THE MEDICAL PROFESSION AND PUBLIC LIFE.¹

By VINCENT JACKSON, F.R.C.S.

GENTLEMEN,—The Staffordshire Branch of the British Medical Association was founded April, 1874, in consequence of a very general desire that this county should possess a medical society, for until the Branch was established Staffordshire was without one, although nearly 300 medical men reside within its area. From time to time local societies had been established; these at first flourished, then dwindled, and finally ceased to exist, but as the want of a medical centre was at that period much felt, the only existing one being the North Staffordshire, and as heretofore all local efforts as regards permanency had failed, it was determined that an attempt should be made to promote the formation of a county medical society. This proposal was discussed at a meeting of the North Staffordshire Medical Society, specially convened for the purpose, and the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

"The North Staffordshire Medical Society, after an independent existence of twenty-five years, wishing to extend its influence and usefulness, resolved at a meeting of members held at Stoke-upon-Trent, on Thursday, April 7th, 1874, to amalgamate with the British Medical Association."

In furtherance of that resolution, the medical profession of the county was invited to assemble in Stafford on Thursday, April 30th, 1874. The meeting was a large and representative one, the chair being occupied by Dr. Weaver, the President of the North Staffordshire Medical Society. The formation of a Staffordshire Branch of the British Medical Association was at once agreed upon. The draft of the rules and regulations for the government of the Branch was approved, and the first meeting was fixed to take place at Stoke on the last Thursday of the following October. Mr. Garner of that town was elected the first President; Dr. Weaver (Longton) and Mr. Yates (Newcastle), Vice-Presidents; Mr. Vincent Jackson and Mr. Ralph Goodall, Secretaries; Mr. Weston, Treasurer.

From then to now the Branch has steadily pursued a prosperous career, and it has realised every anticipation, and at the present time, however regarded, it may with truth be said to have successfully fulfilled the great objects for which the Association was established—namely, "the promotion of medical and the allied sciences, and the maintenance of the honour and the interests of the medical profession."

I have for a good purpose refreshed your memories with an initial summary of the nativity of our Branch, for it has been inferred that it was called into existence for personal reasons. The Branch history is a complete refutation of this kind of criticism, for it was conceived in the north of the county, Stoke-on-Trent, a division which is not near to, or overlapped by, any Branch, it was matured in the centre of the county (Stafford), and it first came into existence in the atmosphere of its impregnation. Again, Thursday, the day on which we hold our meetings, is to us a historical day, it being the day of the week on which every kind of preparatory work was arranged and settled prior to what may be called our founder's day, which was Thursday, October 29th, 1874. It has, I know, occurred to some as well as to myself that the present is an opportune time to publish the proceedings of our Branch for the last fifteen years.

The volume would be an instructive and interesting one, and a memorial, to some extent, of the labours of those who have helped in the origin, progress, and permanent stability of this flourishing medical society. If the idea meets with a favourable response, I shall be happy to assist others who will undertake the labours of compiling and editing such a record. The funds for such a purpose are ample, and have only to be voted.

To-day I occupy this chair as your sixteenth President. The position is an honourable one, and he who by your courtesy sits here must remember that he has to attempt to sustain everything that is memorable in the past, as well as being responsible for the present, and, to some extent, for the future—*magni nominis umbra*, as it were. It has, I believe, been customary for the President, on his installation, to express humbly his obligations to those who have conferred the honour upon him. For my own part, I have considered that my predecessors were somewhat off the line in so expressing themselves, and they took more to them-

selves than they were entitled. I consider that the electors have far more to do with the appointment than the elected, and, therefore, that they must take their full measure of responsibility for what they do, and that the shortcomings of the elected are to be placed to their door rather than to his. Do I not re-echo what all my predecessors must have felt when I say that while we did not seek, yet we do not despise the honour of being your president—*nec quærere nec spernere honorem*.

The subject of my address is one which I have naturally deeply considered, for the selection of a topic is not an easy task, and, speaking generally, each year the task must become more difficult. The subjects of the presidential addresses which have been delivered to the members of this Branch² afford a variable range of professional topics, so much so that I felt it would be impossible for me to treatise any one of them with any hope of producing fresh novelty, but rather, in all probability, I should simply restate the thoughts and opinions of the writer in merely altered phraseology. Moreover, it is, I think, a pleasant omission occasionally to refrain from discussing at our annual meeting purely professional subjects. Material of that kind is more, I opine, in its proper place at our ordinary meetings; and even an enthusiast of the highest and driest scientific type will, I feel convinced, forgive me for giving him a little breathing time in the relaxation which is afforded by turning his thoughts and fixing his attention, if I can do so, upon a subject which, if not distinctly classical, is certainly germane to our relations with the public amongst whom we live and daily come in contact.

Regarding the medical profession impartially and as a whole, no one will deny that, looking at it in all directions and from all points of view, it is as a body immeasurably superior to what it was a generation since. Medical men seem less desirous now of living for and with themselves, and more desirous of living for and with the public, hence we may perhaps with advantage consider what I am wishful to speak about, namely, "The Medical Profession and Public Life."

The personal history of the members of the medical profession is in most instances mainly a record, from their professional cradle and upwards, of the continuous and almost unceasing application as well as devotion to the study of that mass of built-up experience and knowledge comprised under the head of the principles and practice of their calling. Day after day, and often night after night, they pursue the even tenour of their way, and which practically means an amount of toil, weariness of spirit, monotony of existence little dreamt of by those who derive from their unselfish and frequently gratuitous services and labours a restoration to health which is often equivalent to a renewal of happiness and the enjoyment of the pleasures of life to those dependent upon the invalid if he or she has been the breadwinner or stay and support of the household.

Labor ipse voluptas seems to be the motto of the mass of our brethren, and no body of men either in spirit or letter apparently more surely realise the full meaning of those three Latin words or exhibit to the world at large the intense and persistent pleasure they take in labouring to their utmost "to do good unto all men," and especially are they ever ready to "take compassion on the multitude." Full medical work entails, in addition to the great mental and physical strain which it enforces, an almost complete abnegation of all social and I am not far wrong if I add of much domestic enjoyment, the one cause being the uncertainty of the calls made upon our time; doubtless the public might in a great measure remedy this difficulty by seeking advice, whether of the consultant or family physician, earlier in the day than it is too frequently requested. Again, the disturbed, hurried, or delayed meal is not so uncommon or infrequent that it can be talked of as an exceptional occurrence, but rather as a misfortune which is almost too universal to be forgotten and apparently to be

² 1874-75, Mr. R. Garner, A Retrospect of Medicine; 1875-76, Dr. Day, The Study of Medicine; 1876-77, Dr. Millington, The Real Origin of Man and the True Descent of Man; 1877-78, Dr. Arlidge, The Pathology of Chorea; 1878-79, Mr. F. E. Weston, The Abnormalities of the Human Body in Relation to the Doctrine of Evolution; 1879-80, Dr. J. H. Tylecote, The Geographical Distribution of Disease; 1880-81, Mr. Folker, Statistical Record of the Capital Operations performed by him whilst Surgeon to the North Staffordshire Infirmary; 1881-82, Dr. J. K. Wynne, A Review of the Art of Medicine; 1882-83, Dr. Tatherick, The Relations of the Medical Profession to the Public; 1883-84, Dr. Orton, The Effects of our Present System of Education on the Health of our Children; 1884-85, Dr. K. T. Tylecote, Epidemics; 1885-86, Mr. J. T. Hartill, Sixteen Years in General Practice: Thoughts on the Past, Suggestions for the Future; 1886-87, Dr. W. G. Lowe, Certain Typographical and other Subjects in connection with the Town of Burton-on-Trent; 1887-88, Mr. Spanton, Surgical Instinct; 1888-89, Mr. F. Boldero, Our Profession and the Advancement of Medicine.

¹ Presidential Address to the Staffordshire Branch.

altered or revolted against. To a great extent I consider all this drudgery is unnecessary and is performed, I believe, from a mistaken consideration of the duties and obligations attending the vocation of the medical practitioner; and it is, I take it, only right and proper that he should begin to recognise that he is, from a material point of view, quite as much or of more importance to the State and the community generally than the members of the other professions, and that he should begin to realise and to be influenced by the consideration that the popular conception of the men of our profession has grown. From charlatans they have become in the eyes of their neighbours examples of the very highest and noblest type of humanity.

An educated and trained professional man is surely worthy of a more varied existence than the monotonous and the daily round of routine and often depressing labour that many a medical man is contented with. To be a mere hewer of wood and drawer of water is to be a person so totally devoid of everything that is elevating or ennobling, and it evidences a complete want of that *vis vitæ* which is, I believe, naturally implanted in all of us, but which will in time, like other forces, cease to drive us on if its impulses are checked or neglected.

A one-grooved existence such as this engenders a narrowness of mind and a captiousness of disposition which induces a readiness to perversely contemplate the conduct and actions of competing practitioners, and causes a hasty assumption of an intentional professional injury having been inflicted; then is let loose that kind of ill feeling usually described as professional jealousy, and which, when exhibited, exposes the individual or the body to the laughter and sarcasm of the general public.

The medical profession seems to me much wanting in *esprit de corps*; the members do not "hold together;" there is hardly any unity, and not much friendly intercourse.

A recent writer says (Dr. Thursfield, Leamington): "I do hold most strongly with Sir Walter Foster, who says that though the excuse given to explain our absence from the duties of public life is our absorbing interest in a most laborious profession, yet it is, though a good one, more or less a species of selfishness; that in many instances it arises from a want of independence of character; and that until medical men will take their share, and their fair share, in that which is becoming day by day more and more the duty of all good citizens, they must expect those of the citizens who do submit to the heat and burden of the work, to estimate lowly and even to despise those who shirk it."

The cure for this crystallised and narrow mode of living, or rather, of existing, is, I believe, an active participation in public business, otherwise called public life. The mixing with one's fellows removes many of the cobwebs of a too home life, which are apt to environ and entangle us, and nothing so much causes us to take a more healthy and generous view of the conduct and actions of others than intercourse with them, and associating ourselves with them in efforts which tend to human benefit and progress. The mind of the medical man is strengthened and refreshed, and returns with new vigour to the daily routine dullness of professional life. The single-groove man may not be a less able man, but certainly is less useful than the man who embarks in public life, and does his best to leave the affairs of this world better than he found them.

The time has now arrived and is now quite opportune for able medical men to step forth from their seclusion and take their share in Imperial and local self-government, and to prove to the community that they are equally and even more competent to legislate in the many important measures involving interests of a multifold, important, and sometimes of a vast character, which from time to time have to be considered and discussed.

The objection urged by medical men for disregarding public work is the common one of "no time;" but is this a real or sufficient excuse? Surely what our professional brethren in other countries can do we can and ought to do. If French, German, and Italian doctors can be elected members of their national assemblies the profession in England ought to contribute its contingent to the House of Commons and to the borough, city, and county councils; but we know it does not sufficiently do so. At this moment, and to his praise and honour be it stated, Sir Walter Foster is our only representative in the House of Commons; a man of great ability he has made himself heard and listened to, and his increasing influence is a just acknowledgment of his great merits and his singleness of purpose in so steadfastly standing forth as the spokesman of the profession of which he is so eminent a member; but why do not others follow his example?

Our ranks are not wanting in men of ability, eloquence, ambition, and means, yet no one seems willing to contest a seat or to take his chance at the polls. Surely the dearth of medical men in the House of Commons is not to last, and at the next general election I hope we shall see more medical candidates in the field and more medical men sitting in the House of Commons.

Never was the period more opportune for medical men to enter public life. A recent writer in a weekly periodical says: "Outside the profession medical men are assuming important social and political positions which are hardly sufficiently recognised by the press and the public. Bad times are depriving landlords and their agents and country parsons of much of the local influence they formerly possessed, and in many cases are even driving them from their country houses, while the greater diffusion of riches, as shown by the recent Report on Trade Depression, has saved the doctor from similar misfortunes, and the lowering of the county franchise has placed him in more immediate contact with the great mass of the voters and brought them more immediately within the sphere of his daily influence."

"The tendency, moreover, of local government is in the direction of increasing the power of sanitary boards, and so of increasing the local influence and importance of medical men; a few years ago it was a comparatively rare occurrence for a country doctor to be made a county magistrate, and it was almost impossible to get one or two sent to Parliament, but now both appointments are common, and will become more and more common as medical men recognise their new position and responsibilities."

Let me urge those of you who have the inclination and the capacity to lose no time in embarking in public life; unless individual members of our body do so, we can never hope to obtain recognition and weight with the powers that be.

It is not what we are, but what we can do. No Government—imperial or local—will introduce or pass any measure of reform or improvement unless it is numerically and influentially supported by the outside public and ably sustained in both Houses of Parliament, and session after session questions of the utmost, nay vital, importance to the community are before the country, such as Sanitary, Educational, Lunacy, Army and Navy, and Local Government Bills.

In measures such as these the interest and status of the medical man is involved; and if we were as careful of our own advancement as members of the legal profession are of theirs, we should be up and doing and assist, much more than the Branches of the Association seem inclined to do, that active band of medical reformers, the Parliamentary Bills Committee. The Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Ernest Hart, is doing a great work. The annual reports—I am afraid they are not generally read—indicate the utmost alertness on the part of the Committee to all the measures affecting the welfare of the profession which are set down for probable or possible legislation at the commencement of or during each session of Parliament. The work of this Committee is laborious, and some of its achievements are magnificent; but the reason it is not so successful as it deserves to be is, first, that there are so few medical voices in the House of Commons to back it up; and, secondly, because the profession through the length and breadth of the land is so supine, passive, lukewarm, and even occasionally hostile, concerning questions which, because interests foreign to their own homesteads are involved, as it were, pays no heed to them, and will not even by voice or action lend them the slightest support.

Gentlemen, may I ask you, may I plead with you, to give the most practically beneficial Committee of the Association—the Parliamentary Bills Committee—more attention and the most active aid and support you possibly can? It is well understood that a Minister will readily accept modifying or additional clauses to a Bill which he is rather shy of initially embodying.

In the Local Government Bill for England there can be no doubt, if the profession generally had bestirred itself, the *permissive* clause, allowing County Councils to appoint a sanitary officer through whom the powers conferred upon them would be exercised, would have been a *compulsory* clause. In my opinion that most desirable addition to the English Bill was lost through the apathy, indifference, and want of unity and concord of the profession; for if on this point its voice had been as unanimous as was that of the medical officers of health the portion of the House of Commons to whom it was unacceptable would have been overpowered and silenced, and a great boon would have been conferred directly upon the nation, and indirectly upon our own calling.

Gentlemen, the ground which I have travelled over has not been

untrodden previously; others have journeyed over the same path; others, also, by their voices and their writings have brought this important subject before us, and have regretted that the medical profession as a body is so listless and inert in reference to it, and so stands aloof from active participation in public affairs.

Let me remind you that the French Chamber contains forty-eight doctors, and let me ask you to bear that fact in your memories, and I trust also that it may induce some of you to try the invigorating excitement of public life as a set off to the sameness and the depressing features of the daily recurring routine work of a medical man in ordinary practice; and, gentlemen, whatever you may feel called upon to do, remember to "work while it is day, for night cometh when no man can work."

RUMOURED RESIGNATIONS.

A PARAGRAPH appeared last week in a number of provincial and metropolitan newspapers announcing that a private meeting had been held in the metropolis of some of the gentlemen in whose name a communication was addressed to the Council of the British Medical Association at Leeds, and that they have resolved to carry out their threat of secession. It will be opportune at this moment to recall the facts of the case.

On March 12th they addressed to the Council a document in which they indicated their sense of individual responsibility for all that the JOURNAL contained, and (1) recommended that all editorial articles should be signed, and (2) complained of the character of the advertisements admitted. To this the Council, after careful consideration, replied that they appeared to mistake the character of their responsibility for the JOURNAL, and referred them to the by-law of the Association which relieves them of such individual responsibility. In respect to the signing of all editorial articles, it was pointed out that this was, in the judgment of the Council, not only inadvisable but impracticable.

With respect to the advertisements, it was pointed out that a very rigid supervision had always been exercised over them, and that numerous advertisements had been excluded which were currently admitted into other medical journals of high repute; but it was added that the Journal Committee would be happy to receive any specific criticisms or suggestions in that respect. At the same time that this answer was sent an Editorial Committee was appointed, consisting of the President of Council, Dr. Bridgwater, J.P., of Harrow; the Treasurer of the Association, Dr. Holman, J.P., of Reigate; Dr. Farquharson, M.P., a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, formerly a Lecturer and Assistant-Physician at a metropolitan hospital; and Dr. Donald MacAlister, Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, Secretary of Council of the University of Cambridge, practically versed in medical editing, and since elected by his University a member of the General Medical Council. To them the proofs of every article prepared for publication in the JOURNAL are forwarded from day to day, and the Committee meets on Thursday to pass the pages for the press.

In August the following letter was addressed to the Council on behalf of some of the complainants:—

To the Council of the British Medical Association.

London, August 1st, 1889.

GENTLEMEN,—Many members of the Association have been much disappointed to find that the hopes which they had been led to entertain of an improvement in the conduct of the JOURNAL have not been fulfilled. So strong is this feeling that a large number of men in influential positions in the profession, warmly attached to the Association, but jealous of its honour and despairing of seeing the improvement they desire, have expressed their determination to resign their membership.

But before carrying into effect a resolution so serious, it has been thought right to approach you, as the governing body, with the request that you will give this matter your earnest

consideration, and take such steps as shall make the JOURNAL in all respects worthy of the Association which it represents. —We have the honour to be, gentlemen, your obedient servants,

(Signed) JOSEPH LISTER, Chairman.
W. H. ALLCHIN,
W. A. MEREDITH,
JOHN WILLIAMS, } Secretaries.

Reply of President of Council.

DEAR SIR.—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated August 1st. I will lay it before the Council when they meet in Leeds next week. I must be permitted, meanwhile, to assure you that you may safely leave the honour of the Association where it has been safely preserved for so many years.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) T. BRIDGWATER.

In reply to it, the Council passed the following resolution:

Resolved: That the Council do not admit that the signatories of this letter are better judges than themselves, or more solicitous than they are for the honour of the Association and of the profession, but if there are any points which the signatories desire to particularise, in which they consider that the JOURNAL admits of or calls for improvement, they will, as they ever have been, on receiving them through the representatives of their Branches in Council, be ready to give such suggestions their most careful consideration.

Having submitted the letter and their resolution to the general meeting of the Association, the following resolution was passed by the meeting with only one dissident:

That this meeting desires to express its satisfaction with the result of the present representative system of government of the British Medical Association, and their approval of the steps taken by the Council for the management of its JOURNAL.

The complainants did not make any appearance at the Meeting, nor since then have they invited their representatives on the Council to any meetings which they may have held, nor have they made any representations through them either to the Council or to the Editorial Reference Committee. They have thus declined to put any suggestions, which they might have thought beneficial, to the test of the judgment either of their fellow members when assembled at the annual General Meeting, or of the General Council of the Association, in which they are largely represented by men of undoubted capacity and high character; nor have they offered any advice (as they were invited to do) to the Editorial Reference Committee. Signatures may probably be obtained to a document drawn up under the auspices of some influential and respected persons who have committed themselves to the course stated; but it is known that a considerable number of influential metropolitan consultants have withstood private solicitation from members of their own professional class, and have signified their attachment to the Association, their loyalty to its constitutional methods, and their sympathy with the great professional objects which it has achieved, and with the important work in which it is engaged; thus declining to take part in proceedings that are opposed to constitutional and conservative principle, not less than to the representative character of the institution assailed. Even if it be assumed—and it is an enormous assumption—that the signatories were altogether in the right; that whatever their policy may be it is one of unquestionable wisdom; that the elected representative Council, consisting of 84 of their brethren and peers in the profession, directly elected by the Branches of the Association throughout the United Kingdom, are no longer capable of maintaining the honour and usefulness of the Association, and of conducting the JOURNAL—although they have not been wholly unsuccessful in that effort for the last fifty years; even if the "despair" expressed be well founded and reasonable—although "to despair of the republic" has never been held to be a civic virtue or a patriotic sentiment—yet they might have been expected to follow constitutional methods and to adopt a less high-handed procedure, before having recourse to the last resource of despair—collective and ostentatious resignation.

THE MEDICAL DEFENCE UNION.

A MEETING for the formal inauguration of a metropolitan branch of the Medical Defence Union was held on Friday, November 8th, at the offices of the British Medical Association, 429, Strand, Mr. LAWSON TAIT (Birmingham), President of the Union, in the chair. There were present Drs. F. J. Allan, S. H. T. Armitage, Fancourt Barnes, T. Bridgwater, J.P., LL.D. (President of the Council of the British Medical Association), H. Radcliffe Crocker, Andrew Clark, F.R.C.S., James Calloway, W. A. Dingle, W. Ashton Ellis, John E. Foster, E. Gilbert, Clement Godson, Edward Gray, F. de Havilland Hall, W. Culver James, M. Handfield Jones, J. P. R. Jameson, Albert Kisch, G. B. Mead (Newmarket), J. Alfred Masters, Sir Morell Mackenzie, Drs. Farquhar Matheson, F. Nicholls (Croydon), W. J. C. Nourse, E. J. Nix, James Oliver, J. J. Pitcairn, H. Campbell Pope, Sir Edwin Saunders, Drs. Percy B. Travers Stubbs, G. Danford Thomas, John Ure, Hugh Woods, the following officers of the Union: Dr. Mead, Organising Secretary; Dr. Granville Bantock, Honorary Treasurer; Dr. Bateman (London) and Dr. Leslie Phillips (Birmingham), Honorary Secretaries; Mr. Rogers, Solicitor; and others.

The CHAIRMAN gave a brief history of the progress of the Medical Defence Union from its foundation, which was shortly followed by the formation of a Birmingham branch, and this had been most successful in its working. Of this branch his colleagues had done him the honour of electing him president, and he very soon found that the whole scheme of the Union would have to be altered if it were to be of any practical use, and steps were taken to put the Union on a thoroughly democratic basis. After consultation with those whose judgment he valued, an institution was established which would, he thought, commend itself to every member of the profession and its machinery found to be as workable as anything of the kind. His presence was purely for the purpose of technically inaugurating a metropolitan branch of the Medical Defence Union, which in its extent covered the whole of the United Kingdom; it should be as the Branches of the British Medical Association and other branches were, perfectly self-governing, electing its own president and officers, and managing its own affairs, subject only to this, that no expenditure would be made of anything like an extravagant amount without the sanction of the Council, by whom the ultimate control of all expenditure should be held, so that the metropolitan, like the other branches, would be an *imperium in imperio*. The experience of every medical man, either in his own practice or in that of some one with whom he had been associated, showed the necessity for some kind of union in cases of trouble. He referred to the enormous benefits which had already accrued to medical men by the Union taking up actions which, by reason of their want of capital and other difficulties of their position, medical men could not have carried through for themselves. One of the great charms of the work which the Union had to do rested in the fact that in bogus actions and actions of terror, no sooner did the plaintiff find that behind the defendant was a strong body of medical men ready not only with their purse, but what was of far more importance, with their moral support, than the attempt at extortion collapsed. The Chairman related one or two incidents of the kind at length. Their experience, he said, so far had been uniformly good. They had met with no disaster, and with nothing but what they could congratulate themselves upon. Their work, which was by no means small in amount, showed how much need there was for an institution of the kind; and he ventured to say if the metropolitan branch became as successful in its extent of members proportionate to the metropolis as they had been in the East Anglian and midland district, very great good would accrue. Other branches throughout England would be formed, and hundreds of their professional brethren who were subject to extortion, injustice, and unfair play in many instances would have justice given them under the strong arm and protection of professional brotherhood. After referring to some of the difficulties which it might be expected would arise, but which he thought would in the future, as in the past, be successfully met, the Chairman said it only remained for him further to say that the initiation of the metropolitan branch, and the work (which had been by no means small) so far had been carried on to a very large extent single-handed by his friend Dr. Mead.

Dr. BRIDGWATER proposed, and Sir EDWIN SAUNDERS seconded, the resolution,

That a metropolitan branch of the Medical Defence Union be formed,

which was unanimously carried.

The CHAIRMAN, in reply to a question from Dr. BRIDGWATER, said all sums were paid unto a common fund, Dr. Bantock being the Treasurer, each branch retaining a certain sum for petty cash expenditure.

Dr. MEAD (Newmarket) proposed the next resolution:

That Dr. Bridgwater, J.P., M.B., of Harrow, the President of Council of the British Medical Association, be requested to act as first President of this Union for the ensuing year.

Dr. Mead described the part he had taken first in East Anglia, and ultimately in the metropolis, in the foundation of the Union, or rather in carrying on and extending it, especially in grouping together the districts where attempts had already been made to start a similar society, and in bringing them over into the Medical Defence Union, a work which had been left almost entirely in his own hands. He had only been personally interested in the defence part of it, but there was a strong feeling throughout the northern towns that they should protect the public against quacks, and especially those quacks who went about levying blackmail. Dr. Philipson, of Newcastle, had consented to assist in the formation of a branch for Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Durham. They had a branch in East Anglia, a fairly active Yorkshire branch, and Lancashire was in process of organisation with every prospect of success. They would have an institution having powerful divisions, with one central council working the whole thing, each division acting in harmony with it. The resolution was seconded by Sir MORELL MACKENZIE, and carried.

It was proposed from the Chair, and seconded by Mr. MASTERS:

That the names of Vice-President and Council in the list submitted do constitute for the present the members of the metropolitan division, with power to add to their number.

Carried *nem. con.*

Dr. DANFORD THOMAS proposed and Mr. MASTERS seconded:

That the officers of the metropolitan branch should be selected from the members of the branch,

which was approved.

Dr. BRIDGWATER, in thanking the meeting for electing him as President, expressed the hope that for a time at least they would have the assistance of Dr. Mead and Dr. Bateman's valuable services.

Dr. Campbell Pope was elected Secretary and Dr. Bantock Treasurer.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that an executive should be appointed empowered to act until the first general meeting of the metropolitan branch.

Dr. DANFORD THOMAS thought it important that in selecting members for the executive they should, as far as possible, be chosen so that the different districts of London should be represented.

On being put to the vote, the following were chosen as members of the executive: Dr. Corner, Mr. Ernest Hart, Dr. Danford Thomas, Mr. Felce, M.R.C.P.; Mr. Goodsall, L.R.C.P., F.R.C.S.; Mr. Masters, L.R.C.P.; Mr. Roche Lynch, L.R.C.P.; Mr. Noble Smith, F.R.C.S. Ed.; Dr. Fancourt Barnes; Dr. W. Verdon; Dr. de Havilland Hall; Dr. Prior Purvis.

A vote of thanks to Mr. Lawson Tait for presiding, proposed by Dr. BRIDGWATER, brought the proceedings to a close. A Council meeting was subsequently held.

Drs. A. Bateman and Leslie Phillips, Honorary Secretaries to the Medical Defence Union, write:

"We are requested by the Treasurer of the Medical Defence Union to ask you to allow us to acknowledge in the columns of the JOURNAL the receipt of £3 1s. 3d. as a donation towards the funds of the Union, sent by Dr. Reginald Sleman, this sum being the balance of a subscription invited by Dr. Sleman for the purpose of eliciting a declaration of the exact title which the qualification L.S.A. carries.

"A resolution was passed by the Council of the Medical Defence Union, at a meeting on November 8th, thanking Dr. Sleman for his kindness to the Union."

It is stated that the Governors of Firth College, Sheffield, have received official intimation from the Treasury of an annual grant of £1,200 to the college.

THE ARRAN MURDER.

MEDICO-LEGAL ASPECTS.

IN connection with the tragedy which recently occurred in Arran, the final act of which has commenced with the conviction and condemnation of the prisoner Laurie, or Annandale, at Edinburgh last week, medical evidence of a peculiarly interesting character was led. The circumstances of the case will be fresh in the minds of our readers. A Mr. Rose, of London, accompanied the man Laurie or Annandale in an ascent of Goatfall, in the island of Arran; they were seen together on the summit, apparently arranging the route of descent. Laurie reached the foot of the hill safely, and decamped rapidly from the island, taking some of Rose's things with him.

After considerable delay and the organisation of a search party, Rose was found dead near a gully on the route the two men had selected. His head was smashed in, his shoulder was broken, the left superior maxilla was separated from the base of the skull, and the nasal bones were completely broken. The body was carefully hidden by someone under a large boulder, and the unfortunate man's jacket was turned up over the head before the stones were placed on the body. Dr. Gilmour, Linlithgow, saw the body as it lay on the hill side. He reports that the clothes covering the body were free from rents and showed no indications of rough usage. The pockets were empty. The body was a little decayed in parts, but there was very little evidence of this on the arms and legs. The left shoulder-blade, near the point where it formed the upper and outer boundary of the shoulder-joint was broken off. The head and face were terribly smashed. The lower jaw was dislocated on the left side. The upper jaw was detached from its connection with the bones of the face. The nasal bones were lying loose. The bones of the left side and the top of the head were all fractured, and portions of them lying inside the skull, which was empty of brain matter. There were no marks of blood on the body.

Dr. Gilmour thus concludes his report: "I have no hesitation in certifying that these fractures were not produced by a fall down a cliff or steep incline, but by a number of blows inflicted by a hard blunt instrument, such as a large boulder; that these blows produced fractures of the skull and injury to the brain-matter, which, in my opinion, was the cause of death."

After being removed from the hill the body was again examined jointly by Dr. Gilmour and Dr. Fullarton, Lamlash, who drew up another report, which concludes: "From the examination of the body made by us, and from the nature of the injuries then present, we are of opinion that death was caused by repeated blows on the left side of the head, and that these blows were inflicted by some heavy blunt instrument."

Dr. Littlejohn, Edinburgh, made an examination on September 27th, along with Dr. Fullarton, of the exhumed body. The result of this was the corroboration of the views expressed in previous reports. From his own experience with regard to the effect of falls from heights, which was considerable, Dr. Littlejohn thought it quite impossible that a single fall from a height would inflict so much damage to the head and face. He laid special emphasis on the separation of the superior maxillary. For the defence Dr. Heron Watson was called. Having read the reports already alluded to, he concluded that the injuries described were very much more consistent with the theory of a fall than with that of a succession of blows. He alluded to the extreme difficulty of fracturing a skull *post mortem* for purposes of demonstration, and showed how the head usually required to be fixed in position. He could not conceive that the injuries described could have been done by a stone. Dr. Chas. McGillivray, Edinburgh, and Dr. H. A. Thomson, who had both visited the supposed site of the tragedy recently, confirmed Dr. Watson's view, that the injuries described were more consistent with the occurrence of a fall than a blow or succession of blows. The disposition of rocks in relation to the body and to the property of the deceased man, discovered scattered about the place, afforded additional support to this theory.

The jury, having been admonished by the judge not to look on the question as one of two competing medical theories, but to form their conclusions from a broad common-sense standpoint, returned a verdict of guilty. The verdict was, however, concluded by a majority of the jury, the actual numbers being understood to be eight to seven. The prisoner was sentenced to death.

ST. GEORGE'S MEDICAL SCHOOL.—The Entrance Scholarship of £65, open to students from the universities, has been awarded to Mr. Harold B. Grimsdale.

ASSOCIATION INTELLIGENCE.

LIBRARY OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

MEMBERS are reminded that the Library and Writing Rooms of the Association are now fitted up for the accommodation of the Members, in commodious apartments, at the offices of the Association, 429, Strand. The rooms are open from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. Members can have their letters addressed to them at the office.

NOTICE OF QUARTERLY MEETINGS FOR 1890.
ELECTION OF MEMBERS.

MEETINGS of the Council will be held on January 15th, April 16th, July 16th, and October 15th, 1890. Candidates for election by the Council of the Association must send in their forms of application to the General Secretary not later than twenty-one days before each meeting, namely, December 25th, March 27th, June 25th, and September 4th, 1890.

Any qualified medical practitioner, not disqualified by any by-law of the Association, who shall be recommended as eligible by any three members, may be elected a member by the Council or by any recognised Branch Council.

Candidates seeking election by a Branch Council should apply to the Secretary of the Branch. No member can be elected by a Branch Council unless his name has been inserted in the circular summoning the meeting at which he seeks election.

FRANCIS FOWKE, *General Secretary*.

NOTICES OF BRANCH MEETINGS intended for insertion in the JOURNAL of the current week should be forwarded, addressed to the Editor, so as to reach the office not later than mid-day Wednesday of that week.

BRANCH MEETINGS TO BE HELD.

METROPOLITAN COUNTIES BRANCH: HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT.—A special meeting of the above will be held at the Town Hall, St. Albans, on Thursday, November 21st, 1889, at 6 o'clock. Business: A discussion will take place on the resolutions presented to the annual meeting of the Association at Leeds in August last, by Dr. Rentoul. Infectious Disease Notification Act, 1889. This discussion will be opened by Dr. Brett, Vice-President of the District. Other necessary business.—H. LESLIE BATES, Honorary Secretary, St. Albans.

METROPOLITAN COUNTIES BRANCH: EAST LONDON AND SOUTH ESSEX DISTRICT.—The next meeting will be held, by the kind invitation of Dr. Adams, at Brooke House, Upper Clapton, on Thursday, Nov. 21st, at 8.30 P.M. A demonstration of interesting cases of skin diseases will be given by Stephen Mackenzie, M.D. Visitors will be welcomed.—J. W. HUNT, Honorary Secretary, 101, Queen's Road, Dalston.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE BRANCH.—The next meeting will be held at the General Infirmary, Gloucester, on Tuesday, November 19th, at 6.30 P.M., under the presidency of H. E. Waddy, Esq. Agenda: 1. Presidential Address. 2. *a*, Cases of Evisceration (Mules's Operation); *b*, Cases of Suction Operation for Lamellar Cataract; *c*, A Case of Buphthalmos (the patients themselves will be shown), by E. D. Bowers, Esq. The supper will take place at the Bell Hotel, at 8.15 P.M.; tickets 3s. 6d. each, exclusive of wine.—G. ARTHUR CARDEW, Honorary Secretary, Bayshill Villas, Cheltenham.

SHROPSHIRE AND MID WALES BRANCH.—A special general meeting will be held at the Salop Infirmary, on Tuesday, November 19th, at 3 P.M., for the discussion of Dr. Rentoul's scheme for correcting the abuse of the medical charities. Dr. Cureton will read a paper on the subject to open the discussion.

SOUTH-EASTERN BRANCH: EAST KENT DISTRICT.—The next meeting of the above District will be held at Canterbury on Thursday, November 28th. Mr. Schön, of Bridge, in the chair. All communications to be sent to the Honorary Secretary, W. J. TYSON, 10, Langhorne Gardens, Folkestone.

SOUTH-EASTERN BRANCH: EAST AND WEST SUSSEX DISTRICTS.—A conjoint meeting of the East and West Sussex Districts of the South-Eastern Branch will be held at the Marine Hotel, Worthing, on Thursday, November 28th, at 3.30 P.M.; Mr. G. B. Collet in the chair. The following papers will be read: Dr. Angel Money, on Nitrate of Pilocarpin and Naphthalin; their Use in Infantile Therapeutics. Dr. Herbert R. Spencer, on Abdominal Palpation in Pregnancy. Gentlemen desiring to make communications to the meeting will kindly send word as soon as possible to the Honorary Secretary, W. AXTON GOSTLING, M.D., Barningham, West Worthing.