NOTES ON BOOKS.

IN DR. MANSEL SYMPSON'S *Lincoln*,¹ the history of the ancient cathedral city is set forth from early times. Whilst naturally much space is devoted to the history of the cathedral round which so much of the mediaeval life centred, a full account is also given of other institutions and of customs that have ceased to be. It is evident that the author has a deep love for his city, and a keen appreciation of its beauties. His book will take a worthy place in a series under the general supervision of an archaeologist so capable as Mr. Windle. Of the illustrations, it is enough to say that they come from the hand of Mr. Herbert New to indicate that they are possessed of high artistic merit. Some are very good indeed, but the markedly original touch which invariably distinguishes his work does not quite lend itself to the representation of architectural detail, nor, we think, is it as well suited for comparatively large full-page illustrations as for smaller cuts. Hence some of the illustrations of the cathedral are lacking in richness of effect, whilst the smaller figures are all that can be desired.

The object of Dr. MAGIAN in writing his pamphlet *How to be Healthy*² is to bring home to persons engaged in business the importance of exercise in preserving health. To obtain the full benefit of any kind of exercise—be it walking, cycling, or lawn tennis, or any other form—the exercise should be taken in the proper manner and in amount proportionate to the strength of the individual. A few common-sense directions as to the proper way to indulge in some of the more common and popular forms of exercise, such as are to be found in this pamphlet, should be useful, and, as it is published at the price of one penny, there is no reason why any one should remain ignorant.

Dr. DE SEIGNEUX's little "book of the midwife and nurse"³ consists of three parts: (1) An *aide mémoire* composed of 19 pages giving an outline of the physiology of pregnancy and labour; (2) instructions to midwives. This is in a way officially authorized, for it is based upon the instructions supplied to the midwives of the Canton of Vaud. Dr. de Seigneux is very careful that the midwives who adopt his teaching shall not do harm by over-haste. Therefore the midwife is told to wait for five minutes after the birth of the child before she ties the cord. She is to wait an hour before trying to express the placenta. When taking the temperature she is to leave the thermometer in the axilla for at least ten minutes. We notice that the antiseptic preferred by the author is a 2 per cent. solution of lysoform, a soup-spoonful in a litre of water. Carbolic acid and sublimate are, he thinks, too poisonous, and apt sometimes to irritate the skin; and the odour of lysol is to him disagreeable. To prevent ophthalmia the nurse is told to wash the eyes with a 4 per cent. solution of boric acid. We doubt if a midwife will hold the lids open and drop the antiseptic in, unless she is distinctly told to do so; and even if she does, boric acid is a very weak germicide. The third part is some words on cancer, the object of which is to impress upon midwives and nurses that they ought to use their influence, as confidential friends of their patients, to induce them to consult medical men whenever they get any irregular haemorrhage, to go without delay to a doctor, so that if there is cancer the opportunity for effective treatment may be seized. The size of the book is increased by a number of forms for entering obstetric engagements and notes of cases.

¹ *Lincoln: A Historical and Topographical Account of the City.* By E. Mansel Sympson, M.A., M.D. Illustrated by E. H. New. Ancient City Series. Edited by B. C. A. Windle, F.R.S. London: Methuen, 1906. (Cr. 8vo, pp. 448; 56 illustrations. 4s. 6d.)

² *How to be Healthy.* A Word to Business People. By A. C. Magian, M.D. Manchester: Merrin and Hayward, (1d.)

³ *Le Livre de la Sage-Femme et de la Garde, suivi de quelques mots sur le traitement du cancer de l'utérus* [The Book of the Midwife and Nurse, followed by some words on the treatment of cancer of the uterus]. Par Dr. R. de Seigneux. Privat Docent à l'Université de Genève. Avec un Agenda Obstétricale et 60 feuilles d'observation. Genève: Henri Lündig. 1905. (Demy 8vo, pp. 62.)

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.—The *New York Medical Journal* states that it has been decided to transfer from San Francisco to Berkeley all instruction in the first two years of the medical curriculum established by the University of California. In future, students desiring admission to the Medical Department will be expected to have completed a two years' course in physics, chemistry, zoology, and the German and French languages. Medical students at Berkeley, therefore, will start work at anatomy, physiology, and pathology as soon as they join. The last two years of the curriculum will be passed at San Francisco as heretofore.

THE PROPOSED APPLICATION FOR A ROYAL CHARTER.

By T. ARTHUR HELME, M.D., M.R.C.P., F.R.S.Ed.,
MANCHESTER.

UPON the Representative Meeting this year will devolve the duty of considering and deciding what is a matter of supreme moment for the welfare of the Association, namely, the suggested Charter and the suggested modifications of the constitution of the Association.

It is but a very short time (three years) since the constitution was reorganized; it would have been optimistic to a degree to hope that the form then adopted would prove to be perfect, and the passage of time has already served to reveal directions in which improvement is possible and desirable, but not yet have we fully grasped what changes are desirable; the constitution is still, as it were, on probation; as time goes on its imperfections and suitable methods of dealing with them will become more manifest. The question at once arises, Is this the time to adopt another form of incorporation and to introduce modifications of our present constitution, or would it be wise to postpone such action until our experience has ripened and we are in a position to draft a constitution likely to be in form and substance permanent? Before the reconstitution of 1903 the Council of the Association, it is true, recommended the application for incorporation by Royal Charter, having in view the amendment of the government and administration of the Association, but, as the result of careful inquiries, it was eventually decided that the suggestion of the Council was not the best, and that it would be more advantageous to modify the existing form of the Association as incorporated under the Companies Law. That the present form of government is still imperfect and requires still further modification is acknowledged, and the original arguments which led to the decision of the Constitution Committee and the abandonment of the Council's proposal for a Royal Charter still hold good in regard to these particular objects, namely, the *government and administration of the Association*.

In regard, however, to the *expansion of the objects* of the Association, it is fairly agreed that incorporation by Royal Charter would be an advantage, in that the Association would then be free to undertake without hindrance work in new directions, for example, medical defence; but it must be remembered that this will involve increase of expenditure and increase of subscription.

It is doubtless the fact that many members of the Association are anxious to extend its objects, and are prepared for an increase of the annual subscription; if the Association is to advance so as to meet all the possible requirements of the medical profession, to undertake defence and insurance, to provide benevolent funds, and open agencies and employment bureaux, then it must take measures to obtain increased powers, and probably incorporation by Royal Charter will be the most efficient means. But before enlarging our scope would it not be well to rest content for the time with our present objects, to concentrate our energies and our funds on rendering our present machine as efficient as we may, to get our government and administration as perfect as experience may allow, and, having set our house in order, then to extend our scope of work? For the former object we shall obtain no help or advantage from a Royal Charter, but the reverse; once the Royal Charter is obtained we cannot change in any fundamental point except by a supplementary Charter.

It would appear to many that the wiser course would be to wait until we could frame a Charter thoroughly comprehensive and likely to be permanent.

I have said that our present government and administration are not perfect; in support of this it is only necessary to glance at the propositions which are to come before the Representative Meeting and the amendments to the draft Charter suggested by the Divisions and the Council; but perhaps I may with advantage indicate some matters which require consideration.

1. *The Divisions as the fundamental unit of power in the Association and the Representative Meeting.*—I well remember the dissatisfaction with the existing government of the Association a few years ago. I was a member of the Council, which acted, or appeared to act, in an arbitrary manner, and I took part in those

efforts which ended in the evolution of the present constitution. It fell to my lot, as the honorary secretary of a large Branch, to write and circulate a memorandum urging the members to resist certain proposals of the Council. I have this memorandum before me as I write, and I am not surprised to find that the expressions used are somewhat strong. I ventured to urge that if the proposed articles were adopted the Council will become an autocratic body from whose decisions there will be practically no appeal, and to object "to what practically amounts to the wholesale disfranchisement of the general body of members." I urged members "to be present at the meeting to protect the interests and privileges of the members of the Association." This circular, I believe, assisted in the overthrow of the Council's proposals and helped to clear the way to the reorganization of the Association on its present democratic basis.

I may therefore claim that I have at heart only the good of the Association, and that, when I now call the attention of members to the imperfections of our present constitution, I am acting only in the interests of the general body of members.

As the Honorary Secretary of the Branch, I am brought into contact with all the Divisions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Branch, but I learn that identical conditions prevail in other parts; in many of our Divisions, their smallness, the arrangement which was thought best and the fundamental point in our new constitution, has led to their undoing. Men who used to take an active and lively interest in the work of the Branch have lost interest in the Divisions; they have gone away, we cannot get hold of them, we never see them. Not 10 per cent. of the members attend the Divisional meetings in many instances, and often a quorum cannot be obtained, even at the annual meetings. One of our Divisions has lapsed, and another has not yet organized; the majority of the Divisions are dying, and the apathy is extending to the Branches, and so to the Association as a whole. There are, I am glad to say, one or two notable exceptions. Further, many men whose resignation we should regret, men of standing in the profession, and men of influence and weight in their neighbourhood, are threatening to resign. I have in my possession many letters indicating profound dissatisfaction with things as they are. In many Divisions the meeting is composed of five or six members; important questions are introduced, and decisions may be the result of a majority of one; such a vote cannot be held to represent the opinion of the Division of, let us say, sixty or eighty members; in other instances a mass of material is sent down from the London office, there is no time for discussion, and if any attempt is made the member is reminded that time will not allow, the result being that votes are taken on matters ill digested or not digested at all. Then, the Representative is sent up in a similarly haphazard way, so that the Representative Meeting, although nominally representative, comes to be not representative at all; it is a large meeting, but not truly, in the way in which it was intended to be, representative.

I would particularly ask the members of the metropolitan Divisions to note these facts, as it must be difficult for them, attached as they are to Divisions as large as many Branches, to realize the difference from their own position.

Last year the Representative Meeting passed a resolution that the financial business shall be transferred from the general meeting of members to the Representative Meeting. This will be a most important and fundamental change in the constitution of the Association, and should be thoroughly understood. It is necessary to consider it in the light of the fact that our hopes in the representative character of the Representative Meeting have not been realized in the past, and I fear may be even less so in the future.

This proposed change means that the power and privilege of the individual member of the Association as an individual will be destroyed in this sense—at present every individual shareholder of our company has the power to be present, to speak, and to vote at the annual business meeting of the company; if this transfer is effected that power of the individual goes. It may be for good or ill, but that is the fact, and it should be clearly recognized. The draft Charter, for which it is now proposed that application be made, contains this vital change.

The draft Charter has been sent to the Divisions for report and with what result? Of 199 Divisions only 55 send in a report. Many suggest modifications, and others suggest that it requires more careful thought. These facts, I believe, have influenced the Council in their consideration of this question.

It is, perhaps, an unpopular duty to point out that up to the present the Representative Meeting, in its eagerness to get through the mass of work, has been ready to adopt resolutions involving expenditure without having had the financial bearings carefully investigated by Committees appointed for that purpose. This is a matter which requires to be set right.

To those of us who desire to see the Association so constituted as to be the channel through which the voice of the profession as a whole may be heard and its opinions and desires made known, so managed as to be an efficient machine through which the intentions of the profession as a whole may be carried into execution and its interests protected, it is a source of great regret to find that in what we have done our hopes have not been realized. Further reform is essential. To me it seems of the first importance that the question of the Divisions and the Representative Meeting—the foundation stone on which the Association rests—requires reinvestigation, so that their position may be strengthened. Experience already shows some weak spots and will indicate the remedy.

To safeguard the representative character of this meeting, it would be well if some plan could be devised whereby the Representative must be elected by a due proportion of the Divisional members; and in order that the opinion of a Division, on any matter sent down for report before submission to the Representative Meeting, may really reflect the feeling of the Division, it shall be required that a due proportion of members shall record their votes.

2. *The Branch.*—In the reorganization there was no intention to destroy the Branches, but events have been too strong for them. They are no longer the powerful factor in the Association which they once were. It is true that the Branches elect the members of Council, but only in the sense that the Branch constitutes the electoral area, the councillors being elected by the individual members of the Divisions of the Branch—that is, the individual members of the Association. The decay of the Branches is to be regretted, for they were the means of reunion (political, scientific, and social) of members who otherwise had not much opportunity of meeting, and I am sure that the extinction of the Branch will not be for the permanent benefit of the Association as a whole.

3. *The Council.*—The Council is primarily the Executive of the Representative Meeting and of the Association; but whilst the Representative Meeting is elected by the members of the Association through the Divisions, the Council is elected by the members of the Association through the Branches. This mode of election, through different machinery, allows a trace of that mistrust of the Council, which existed under the old constitution, to linger. It should not, as both bodies are elected by the same electorate, only in different groupings.

The Representative Meeting meets only once a year, and cannot be an executive body. The Council meets at frequent intervals, and is chiefly an executive body, but during the remainder of the year it has other duties to perform; it *must* conduct the business of the Association. If it is to be merely an executive body, then it is too large—unnecessarily large, and unnecessary expense is entailed by its meetings. It is of the highest importance that the powers and position of the Council should be clearly defined. As the Council is a democratic body, elected directly by every member of the Association, it would be well that the Council should exercise some discretionary power in financial matters, not absolute, but discretionary, and this would tend to establish the stability of the Association.

4. *The Colonies.*—The Colonies have been appealed to in reference to the Charter, but it is improbable that their views can in any way be known before the Representative Meetings are held. For the sake of unanimity it is desirable that their wishes should be fully known and receive due consideration.

5. *Financial Matters.*—The work of the Association has grown so rapidly that the expenditure has now almost reached the limits of our present resources. The applica-

tion for a Charter will entail further expenditure, and its main object, the expansion of our work, will require larger funds. Further, if the Association undertakes work in the personal and pecuniary interests of its members, then we must remember that the Revenue Authorities will demand their share! and this will mean a substantial yearly addition to our expenses. This is a fact the importance of which, in connexion with the application for a Charter, must not be overlooked. It must of necessity be taken into our reckoning.

I have said enough, I think, to show that there are points in our constitution which require consideration and amendment, and I think I may say that it was the knowledge of matters of this kind that has led the Council to advise the members to defer for the present the application for a Charter.

The Representative Meeting meets but once a year; the Central Council meets at frequent intervals; it carries out the instructions of the Representative Meeting, and conducts the affairs of the Association throughout the year; it exercises supervision over the expenditure and general business; and all Committees, Branches, and Divisions report to it; its members therefore have the opportunity of ascertaining how the Association as a whole is getting along. On any matter affecting the welfare of the Association, and especially upon any changes affecting its constitution or financial stability, it is the manifest duty of the Council to fully convey to the Association and to the Representative Meeting its deliberate opinion, based on a wide and intimate knowledge of the affairs of the Association in all its parts.

In the matter of the Royal Charter and the proposed modifications of constitution the Council has, after mature consideration, viewing the matter on the broadest basis, guided by some or all of the subjects I have touched upon, and in the interests of the Association as a whole, deliberately arrived at the decision that it is its duty to advise the Representative Meeting that fuller and further consideration of the question is required, and that it is desirable to delay the application so as to give the Association as a whole longer time to appreciate and consider the many important matters involved in drafting a thoroughly comprehensive and permanent form of Charter.

I doubt not but that the Representative Meeting will recognize fully the bona fides and proper intention of the Council, and will afford its recommendation the most thoughtful consideration.

ANOTHER CANCER "CURE."

SINCE the publication recently¹ of a description of the composition of several articles put forward for the treatment of cancer, we have received from a medical practitioner another pretended "cure" for this disease, which had been supplied to a patient of his by an individual from Croydon who describes himself as a retired Government analytical chemist. So far as is known he does not advertise. The patient heard of him from friends who knew of marvellous cases of cure which he had effected. The bottle did not bear an Inland Revenue stamp. He saw the patient and examined her. He was paid 3 guineas, and asked for more, as it was a complicated case. The directions given were "two tablespoonfuls should be taken three times a day."

Analysis of this liquid showed the presence of ferric chloride, and traces of hydrochloric acid and alcohol, and nothing else except water; the alcohol indicates that the tincture of perchloride of iron, and not the liquor, has been used; determination of the amounts of iron and chlorine present showed that 6 fluid ounces of the mixture contained 5.7 fluid drachms of the tincture.

¹ BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, May 26th, 1903, p. 1238.

A SEASIDE hospital for the treatment of children suffering from tuberculous disease is about to be erected in the State of New York on land to be found by the City Corporation. The estimated outlay is 250,000 dollars, half of which sum was provided by Mr. J. D. Rockefeller on condition that a similar sum should be raised by the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor.

THE late Mr. Naboth Albon Burt, of Crofton House, Bristol, left £50 each to the General Hospital, the Royal Infirmary, the Dispensary, and the Hospital for Sick Women and Children, all of Bristol.

THE PATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

THE Pathological Society for the United Kingdom, the approaching formation of which was announced last week, was duly constituted at a meeting held in Manchester on Saturday, July 14th.

When Professor D. J. HAMILTON, of Aberdeen, took the chair in the Physiological Theatre, Owens College, on Saturday morning, there were between seventy and eighty persons present, including the chief working pathologists in the United Kingdom, and other members of the profession interested in the progress of the science. The Society which owes its existence to the initiative of Dr. Lorrain Smith, Professor of Pathology in the Victoria University, Manchester, and of Dr. Robert Muir, Professor of Pathology in the University of Glasgow, is intended to be conducted on lines similar to those which have proved so successful in the case of the Physiological and Anatomical Societies. After some discussion on the form of constitution, a Committee was appointed to draw up rules: these will be submitted to the next meeting of the Society, which will probably take place in London next December.

This formal business having been disposed of, the rest of the morning was devoted to the reading of a number of papers. Among these were notes on amyloid goitre and amyloid disease of the air passages, by Dr. J. Miller, Lecturer on Pathology in the University of Birmingham; on waxy degeneration in rheumatism, by Dr. J. M. Beattie, Lecturer on Pathology in the University of Edinburgh; and on terminal thrombosis in amyloid degeneration, by Dr. J. Ritchie, Professor of Pathology in the University of Oxford; Dr. A. C. O'Sullivan, Lecturer in Pathology, Trinity College, Dublin, described the appearance in a case of extensive anaemic infarction of the liver; and Dr. S. G. Scott, demonstrator of pathology in the University of Leeds, read a paper on obstruction-atrophy of the pancreas.

Professor J. Lorrain Smith read a very interesting paper on the staining of fat with aniline dyes. He pointed out that if a section of a tissue containing globules of fat, such as fatty liver or kidney, be exposed to a solution of a basic dye (methyl violet), the globules of fat occasionally stain, but in many cases none stain. He found that if after staining the section in a watery solution of the basic dye, it was exposed to the air, by leaving it mounted in Farrant's medium without a coverslip, the colour disappeared from the tissue as a whole, but the fat globules became more and more intensely stained. The same result was obtained if the section was exposed to the air in the medium for two days and a drop of the stain then added. The action took place with all basic dyes but failed with acid dyes, and it took place with all forms of fat (normal fat tissue, fat globules in gland cells, degenerating nerve fibres, granular corpuscles, fatty muscle-fibre, lipochromes, etc.). The reaction was due to the presence of carbon dioxide, and did not take place in sections exposed to an atmosphere of oxygen, nor in those exposed to air deprived of carbon dioxide. The action of carbon dioxide was apparently to hydrolyse the neutral fat, splitting it into glycerine and fatty acid, the latter then combining with the colour base. Further experiments showed that the hydrolysing action of carbon dioxide was not confined to fats. Experiments with carbohydrates give the following results: Cane sugar is converted into a reducing sugar (1) by exposure of a solution to CO₂ at high pressure (about four atmospheres pressures has been tried); (2) if boiled in a sealed tube, the solution in the tube being saturated with CO₂ at atmospheric pressure; (3) if left standing for some time in CO₂ at atmospheric pressure; (4) if left for twenty-four hours at 60° C. in a solution containing calcium or barium bicarbonate. Glycogen was converted into a reducing sugar if exposed to the action of CO₂ at high pressure in the presence of sodium bicarbonate. Carbon dioxide alone at high pressure failed to bring about the reaction. Starch behaved in the same way as glycogen. Specimens shown indicated that the method was applicable to the study of degeneration of the nervous system.

A paper on the absorption of toxins by the perineural lymphatics was read by Drs. Orr and Rows, and Dr. McWeeney, Professor of Pathology in the Catholic University, Dublin, described the appearance in a case