"As one proof", he tells us, "of the obstinacy of the English medical department, they would pursue the old system of treatment; notwithstanding the advice of the French, and the physicians of the country, they would not listen; therefore, not taking into account the climate, many men perished who might have been saved had it not been for this prejudice." We certainly never heard, before Mr. Bracebridge informed us of the fact, that English medicine was at all behind that of France, and we are inclined still seriously to doubt it. Indeed his very next words seem to contradict his conclusions drawn against his countrymen in so *ex cathedra* a manner; for he tells us that "many of the poor men were completely worn out, and all the medical skill in the world would not have restored them [not perhaps that of his friends the French physicians]. Men from twenty to thirty years of age, when brought to the hospital, appeared to be seventy or eighty years old. This was caused by bad food, want of clothing, exposure in the trenches, and overwork." So that, after all, the British commanders and the commissariat, rather than the "prejudices of" the English doctors, were really responsible for the great mortality among our men.

But these are general charges, which can be indulged in with comparative impunity. Not so the specific accusation which this gentleman brings against a surgeon he declines to name. Here we are able to estimate the value of his strictures, and to judge from them what the others are worth. "He had a word of dispraise to say of one or two medical gentlemen. He would not mention names; but though one man was of superior rank, his deeds were far from being superior; *he actually took the butter from the poor sick man, and threw it away.*" [Cries of "Shame".] Of course it was very easy to get up a case of hardship in this manner, and to excite the "shame" of a sentimental audience; but in all probability the surgeon was quite right in interdicting this butter, and the person who supplied it quite wrong. At all events, we do not feel inclined to allow Mr. Bracebridge to demur to a medical man's opinions of the necessary diet for his patients; neither can we go with him in saying that the excuses for forbidding this article of food were "most frivolous". For instance, it seems to us quite a natural remark, that "if they had butter, they would be having cakes next; from that probably they would have nuts, and afterwards proceed to gin." Such an opinion may have produced a "sensation", as the papers report, in the polite audience gathered together to hear Mr. Bracebridge discourse; but it is the common one entertained in all well-conducted hospitals. The stern janitor, at the hall door of all our public hospitals, remorselessly strips all the visitors of the little food presents which they bring to their friends, for obvious reasons; and we certainly see no reason even why Eastern philanthropists should be allowed to violate a necessary rule of this kind, any more than Biddy Malony, who is caught conveying a quatern of gin to the bedside of her friend. In both cases, no doubt, the intention was equally good, and the result equally mischievous. The *Times* of course praises without stint this speech of Mr. Bracebridge's, as that gentleman judiciously speaks of the *Times* Fund, which, we admit, did a vast deal of good; but so powerful an organ might have avoided mention of the "barbarity on the part of the English doctors" for doing that which they would have done even in the case of Mr. Walter himself, had he required their services. Whatever that consum-

mate physician, Mr. Bracebridge, might think about the virtues of butter, we can answer for it that it is not invariably conducive to the cure of the sick soldier.

HOW TO IMPROVE OUR ANNIVERSARY MEETINGS.

By C. RADCLIFFE HALL, M.D.

VARIOUS are the links which bind us together as an Association. Some will influence the few whose minds are impressed by abstract ideas—such are the propriety of our union, its objects and possible performances. Others will attract the larger number, who are actuated by the prospect of direct advantages—such are the circulation of a weekly periodical at a small annual expense, and the chance of an occasional volume of Transactions. And others again touch each of us as a gregarious animal, and offer up for our entertainment once a year a large social meeting "for the feast of reason and the flow of soul."

At this especial juncture, when we wish our old chain to hold well together, and to gain as many new links as possible, it is proper to look it over, notice where it has become rusty, and polish it up so that for the future we may trust its cohesion whenever a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether, is wanted at our hands.

The particular link to which I desire to direct attention as needing to be strengthened and polished, is the mode in which our Anniversary Meetings are conducted. Their present attraction to the many is simply that of a social meeting, *malgré* the bore of the business transacted. To this social gratification, I would endeavour to add the lessening of the boring part, and the addition of more of scientific proceedings. "We do not meet together to learn science; we have enough of that at home; let us leave such matters during our holiday at all events—it is short enough!" observes some one. I suspect that Mr. Someone does himself bare justice in this notion. It is not science which he dislikes; but prosiness, medical preaching, and verbose commonplace. It is the listening with head and ears wearied out by two days infliction of debate, in which he thinks every one by turns exceedingly ill-used, upon business of which he previously knew little, and now knows scarcely more; upon ethics, which, as every associate is understood to be a gentleman, scarcely concern him; upon medical reform, which mainly interests those who desire to be something which they are not, without the trouble of working for it. No wonder if, after two full days discussion of such matters—to say nothing of the seasoning of occasional somewhat hot personalities—the tired associate has no ears to give to the papers arranged to be read in the last three-quarters of an hour of the last day!

It is true, there are usually two Addresses formally prepared, to one of which the place of honour is assigned on each day. Is not that enough? No, it is not enough! because by means of a little method and organisation much more might be accomplished, and with not more (some will consider with far less) tax upon wearied attention than at present.

In the first place, let business be greatly curtailed. We waste an immensity of the time upon it. Let all pecuniary accounts, whether favourable or otherwise, be so *clearly* stated in the Journal previously, that every associate will come ready informed of all that he at present has to ask questions about. Let all subjects that are to be brought forward be previously stated in the Journal. Let no speaker, who has not a report connected with the Association to produce, be allowed to exceed ten, or at the most fifteen minutes, in one speech. And let the detail of any business-matter brought forward, which may demand immediate investigation, be delegated to a committee without previous discussion of it *pro and con*.

In the second place, let the scientific part have fair

play—which it never yet has had—before we assume that it will prove a failure in point of interest. Let an adequate proportion of the time be assigned to it. Let strict rules be exercised over it. And of these, three would be sufficient. The President must be inexorable. The time limited. Precedence must be given to priority of application; a place lost by non-attendance at the time, going to the bottom of the list. What should be the limit of each paper? Twenty minutes or half-an-hour at the utmost. Any paper exceeding this is better in the form of analysis; and it would be something gained to ensure that a lengthy paper was susceptible of a pithy analysis.

But how is the adequate proportion of time to be obtained? It is quite certain that no one for the future will take the trouble to prepare a communication of any supposed value for the annual meeting, unless he has an assurance that he will be furnished with the opportunity of communicating it. At present, he may safely rest assured that he will scarcely have that opportunity. It is essential, therefore, to raising the standard of the scientific part of our meeting, that an adequate time be prefixed; and that when fixed, it be not encroached upon by that grand usurper, business. A list of papers or communications should be prepared, with the half-hour allotted to each (for the limit would always be reached), and posted up in a conspicuous place, so that an associate might see his bill of mental fare, and arrange his movements accordingly. But the question recurs, what part of the time could be thus appropriated? My own idea is, that if the business were properly conducted, the major part of the time might be thus employed. But if the business involves a revolution with "each revolving year", as school-boy Latin verses have it, that is out of the question. Why not then arrange to have two houses sitting at once. Let the commons vote the supplies and do the debating, whilst the quieter spirits amuse themselves in another room under the command of the ex-president of the year. A certain hour might be fixed for general voting, when such was necessary. The present arrangement for the delivery of the annual addresses might remain. Any unusual thunder would still, as at present, draw a full house, whilst variety would be, which it is not now, within reach.

I do not offer this as the best mode of arrangement. I shall be delighted to see a better proposed. But I do earnestly advocate some method by which the incitement to working men of bringing forward the result of their labours before an audience of their peers may be rendered more available. I do not believe that the scientific half of our proceedings would prove the most tedious. It is a libel upon ourselves to suppose it. I feel convinced that it might, by strict order and due arrangement, become the most interesting, the most useful, and certainly the most creditable part of our anniversary proceedings. It is not for me to dilate to other members of the Association upon the desirableness of keeping up our character in the aggregate as members of a scientific profession. I will only hint that to omit furnishing to ourselves every honourable incentive to scientific work, is to fall short of fulfilling our corporate duties to one another.

Torquay, October 1855.

ASSOCIATION INTELLIGENCE.

BRANCH MEETINGS TO BE HELD.

NAME OF BRANCH.	PLACE OF MEETING.	DATE.
METROP. COUNTIES.	37, Soho Square,	Tues., Oct.
[Special Meeting.]	London.	23, 4 P.M.

METROPOLITAN COUNTIES BRANCH: REQUISITION TO CALL A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION.

The Honorary Secretary begs to call the attention of the members of the Association to the report of the proceedings of

the Special General Meeting of this Branch held on the 9th instant; and requests that, if they concur in the object of the requisition about to be forwarded to the Executive Council, they will authorise him to append their names to it previous to the adjourned meeting on the 23rd instant.

T. OGIER WARD, *Hon. Secretary.*

Kensington, October 16th, 1855.

The requisition now lies for signature at the office of the Journal of the Association, 37 Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

BATH AND BRISTOL BRANCH: SPECIAL MEETING.

A Special Meeting of the Bath and Bristol Branch was held at the White Lion Hotel, Bristol, on Tuesday, October 9th, at 7 P.M., in accordance with a resolution passed at the last quarterly meeting, "for the revision and amendment of the laws of the Branch, and for the consideration of other Association business." Dr. BUDD, President, in the Chair. There were also present: John Barrett, Esq., Bath; J. S. Bartrum, Esq., Bath; Frederick Brittan, M.D., Clifton; George Burder, M.D., Clifton; J. B. Burroughs, Esq., Clifton; W. J. Church, Esq., Bath; R. W. Coe, Esq., Bristol; Charles Collins, Esq., Chew Magna; John Colthurst, Esq., Clifton; James Crang, Esq., Timsbury; Finlater Crang, Esq., Hallatrow; W. Davies, M.D., Bath; Conway Edwards, Esq., Bathaston; E. Evans, Esq., Bath; F. Flower, Esq., Chilcompton; R. F. George, Esq., Bath; James Godfrey, Esq., Bristol; Thomas Green, Esq., Bristol; J. L. Green, Esq., Bristol; W. B. Herapath, Esq., Bristol; G. C. Kenrick, Esq., Melksham; George King, Esq., Bath; Crosby Leonard, Esq., Bristol; John Lodge, Esq., Keynsham; Samuel Martyn, M.D., Bristol; Frederick Mason, Esq., Bath; E. S. Mayor, Esq., Bristol; J. S. Metford, Esq., Clifton; W. F. Morgan, Esq., Bristol; George Norman, Esq., Bath; J. Ormond, Esq., Bath; W. H. Paine, M.D., Stroud; Thomas Sawyer, Esq., Clifton; E. Skeate, Esq., Bath; Charles Smerdon, Esq., Clifton; John Smith Soden, Esq., Bath; John Soden, Esq., Bath; J. K. Spender, Esq., Bath; R. N. Stone, Esq., Bath; S. H. Swayne, Esq., Bristol; J. G. Swayne, M.D., Clifton; J. G. Wilson, Esq., Clifton; F. H. Woodforde, M.D., Taunton. — Conolly, Esq., was present as a visitor.

The notice convening the meeting having been read by the SECRETARY,

The PRESIDENT briefly stated the object of the meeting, and requested the Bristol Secretary to read the existing laws of the Branch, and also the laws as revised by the Council, the latter were then put separately to the meeting by the President, and, with very slight alterations, carried; the adoption of the first rule being suspended till the future title of the Association should have been agreed upon.

LAWS OF THE BRANCH.

The following are the Laws adopted at the meeting.

"I. That the Branch be called the Bath and Bristol District Branch of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association.

"II. That members of the Association desirous of joining the Branch shall be proposed and balloted for at an ordinary meeting of the Branch. A majority of votes shall decide the admission. The annual subscription to the Branch shall be 2s. 6d., due on January 1st in each year.

"III. That the management of the Branch be conducted by a President, Council, and Secretaries.

"IV. That a President-Elect be chosen at each anniversary meeting alternately from the Bath and Bristol District, whose year of office shall commence at the annual meeting next ensuing. The President, President-Elect, and Retiring President, shall be *ex officio* members of the Council.

"V. That there shall be two Secretaries elected annually, one for each District, who also shall be *ex officio* members of the Council.

"VI. That all the members of the Branch be arranged according to their localities, viz., Bath and Bristol. That the Council shall consist of twenty-four members (in addition to those who are *ex officio*), twelve to be chosen from each District by the members of that District; to be elected by ballot; one-third of whom shall retire annually, by rotation, eligible for re-election. That, for the purpose of filling up the annual vacancies, a printed list of the members of this Branch be transmitted, together with the notice of the annual meeting, to each member, who shall return the same to the Secretaries, not less than ten days before such meeting, that the result may be declared by the scrutineers. No voting paper shall be received containing more than the proper number of names.