Mr. Balfour Browne, in his work on *The Medical Jurisprudence of Insanity*, thus concisely refers to the apathy of the legislature in respect to this matter: "The English law refuses to interfere with the liberty of an individual, even although he may be an habitual drunkard. The law of England has a superstitious regard for the liberty of the subject. And so, out of respect for the theory, it allows an individual to deprive himself of all liberty, to place himself in a position in which there are numberless temptations to crime, and no protection for the commission of criminal acts, to cultivate disease in himself and others who may come after him, and to sow the seeds which will grow up either in crime or insanity in the next generation. But no, the law of England will not restrain the habitual drunkard. The liberty of the subject is allowed to render persons, in the words of the Canadian Bill, of grievous injury, as well to their relations as their creditors; it is allowed to stand in the way of the reclamation by a 'reasonable and regular course of treatment of many who might be made useful citizens of a State, which is exhausted with the weight of its burthen of disease and crime'."

One thing is certain, and that is, that long continued habits of intemperance almost invariably render the individual incapable of managing his own affairs with any efficiency, and it would be reasonable and in conformity with the expressed opinions of physicians in all countries to restrain individuals thus affected, and in this way give certainty of ultimate recovery.

But, as yet, no measure exists in this country to prevent this most pernicious habit. An unsuccessful attempt has been made to legislate for inebriates, but the health of the community, although it should be the first object of government, seems to be of small consideration in comparison with trumpery little rights of property. It is in keeping with England's character as a nation of shopkeepers, that the excellence of its civil laws and their administration is beyond all question—almost beyond all rivalry; while its sanitary arrangements are of the most defective nature. It is only recently that health bills have received any general attention, and even now the attention which they do receive is inefficacious to secure anything like a satisfactory settlement of questions of the most paramount importance.

Those persons who shut their eyes to the close connection which exists between disease and crime are careless observers. Those who, while they legislate for the latter, ignore the existence of the former are careless legislators.

It appears to me that it is nothing less than monstrous that subjects like this which would appear to demand the foremost attention of our legislature should be made subservient to so many questions of comparative insignificance. I believe that if the medical profession were more freely represented in the House of Commons, it would be of the greatest advantage to the nation and to the profession itself; and I venture to express the hope that such may some day be the case, that gentlemen pursuing the higher walks of our glorious profession may be able and as well possess the inclination to give up some portion of their well earned leisure to serve their country in the British House of Commons, believing, as I firmly do, that no class of men would be more fitted by their education, culture, and superior attainments to do honour to the profession to which they belong, and to be of the greatest possible use in the House to their fellow men. In the meantime, it behoves us to speak in language that admits of no compromise or misinterpretation; the oft-repeated opinions of ourselves and our leading psychologists on this great question brought prominently before the public on every suitable occasion cannot fail to create a mighty echo in the national mind.

MODIFIED SYPHILIS.

By J. F. PORTER, Surgeon-Major, Assistant Professor Military Surgery, Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley.

MR. MORGAN's views on modified syphilis, published in the JOURNAL of June 13th, have afforded me great interest, and, as I have entertained the same opinions for a considerable period, I beg to offer my mite of experience on this important subject.

For many years after joining the profession, I was led away by the belief that there were two forms of primary venereal sores, "infecting" and "non-infecting"; the former followed by secondaries, the latter not so. After some experience in the army, at home and abroad, I found I was frequently disappointed in my prognosis; that some of the most simple soft sores, or excoriations, which healed in a few days with the application of cold water, were followed in due time by secondary symptoms of mild form, such as two or three coppery patches on the face or trunk, a sore throat, or cracking of the palms of the hands. Such cases completely upset my mind as to the doctrine of duality, and

I came to the conclusion that, though I might almost to a certainty point out a sore which would be followed by secondary symptoms, yet I was unable to point to any simple venereal sore and say, this will not be followed by secondaries of some character.

It may be said I overlooked the infecting sore, but, having been nearly nineteen years in one regiment, I was in a position to know the constitution, habits, character, and temperament of every man in it; and, as the commanding officer punished men whom I reported as having secreted disease, I seldom had a complaint to make of non-attendance at hospital on the first appearance of a sore, and consequently had every opportunity of judging whether the men were infected, or had any trace of an indurated sore, which might have given rise to the secondary symptoms apparently following soft sores. Induration, besides, is a condition not easily got rid of.

I admit that venereal disease in all its forms is, to use a vulgar expression, a "lying disease", and that it is most difficult to obtain simple facts or straightforward answers from any class of patients suffering from it. I have, therefore, in my investigations, been most careful to make minute examinations.

With regard to Mr. Morgan's theory, "that the vast majority of primary sores are not derived from sores, but from the inoculated discharges of constitutionally infected women", I may state that, when serving in Saugor, Central India, in 1865, the admissions into hospital in my regiment from venereal sores were numerous, and caused me much anxiety. At my suggestion, I was permitted to take into custody, for medical observation, the prostitutes (natives of the lowest type) frequenting the neighbourhood of the barracks and cantonments; I carefully examined them with a speculum, and sent those diseased to the civil hospital for treatment. These unfortunate women, it was well known, were the source of the disease among the troops; but I was surprised to find that nearly all suffered from a purulent vaginal discharge, and not from true syphilis, a sore being but seldom met with.

The result of my endeavour to check the disease was satisfactory, as may be seen by the following figures:—*Admissions*—January, 1865, 18; February, 19; March, 25; April, 22; May, 19; June, 4; July, 1. In the month of August, the regiment left the cantonment in consequence of cholera. The system of supervision of the prostitutes was commenced on the 17th of May, and 15 of the 19 admissions during that month were prior to this date, 4 only having been admitted during the latter fourteen days. These figures, which I recorded at the time, and have now before me, may be found of some interest.

THE EFFECTS OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION:

Abstract of the President's Address delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Southern Branch.

By W. R. E. SMART, M.D., C.B., Inspector-General R.N., President of the Branch.

DR. SMART congratulated this newly formed Branch of the Association on its auspicious title, and its success. The Association was truly the great federal republic of medicine, made up of many Branches and districts of Branches, each holding its autonomy and exercising self-government, while abiding by the general laws and regulations of the Association, to which its representatives were sent at the annual great meetings. The Association now numbered about six thousand members, and its organisation had extended into Scotland and Ireland. The Southern Branch, although the latest offspring, had before it a bright future; and its constituency was more varied than in most other Branches, as in it the civilian, the naval, and the military elements of the profession were blended in sufficient numbers to produce mutual strength and to effect much for general good. They had engaged to rally round and combat for, if need be, the principles so long and well maintained by the Association, and to serve under it in the spirit with which, in this garrison town, they were used to see young soldiers actuated by the names of glorious victories emblazoned on the colours of their regiments to seek to obtain fresh honours in new fields; for, like them, they also might proudly scan the battles fought and victories already won, deriving from them a noble spirit of emulation. It was a saying of an ancient victorious monarch, that "to conquer self was a greater achievement than to have subjugated cities". And in this lay much of the honour of their Association. They might glory in the extension of friendly social feelings, so that those local and tribal dissensions which were formerly imputed by their critics as a true characteristic of the doctors were of rare occurrence within the bounds of their membership. This had contributed greatly to the elevation of their profession, and to the

increase of its influence for good. This had been effected by the diffusion of a purer ethical code impressed on the minds and spirits of men, rather than by written laws enforced by tribunals. Out of this there had sprung a charitable feeling, which made effort to aid the least fortunate among them, and to succour those who had been left unprovided for by them by means of a benevolent fund.

Secondly: Much had been done already towards consolidating the vital interests of the profession. Thus it was greatly due to the voice of the Association that a Medical Council had been established to register all legally qualified practitioners, and to form a standard of therapeutics embodied in a national Pharmacopœia, that had supplanted the too numerous productions of colleges, and to aim at uniformity of education and tests for the entire kingdom. Although these last desiderata had not yet been accomplished, there was ground for hoping that when the mind of the profession was sufficiently educated to be of one accord on the essentials, these great points of internal reform would certainly be achieved.

Thirdly: Its external utility was amply displayed in the successful operations of its "State Medicine Committee", to which it was in a great measure due that they had any Public Health Act, supervising the eradication of the causes of diseases in cities and towns, by sanitary measures; and, although much still remained to be done, yet it might be confidently predicted that the voice of their profession, heard in the repeated warnings of this Committee and its district Branches, would make itself not merely listened to, but attended to. It had already triumphed frequently in the cause of the public, over the narrow obstructiveness of corporations and vestries. Again, by vigilance of the Parliamentary Bills Committee, erroneous measures had been corrected before obtaining the force of enactments. Undoubtedly, through its influence, much had been gained by those of them who undertook the care of the sick poor, and by those whose office it was to treat sick and wounded sailors and soldiers in the service of the State. For the last divisions, he might state that they were fully sensible of, and gratefully acknowledged the friendly hand that had been extended on more than one occasion, assisting them to obtain a due consideration for their labour and calling.

Fourthly: The Association might glory in its having conferred lasting benefits on the sick poor by persistent efforts to obtain mitigations of the too levelling and centralising policy of the Poor Law Board, in whose economical reforms acts were done oppressively to the sick and those disabled by age. The details of the Poor Law were much more mercifully administered now than they were a few years since, thanks to their profession in a great degree.

Lastly: In a scientific direction, the Association had done much by its *Transactions*, and of later years by its *JOURNAL*, which, under its present editorship, was second to none, and had become the fair exponent of the views and studies of its individual members. And, as much by its annual meetings, for the general discussion of the objects and management of the Society, as well as for the advancement of science, it brought home to them concisely and lucidly a summary, and the results of all the recent investigations devotedly pursued by the most illustrious men of the day. And now, at length, a point had been reached when a more direct participation would be taken in such investigations. To this end, a recommendation would be made at the Annual Meeting, 1874, to grant £200 in aid of researches in anatomy and physiology, the action of remedies, clinical medicine, and surgery. All these things were demonstrations of innate strength, marked by slow and steady growth, and as successive triumphs worthy of being recorded, and likely to arouse enthusiasm among them, akin to that the soldier felt when he enlisted in a regiment with untarnished laurels, to follow its glorious colours into fields where fresh honours were to be participated in. Each of them should strive to augment and maintain what had been already secured by the elder Branches of their Association, and to prove themselves not unworthy of being enrolled in the same list.

Proceeding next to local arrangements, he spoke of the results obtained by the Contagious Diseases Act, which the Admiralty had been prominent in instituting and maintaining in spite of an unprecedented clamour in the name of a pseudo-morality and of public decency, which, as he contended, had been greatly advanced by its operation; and he called on his audience to proclaim their knowledge, so that the arm of the Government might be strengthened, and the nation enlightened, so as to give a wider adoption of a great sanitary principle. In another direction, he believed that equal good would be derived in the direct action of Government as a corrective to the slowness of municipal authorities in stamping out the causes of some zymotic diseases. Among these, he instanced the fact that the causes of enteric or sewer fever were never absent in certain districts of these towns, especially in the hastily constructed houses allied to the barracks at Eastney, which were

of themselves, perhaps, the finest in England, from among the men quartered, in which there were more cases of the disease sent to Haslar Hospital than from all the more numerous bodies of men under control of the Admiralty quartered here. He attributed this to the very imperfect sewerage and water-supply of the neighbourhood of the barracks in which the families of the soldiers resided for the convenience of being near the barracks. In addition to his personal observations, he quoted those of the medical officers immediately concerned, in proof of the facts. While admitting that much was being done in securing better conditions in the newer portions, he contended that much remained to be done to correct past neglect, and expressed a hope that the Government would use its weight in stimulating municipal authorities to correct all proved evils arising from defective sewerage. The necessity for activity in this direction had become the more needful, inasmuch as otherwise the health of the Portsmouth district was second to that of none in the kingdom; and, with this corrected, it would stand superior to all. To this end, he advocated the strengthening of the hands of the health-officer, who had done very much, and was alive to all these imperfections. Whatever influence established or increased the public safety, the united strength of civilian and Governmental practitioners in working to the advantage of the community at large, would be seen and felt, and the hand should not be stayed so long as there was any remediable cause of which disease was an inevitable product. Reminding his audience that to aim at the prevention of disease was more conservative of life than the most successful treatment of it could ever become, he remarked that this fact had been strongly impressed on military medicine from the days of the great conqueror Cyrus, whose father Cambyses, according to Xenophon, taught him that the prevention of diseases in the camp was one of the most honourable functions of a general, while the office of treating diseases stood relatively to it, as the office of repairing the cast-off garments of the army. In this respect the medical duties had undergone great changes in modern times, although the executive had not yet fully surrendered to the medical element its authority in such matters, in apprehension that military strategy might be embarrassed or retarded by any secondary interposition. Whatever might have been the recent experience and practice of other conflicting nations, they might trust that at least the salutary lesson had been learned from the management, and in the results of their own little war in a deadly climate, that medical foresight and executive reliance on it would deprive war, under its worst aspects, of many of its horrors, while they tended to ensure rapid and complete success now, when brevity of a campaign had become an absolute necessity. Sooner or later the lessons now accumulating in social and military science must bring about a just appreciation of the fact that all questions concerning public health, that is of communities, were most safely dealt with by the science of medicine and its educated professors. To this desirable end, nothing could be more conducive than a deep sense of its responsibilities actuating the profession, and that sense was becoming more fostered now than at any previous period, mainly through the co-operation of all classes in one fraternity—the British Medical Association. They were striving in the right path by uniting to form a new Branch of it, to be guided by its principles in pursuit of its prominent objects, while hoping for the same results within their own local sphere. Let them, then, work together, zealously holding this sole end steadily in view.

THE GAINS DERIVED FROM THE USE OF THE LARYNGOSCOPE.

By PUGIN THORNTON, Esq.,

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THE profession will, I am sure, look forward with interest to the evidence resulting from Dr. George Johnson's experiments and pathological observations. In my desire not to encroach on the space of the *JOURNAL*, I fear that the observations I ventured to put forward in explanation of his interesting case were not quite clear. I will, therefore, briefly explain.

1. By idiopathic disease of the muscle, I mean disease of the muscular structure, independent of the nerve-supply. The laryngeal muscles are so superficially situated, that they are very readily affected by inflammation of the mucous membrane; and it not unfrequently happens that, when the inflammation subsides, the structure of the muscles remains impaired. This subject has been elucidated by Dr. Morell Mackenzie in his work on *Hoarseness and Loss of Voice*; and, under paralysis of the adductors of the vocal cords (page 5), he specially calls attention to the views of Professor Gerhardt, who enumerates two