is, in all probability, a small thing when compared with increasing the secretion of bile. One might expect that such powerful intestinal irritants as magnesium-sulphate and gamboge would be likely to bring about a reflex expulsion of bile; yet no one has attributed any cholagogue power to these. But, without attempting to reason out a question that can only be determined by experiment, we would merely add that we leave the investigation of the action of drugs on the *bile-expelling* mechanism to those who care to enter upon such an inquiry. We are satisfied to have shown that every substance supposed to be a cholagogue has, with the exception of calomel and manganese-sulphate, the power of exciting the *bile-secreting* mechanism; and, as our estimate of their powers, from an observation of the *bile-secretion* only, closely agrees with observations on the human subject, where actions on the bile-secreting and on the bile-expelling mechanisms cannot be distinguished from one another, we cannot but infer that surely their actions on the human subject must be chiefly on the bile-secreting mechanism. With regard to calomel, we must refer the reader to our criticism of its action at the close of the second series of experiments (JOURNAL, 1877), and we have already commented upon manganese-sulphate (p. 107).

The term cholagogue is of necessity a vague one, and is applicable to any substance that increases the biliary flow, whether by augmenting the secretion of bile or by exciting contraction in the gall-bladder and bile-ducts. We have, therefore, applied the more definite term *hepatic stimulant* to those substances which we have proved to increase the secretion of bile.

[To be continued.]

AN ADDRESS ON THE WORK OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

Delivered at the Second Annual Meeting of the Dublin Branch.

By GEORGE H. PORTER, M.D., F.R.C.S.I.,
Surgeon in Ordinary to the Queen in Ireland; President of the Branch.

GENTLEMEN,—Twelve months have now rolled over since you entrusted to my charge the high responsibility which, to-day, I am about to give back into your hands—that of President of this most important and influential Branch of the British Medical Association. Twelve months! A long period to which to look forward; yet how short the retrospect! During that time not much has occurred, so far as the peculiar interests of this Branch are concerned, to require special notice from me. Indeed, were such events alone to be considered, I might dismiss them with but few observations; yet this Branch, unit as it is of one great integer, has suffered a severe loss—has much to deplore—in the removal from our midst, in the meridian of his usefulness, of the late President of the British Medical Association. I need scarcely add I allude to Dr. Eason Wilkinson. That a gentleman occupying such a position amongst us should have strong claims upon our respect, and that his unexpected death, occurring just at the period it did, should give our community a severe shock, seems only natural. But in his case, the memory of Dr. Wilkinson has a stronger demand upon our sympathies than would under ordinary circumstances arise, and for this reason. A year ago, an important era arose in the history of the British Medical Association—the first meeting of the Dublin Branch was held. Its inauguration was signalled by an eloquent and exhaustive address, the memory of which, doubtless, still fills your recollections, and the assemblage was graced by the attendance of that kind, good old gentleman, the President of the parent Association, braving, at an inclement season of the year, the “*désagréments*” of the sea. He came amongst us, and cast over our meeting the prestige of his high official position, and shed upon it the light of his genial presence. That was the first occasion, I believe, that many of us had ever met him, yet I venture to assert that his conduct and bearing at the meeting impressed us most favourably; and, as the result, when his unexpected death was announced, I think myself justified in stating, that probably there was not one member of this Branch who did not feel that in the President's death he had, to a certain extent, suffered a personal bereavement.

If there be truth in the phrase that “*non civis homini contingit adire Corinthum*”, what a much greater amount of truth is there not to be found in the statement that it is permitted but to few indeed amongst

us to make startling discoveries in medical or surgical science, whereby long accepted practice is revolutionised, and new points of departure started!

How few of us could ever hope to rival such original thinkers as were Harvey, Jenner, Hunter? Yet there is not one in our ranks who may not fulfil an useful rôle in his own sphere, by upholding a high standard of professional honour, and of moral integrity; acting in such a manner as to command the respect of the public at large, and thereby elevating in their estimation the profession to which he belongs.

Such a man was Dr. Eason Wilkinson. His character may well be estimated from that address which he had prepared for the late meeting of the Association at Bath, but which he was not spared to deliver, and from which I ask your permission to read a few extracts, supporting the views I have just enunciated. He had written:—

“I should like to say a few words upon the future of our profession. Its portals are being narrowed year by year, and it will come to pass that only men who have arrived at a very high standard of knowledge will be allowed to enter them. I look forward to this and other causes for the immeasurable raising of our social position. The hindrances to our advancement are indifference, private interests—which engender pitiable jealousies—too great intemperance upon ‘getting on’, and making money. All this, instead of a gallant *esprit de corps*, and steadfast pride in raising and upholding our grand profession. We have all heard it said, some of us often, and by our inferiors possibly in birth and education—‘He's only a doctor’. Only a doctor! Now, let us see what that means. It means a costly and, though very interesting, yet a very anxious and laborious education; it means, in all who are worthy of the profession, enormous self-denial, earnest thought, truthfulness, integrity, purity of life, sympathy with human suffering, unceasing labour, obedience to God's Word.

“It seems to me, then, to be a ‘doctor’ in the world's acceptance of the word, means to be a man worthy of the highest possible love and esteem of all with whom he may come in contact. Let us, therefore, encourage our sons to adopt this profession, to have high aims and noble aspirations. We must endeavour to influence all to look upwards and onwards in the highest sense; that is, in the hope of being an honour to his calling and a blessing to his generation, and not in damaging aims at self-aggrandisement.”

Ample evidence on the part of sorrowing friends, at the meeting in question, was brought forward to sustain the fact that, as he spoke, so he lived. In my opinion, higher praise could not be accorded to any man.

Passing from this sad theme, gentlemen, permit me to occupy your attention for a short time whilst I bring under your notice some of the principal objects for the advancement of which this Association was originally founded, and which, from its birth up to the present moment, its members have steadily kept in view. These may, with advantage, be grouped under the following headings:—

1. The scientific culture of our profession:
2. The consideration of questions of what may be termed medico-political reform:
3. State Medicine:
4. Though last, by no means least, the development of social intercourse amongst the vast body of our profession through the instrumentality of our great annual gathering, and the meetings of the several Branches into which the Association itself has been subdivided.

With reference to the first of these groups, it is scarcely necessary for me to remind you how thoroughly this intention of the founders of the Association has been carried out at our several annual meetings. The addresses delivered by the Presidents of the different Sections in which the work of the meeting is conducted, taken one and all, are highly creditable to their authors, most of whom have been the foremost men in our ranks. In Medicine, Surgery, Midwifery, and State Medicine, addresses, from time to time, have been delivered, which will remain classics in our literature, and which would be well worthy of collection and republication. That this will yet be done, I doubt not, inasmuch as it would be matter for regret that essays of such importance should not occupy a more permanent position in our professional writings than can as yet be claimed for them. But it is not only at our annual meetings that such good work is achieved; reference to the pages of our JOURNAL will show that, on many occasions, most valuable communications are made by members at the meetings of the Branch Associations—contributions which otherwise might be lost to our profession.

It is true that, in large cities, such as London, Dublin, and Edinburgh, no like requirement exists. In this city, every opportunity is afforded by important bodies as the Surgical, the Medical, the Obstetrical, the Pathological, and the Biological Societies; but in other

localities it is not so; and thus, by an association such as ours, less favoured provincial places are brought on a professionally scientific level with the great metropolitan centres.

With regard to the *second* of these groupings—medico-political reform—much excellent work has been effected by this Association, work both of a positive and of a negative character. That the standard of education, both preliminary and professional, on the part of candidates seeking admission into our ranks, has (thanks to our agitation) been raised, cannot be gainsaid. The necessity for a sound preliminary education, long recognised by our Irish College of Surgeons (indeed, from its foundation some hundred years ago up to the present moment, and in the enforcement of which it stood in an honourable minority of one) is now universally admitted. To dwell upon its importance would be but to abuse your patience. With regard to professional education and examination, I believe that our Association has also done good service. Unworthy competition amongst the licensing bodies is less flagrant than in days gone by; a greater equality now exists amongst our examining boards: an equality obtained, I am happy to observe, rather by a process of levelling up than levelling down. Yet candour compels me to acknowledge that much remains yet to be accomplished. Whether every evil shall be removed by a system of conjoint examining boards is a mooted question, in the discussion of which able and thoughtful men range themselves on opposite sides. But upon one point I think that I will receive the unanimous verdict of every surgeon, and it is this: that no candidate should be permitted to obtain a licence in surgery who has not been tested practically as to his fitness by operations upon the dead subject. To certify without some such test that the candidate is competent to operate upon the living being is to testify to that of which the examining board has no evidence. It is very much to be regretted that, when Mr. Macnamara brought forward, at a meeting of the General Medical Council, a resolution couched in this spirit, it failed to command the support it eminently merited.

As to the amount of negative service rendered by our Association, that is evidenced by the successive Bills, introduced by strong Governments, which we have defeated, inasmuch as that they were crude in conception and unsatisfactory so far as the requirements of our profession are concerned. Upon one point, I believe, a very unanimous opinion exists in the minds of the vast majority of members of this great Association. I allude to the question of direct representation of the profession on the General Medical Council. Upon this subject, a *plébiscite* has been taken, with a result which justifies me in making this assertion. It is therefore I regret to see, from an answer given in the House of Commons by Lord George Hamilton, in reply to Mr. A. Mills, during the past session, that, whilst Government contemplate introducing in the coming session a Medical Bill, still, in the absence of information on the subject, they are not prepared to touch that question of direct representation upon which the great mass of the profession has spoken in so unmistakable a manner. That such information is not immediately forthcoming, may be true; but I believe, before Parliament reassembles, a large and reliable amount could be placed at the service of Government, in the shape of a report drawn up by the Executive Committee of the General Medical Council; and, for imposing this duty upon the said Executive Committee, the members of the British Medical Association are indebted to three Irish members of the General Medical Council—Sir D. Corrigan, Professor Macnamara, and the Rev. Professor Haughton.

With respect to the *third* of these groupings—that of State Medicine—this Association may well afford to congratulate itself. Perhaps in no other department of our profession has its labour been more earnest or more useful; and, in connection with it, the debt of gratitude due to the late Dr. Rumsey should never be forgotten. I believe that at length the public are beginning to recognise this all-important branch of our profession—but they are only beginning. Old as is the proverb, "Prevention is better than cure", still the public has not as yet learned fully to estimate it at its true value. Long, very long since, the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, recognising the great importance of this subject, founded a professorship of what was then termed "Hygiene"; this was somewhere about the year 1844, and was the first chair of the kind established in the British empire. Its first occupant was one who too soon was lost, by secession from that profession he was so calculated to adorn, but who, I am happy to state, still exists in a green old age amongst us. Abandoning medicine for journalism, for many years past he has devoted himself solely to new duties. Need I say, that I allude to that respected, consistent political veteran, Dr. Henry Maunsell, proprietor of the *Dublin Evening Mail*?

Next in order, I find our time-honoured University of Dublin instituting a Degree in State Medicine; the first established, though, I am glad to say, not the only one now existing, in the three kingdoms.

Have we not, therefore, gentlemen, reason to be proud at finding elsewhere recognition, tardy though it be, of the great value of the science to which we in Ireland so many years since attached so much importance?

With regard to the *fourth* of these groupings—the opportunities this Association affords its members of social intercourse—I think that its value cannot be overestimated. To us, whose whole lives are spent in a perpetual conflict with disease, misery, and death, it is difficult to realise the profound philosophy enunciated by Horace, "Dulce est desipere in loco"; and yet it were well that we learned it in time. If it be true that even Apollo did not always keep his bow strung, neither should we. And yet how many have we not seen dropping from the ranks, victims to a tension that has been allowed no relaxation. To our patients we talk learnedly and wisely upon the subject; to its importance in our own persons we are blind.

Many of us make up our mind to take a holiday next week, or next month, as the case may be; but, when the time comes, we find it inconvenient to leave home; we have this case or that case on hand, and when we get rid of it, then we will surely be off. But another case crops up; the same excuse is made; and so on until, imperceptibly, times lips by, and for that year the opportunity is lost.

"The rustic waits beside the river,
In hope to cross its arid bed;
But it flows on, and will for ever,
By countless mountain torrents fed."

But, with the great annual meeting of our Association, all appears in a different aspect. The month of August has come; our paper is written, and must be read; so, doing a gentle violence to our feelings, we repair to the place of rendezvous, and, combining work with pleasure, we enjoy our holiday.

Nor is this the only amount of benefit that accrues. At such meetings, old friendships are revived, new acquaintances are formed; in many instances, long standing acerbities are mollified, asperities smoothed down, heartburnings quenched; mutual respect takes the place of unworthy jealousies. Before the meeting breaks up, smiles and good feeling prevail, and each returns to his several avocations with improved health, renewed vigour, and a higher estimate of the goodness of human nature at large.

This year, I am happy to think that Ireland is once again to be honoured with the visit of the Association: and I feel pleasure in congratulating the inhabitants of our premier southern city at being the place selected for our reunion. On the part of my professional brethren there, I may be permitted beforehand to promise the members of the Association a cordial welcome, enhanced by the beauties of the scenery of Cork, Glengarriffe, and Killarney.

I would have but imperfectly discharged my duty, gentlemen, were I to omit drawing your attention to one other important feature connected with our Association—one that has most materially contributed to our prosperity. Need I say I allude to the *JOURNAL*, of which we are all justly proud? It does not require me to remind you of the distinguished position it now occupies amongst our scientific publications; and I am sure that every one of its readers will cheerfully endorse my statement when I record it as my conviction that it mainly, if not altogether, owes that position to the zeal, tact, and ability of its highly gifted and talented editor, Mr. Ernest Hart.

I cannot conclude without expressing my deep sense of the services of our respected Honorary Secretary of this Branch, Dr. Dufey. He was not only one of the prime movers in bringing this Branch into existence, but has spared none of his valuable time in promoting its advancement in every way. Personally, I thank him for his assistance during my year of office.

Lastly, gentlemen, allow me to say that I feel great pleasure in vacating the chair for so distinguished a physician as Dr. Gordon, who, I am confident, will faithfully uphold the honour and *prestige* of this our Dublin Branch of the British Medical Association.

THE EFFECT OF ATTENTION ON THE BODILY ORGANS.

I BEG to send a case corroborative of Dr. Carpenter's views on the effect of attention on the bodily organs.

A lady aged 33 has suffered from what I will call, in common parlance, gouty rheumatism. She is now much better, but still has occasional attacks of pain and swelling in the joints. She lately called my attention to the fact that, if she converse about her ailments with any very sympathetic friend, she will actually see the arm or wrist swell and become painful. Yet she is not fanciful or weak-minded, but takes great interest in such observations.

JAMES MARTIN, Woodview, Portlaw.