Bombay Medical Establishment from April 25th, the date of his arrival at Bombay.

Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonel W. MCCONAGHY, M.D., Bombay Establishment, is permitted to return to duty.

Surgeon-Major-General W. R. RICE, M.D., C.S.I., has been granted an extension of two years in his appointment as Senior Medical Officer in Bengal.

The *Times of India* of May 7th says: "We are sorry to have to announce the death of Brigade-Surgeon WILLIAM DYMCK, retired Medical Storekeeper with the Bombay Government, at midnight on Friday last, at his residence at Malabar Hill. Deceased held the post of Medical Storekeeper from 1870 to 1890, during which time he had much secured the affection of his establishment, who, at the time of his burial in the Sewri Cemetery on Saturday evening, were present in large numbers. In addition to his duties as Medical Storekeeper, deceased held the post of Professor of Materia Medica in the Grant Medical College. He was well versed in the Arabic and Persian languages, and had earned a good name as author of works treating of medicine. Works like *Pharmacographia Indica* display his vast knowledge of Indian drugs. Two years ago he retired on pension."

The following Surgeon-Majors of the Bengal Establishment, who have completed twenty years' full-pay service, are promoted to be Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonels from March 30th:—A. CROMBIE, M.D.; W. R. MURPHY, D.S.O.; C. H. JOUBERT, M.B.; E. G. RUSSELL, M.B.; J. SCULLY; G. C. HALL; A. S. REID, M.B.; E. LAWRIE, M.B.; W. A. D. FASKEN, M.D.; J. WILSON, M.D.; E. MULVANY; J. M. ZORAB, M.B.; R. L. DUTT, M.D.; J. T. B. BOOKEY; A. MACGREGOR; J. YOUNG, M.B.; J. DUKE; J. MCCONAGHY, M.D.; E. PALMER; A. H. WILLIAMS, M.B.; R. A. K. HOLMES, M.D.; J. E. C. FERRIS.

Surgeon-Captain F. P. MAYNARD, Bengal Establishment, received charge of Burdwan Gaol on April 24th.

Surgeon-Major C. H. BENNETT, Madras Establishment, is appointed Civil Surgeon of Toungoo, Burmah, *vice* Surgeon-Captain C. N. Bensley.

The services of Surgeon-Captain M. B. BRAGANZA, Bombay Establishment, are replaced at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief.

The undermentioned officers have been granted leave of absence as specified:—Surgeon-Colonel J. RICHARDSON, M.B., Bengal Establishment, Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, North-West Provinces and Oude, privilege leave for three months from May 15th; Surgeon-Major W. R. MURPHY, D.S.O., Bengal Establishment, on private affairs till September 1st; Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonel G. F. BEVAN, Madras Establishment, Secretary and Statistical Officer to the Principal Medical Officer H.M.'s Forces, Madras, for six months; Surgeon-Major A. J. STURMER, Madras Establishment, Medical Officer 21st Madras Pioneers, for 220 days; Surgeon-Captain M. B. BRAGANZA, Bombay Establishment, officiating in medical charge 9th Bombay Infantry, to Darjeeling, from May 1st to August 31st on private affairs.

Deputy Inspector-General MATTHEW KANE, M.D., Madras Retired List, died at Cardiff on May 27th.

### THE YEOMANRY.

SURGEON-MAJORS W. WICKHAM and A. GRACE, Royal Gloucestershire Hussars, are promoted to be Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonels, May 28th.

### AMBULANCE ARRANGEMENTS AT THE ROYAL MILITARY TOURNAMENT.

THERE was a small hut in the yard near the Barford Street entrance which was used as a hospital for the regulars and as a first aid station in case of accident. This was equipped from Aldershot, and the non-commissioned officers and men of the detachment from the Depot Medical Staff Corps, Aldershot, were available for duty. This detachment took part in the combined display, assisted in the evening by two stretcher detachments of the Volunteer Medical Staff Corps. Only two accidents of any importance occurred among the regulars. First aid was available at a moment's notice during each performance, and the medical arrangements have worked very satisfactorily. Surgeon-Captain Lawless, of the 4th V.B. East Surrey Regiment, had charge of the civil first aid ambulance stations, and rendered the officers of the Army Medical Staff—Surgeon-Captains F. J. Craig and T. B. Beach—valuable assistance.

For the treatment of accidents and minor casualties, among the audience, two first aid ambulance stations were organised this year for the first time. They consist of two huts, of about 12 feet square, erected by the Patent Wire-work Waterproof Company; these have been placed in the Arcade, the one on the left of the steps leading to St. Edward's Hall being for males, that on the right for females exclusively.

The female ambulance station is in charge of Miss Edith Ward, assisted by Miss Luischen Ward, who can instantly summon the medical officer by electric bell ringing near the committee box. At the male station three orderlies of the V.M.S. Corps are on duty to act as a stretcher party when so required. Some severe cases figure in the list of casualties treated.

### THE NEW TITLES AND RETIRED OFFICERS.

VETERAN states, although officially known as an old retired surgeon-major of over twenty years' service, he finds himself described in certain lists of civil bodies with which he is connected as surgeon-lieutenant-