THE COMPANY OF BARBERS AND THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.

ADDRESS BY SIR WILLIAM MACCORMAC.

THE Honorary Freedom and Livery of the Barbers' Company were conferred upon Sir William MacCormac, Bart., K.C.V.O., Honorary Serjeant-Surgeon to the King, President of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, on March 26th, at the Barbers' Hall in Monkwell Street, E.C. Many mediæval ceremonies attended the bestowal of the honour. Not the least remarkable was the quaint charge read in the presence of the assembly, the members of the Court and the recipient standing, whilst those below the rank of an assistant in the company and the visitors remained seated. The presentation, made by the Master of the Barbers' Company, Mr. Frederick Stanley, was followed by a banquet, which was truly in the nature of a love feast, for no surgeons have dined officially in the Barbers' Hall since the disruption of the two callings in 1745. The feasts, however, were always independent of the surgeons, for as early as 1388, in the return to a writ of Richard II. the Masters of the Barbers certified that it was their practice once in a year to assemble to feast, and that they had an ordinance by which none of the brotherhood were to pay more than fourteen pence each towards the feast.

Long practice has made the feasts perfect, but as the hall seats only forty-nine persons the gathering was necessarily small. Amongst the guests were the Recorder of London, the Venerable the Archdeacon of London, Sir Thomas Smith, Bart., S.S., Sir Joseph C. Dimsdale, Sir Edward Clarke, K.C., Alderman Sir William P. Treloar, Dr. Pye-Smith, F.R.S., Mr. Bryant, Mr. Allingham, Dr. W. J. Collins, Mr. Makins, Mr. Edmund Owen, and Mr. D'Arcy Power.

The MASTER OF THE COMPANY proposed the usual loyal toast, and Major W. B. Brown, J.P., proposed the Imperial Forces, coupling with the toast name of Colonel GALLWEY, C.B., R.A.M.C., P.M.O. of the Home District, who duly replied. Mr. RICHARD ROBERTS, the Middle Warden of the Barbers' Company, proposed the toast of the House of Commons, which was responded to by Alderman Sir JOSEPH DIMSDALE, M.P. The MASTER then proposed the health of the "New Freeman of the Barbers' Company."

Sir WILLIAM MACCORMAC replied as follows:

I should, Mr. Master and Wardens, first like to express to you and to this venerable Company my sincere appreciation of the distinction conferred upon me of its honorary freedom, and the pleasure it has afforded me to receive it.

THE GUILD OF BARBERS.

The Guild of Barbers is of such ancient foundation that its earliest records can no longer be traced. It may, at all events, be assigned an origin as early as the thirteenth century, and, before its final development into a trade guild, it was partly religious in character and partly social; the barbers used to assist the monks to perform operations, but, after the edict of Tours, in 1163, forbade the priests to shed blood, it is probable the barbers assumed a much larger share of surgical work, and performed all the minor operations, and in those days there were few besides. In 1462, the first year of the reign of King Edward IV, the barbers obtained a charter of incorporation, and became a City company, "the better to protect the King's lieges from going the way of all flesh through the ignorance and negligence of various unskilful barbers and other practitioners in surgery." In 1530 the Company drew up ordinances for the better government of its members, a document of much historic interest, as it is signed by Sir Thomas More, then Lord Chancellor of England.

THE FRATERNITY OF SURGEONS.

There was also from remote time a "Surgeons Guild," small in number, poor, called a "Fraternity," and chiefly consisting of military surgeons. The surgeons became merged in the Barbers Company in 1540, and remained members of a united company for two hundred years, until they finally separated in 1745, and were constituted a Company of Surgeons, a movement attended by many quarrels. From this body was evolved the present College of Surgeons, which became incorporated on March 22nd, 1800, and celebrated the cen-

tenary of its foundation last year. Our College of Physicians was founded in 1518 by Henry VIII at the instance of Thomas Linacre, physician to the King, and Cardinal Wolsey, his Chancellor.

PHYSICIANS, SURGEONS, AND BARBER SURGEONS IN FRANCE.

It is interesting to find that in France very similar conditions obtained. There were in Paris during the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries three kinds of medical practitioners: a corporation of physicians, a confraternity of surgeons founded in the thirteenth century, and a company of barber surgeons, and these three bodies were engaged in almost perpetual strife for their respective privileges. It is said that about the year 1400 there were in Paris 31 physicians of the faculty, 10 master surgeons of the Fraternity of Surgeons, and about 50 barber surgeons.

The Barbers, continued separate until 1505, when they became barber surgeons, and formed a numerous and powerful body, especially a little earlier, when Ollivier le Dain was barber surgeon to Louis XI, and had the ear of the King. Ambroise Paré, who was surgeon in succession to five French monarchs—Henry II, Charles IX, Henry III, and Henri of Navarre was a barber surgeon from 1541 to 1544, and took a prominent part in their quarrels, afterwards he was admitted to the Fraternity of St. Côme, which consisted of the master surgeons closely corresponding to our company of surgeons. It is interesting to note that Paré, when he was 65 years old, dedicated in 1575 his great work on surgery to the King, and he there tells us that "he had laboured 40 years to bring his art to perfection, and striven so hard to attain his end, that the ancients have nought wherein to excel us, and posterity will not be able to surpass us." It is extraordinary that this boast of attained perfection, made more than 300 years ago, remained largely true until the latter half of the nineteenth century witnessed the transformation of surgery. This boast of perfection has been made with curious frequency by surgeons. The celebrated French surgeon, Baron Boyer, who was also at one time a barber surgeon, says in the preface to his great work on surgery in 1814, that surgery had made the greatest progress and had arrived at the highest degree of perfection of which it was susceptible. Sir John Erichsen and others have in their time said much the same thing.

In 1655, the French master surgeons petitioned to be allowed to join the Company of Barber Surgeons about one hundred years later than their English *confrères*, who became a united company in 1540, and they so continued till 1745, when they separated in the same year that witnessed the disassociation of the surgeons and barbers in England.

THE HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE BARBERS' COMPANY.

The quarrels between the barbers and surgeons are now ancient history; any ill-feeling has long since disappeared, and I think I may assume that the honorary freedom you have bestowed upon me symbolises a friendly reunion. There is no doubt that the election to day of the President of the College of Surgeons to the honorary freedom of the Barbers' Company constitutes the first official link between the two societies since their separation more than one hundred and fifty years ago; and one must go still further back, to a period antecedent to 1540, when the barbers and surgeons were still separate bodies, for the possible occurrence of a member of the old fraternity of surgeons being elected as a freeman or honorary freeman of the Guild of Barbers.

There is a record of a surgeon, one Master Johes de Suthwerk (John of Southwark), being given the ordinary freedom of the Guild of Barbers in 1312 in the fifth year of King Edward II's reign, a body amongst whom there were practitioners of surgery, but no honorary freedom has been conferred upon anyone since the separation in 1745, nor, indeed, since 1663.

In that year James Duke of Monmouth, a natural son of Charles II, Alexander Lord Leven, Richard Hopton, and Thomas Rosse, Esquires, received the honorary freedom, but apparently no surgeons. The only other honorary freemen were Henry Nevill Lord Burgavenny in 1584, and Thomas Lord Windsor in 1631.

SURGEONS TO THE CROWN.

Your history can point to many famous surgeons, no fewer

than nineteen of them having been serjeant surgeon to the King or Queen. William Hobbes, a member of the Company, appears to have been appointed the first serjeant surgeon in 1461, during the first year of Edward IV reign.

Thomas Vicary, born between 1490 and 1500, whose portrait we see in the first kneeling figure on the King's left hand in Holbein's picture, was granted the reversion of the office in 1530. He was serjeant surgeon to Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth, and Master of the Company on four occasions. Richard Ferris, a very notable man, was appointed serjeant surgeon to Edward VI and afterwards to Queen Elizabeth in 1562. He tried to make surgery a profession, and that surgeons should know physic. Thomas Gale, surgeon to Elizabeth, born 1507, was twice Master of the Barber Surgeons. He served in the army of Henry VIII, and was present with Philip II of Spain at the battle of St. Quentin in 1557. He was a contemporary of Ambroise Paré, who was also present at this battle, where he occupied himself in repairing the damage done by the English soldiers.

William Clowes the elder, born 1540, was surgeon to Queen Elizabeth, and served against the Spanish Armada in 1588. He was a warden of this Company, and a surgeon to St. Bartholomew's Hospital. He saw active service during many years both in the army and the navy. His published works are written in vigorous English, and are the best surgical treatises of the Elizabethan time. He was very outspoken, and this got him into trouble, as is more than once recorded in the annals of the company. On one occasion the strife of words between George Baker and William Clowes ended, we are told, in a "fight in the fields." Baker afterwards became serjeant surgeon to Queen Elizabeth, and was Master of the Company in 1597.

William Clowes the younger was twice Master of the Company and became serjeant surgeon to Charles I on his accession in 1625. He was not quite so great a man as his father. In 1625 we find a long letter from him asserting his rights in the Company, and declining to act as Renter Warden of the Yeomanry, since he "must not so poorly value the King his master, but expect from the Company as good a respect as any serjeant surgeon heretofore."

Halle, Banester, and Reid were well-known Elizabethan surgeons, and Woodall and Wiseman followed them during the Stuart period and the Commonwealth. All were men who had seen much service in the wars, and occupied very high places in their profession. Their biography can scarcely be told now, but much of interest is related of them, and they helped in their day to raise the dignity and importance of their calling and the prestige of the company.

THE BARBERS' COMPANY AND THE TEACHING OF ANATOMY.

Your records abound in matters of interest, which Mr. Sidney Young, your most able historian, has compiled with loving care. In the archives preserved at Guildhall the Barbers are admonished not to advertise improperly, and not to expose blood in their windows, but to have it privately carried to the Thames.

The Barbers rightly claim to have been the first of the City Companies to give technical instruction in their craft by anatomical lectures and demonstrations; the attendance on these lectures was compulsory, and they were for long given in the theatre of anatomy built by Inigo Jones in 1636, and depicted in one of Hogarth's telling pictures. The subject matter was found in the bodies of persons executed at Tyburn or elsewhere, the Company having the right to claim four each year. Upon the beads devolved the unpleasant and sometimes dangerous task of bringing the dead bodies to the hall. There was generally ample material to choose from, and when the selection had been made the body was placed in a coach and carried off. Not infrequently the hangman, who had vested interests of his own, or the relatives of the persons executed, or the mob, protested with violence, maltreated the beadles, and rescued the body.

In the annals for 1555 it may be seen that the doctor appointed for the "Anatomye" was provided with a mat to guard against cold in the feet, two fine white rods with which to touch the body, and a wax candle to look into it, also an apron and sleeves both white and clean. Nevertheless, in 1631 it is recorded that great annoyance was caused to the dresser boards and utensils in the upper kitchen by reason

the blood, filth, and entrails of the "anatomies," and another room was built in order to preserve the kitchen to its proper use. I believe we sit at our banquet to-night around the old dissecting-room table.

Two apparently authentic instances are mentioned in the records of the resuscitation of executed criminals. One was on February 20th, 1567, "when a strange thing happened to a man hanged for felony at St. Thomas Wateringe. The surgeons begged to have him for an anatomye. He was stripped, hid in a chest, thrown in a carre, and so brought from Southwark over the bridge to Chirurgeons Hall near Cripplegate. The chest being opened, the weather extreme cold, he was found to be alive, and lived to the 23rd of February." The other instance was that of William Duell, a youth of 16, who was hanged at Tyburn, November 23rd, 1740, "where, having hung for some time, he wass cutt down and brought to the Company's Hall for dissection. He had not been there five minutes before life appeared in him, and in less than two hours he sat up and drank some warm wine." He was conveyed back to Newgate where he recovered completely, and was afterwards transported for life.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the physicians and also the bishops challenged the privileges of the Company, but in the end without much success. The Company maintained their rights, and haled offenders before them. In 1616 an amusing account is given of the behaviour of a John Walgrave before the court. He said he had "the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of London to practise, and was an antienter surgeon than anie of them." He defied the Court, and made many untimely and irreverent speeches.

About 1684 the surgeons in the Company began to seek for separation. The barbers protested against the undue influence exercised by the surgeons, and the matter was referred to the law. The feud continued, until the final separation took place in 1745.

CONCLUSION.

I would say in conclusion that the Master and Wardens of this Company were good enough to lend some of their ancient and valuable plate to the College of Surgeons on the occasion of our centenary. It was a graceful act on their part, which was much appreciated by the College, and perhaps this incident may have suggested to your Master the compliment he has with so much good spirit and good taste bestowed on me to night. Old associations, like old books, old friends, and old wines are oftentimes of the best, and it was a happy thought of your Master to revive them.

Master, Wardens, and Members of this ancient Company, I tender to you once again my very cordial thanks and grateful appreciation.

Dr. W. J. COLLINS proposed the toast of "The Bench and Bar," which was replied to by Sir FORREST FULTON, K.C., LL.D., Recorder of London, and Sir EDWARD CLARKE, K.C.

Mr. SIDNEY YOUNG, F.S.A., gave the toast of "The Royal College of Surgeons of England and the Worshipful Company of Barbers root and branch, May they continue and flourish for ever!" coupling it with the name of Mr. THOMAS BRYANT, who replied.

The Venerable Archdeacon SINCLAIR replied for "The Visitors," proposed by Mr. ROBERT HOVENDEN; and Alderman Sir WILLIAM P. TRELOAR gave the toast peculiar to the Barbers' Company, and handed down from a remote antiquity, "The Good Wives, Merry Maids, and Buxom Widows of the Worshipful Company of Barbers," to which on this occasion he added "and of the Royal College of Surgeons of England."

Mr. D'ARCY POWER replied.

A selection of music was performed during the evening under the direction of Mr. James A. Brown.

LI HUNG CHANG AND HIS AMERICAN SURGEON.—According to the *New York Medical Journal* Dr. Robert Coltman, jun., formerly surgeon to Li Hung Chang and Professor in the Imperial University at Pekin, passed through San Francisco recently, on his way back to China from Chicago, where he had been spending a holiday. He has a claim against the Chinese Government for £7,000. Three houses belonging to him were levelled to the ground by the Boxers, and all his property, with the exception of the clothes on his back, was looted by the rioters.