

Notes and Comments.

THE INCREASE OF CANCER.

We are again reminded of the steady increase in the mortality from cancer by a communication to the Manchester Medical Society. Mr. Roger Williams has brought together a series of figures to prove that the increase in the deaths from all causes, and that similar conditions are observed in most civilised countries where statistical records have been kept. Mr. Williams is of opinion that the increase cannot be accounted for by "improved diagnosis or other casual error." The British Medical Association has long held a similar opinion. In 1887 and 1888 the Council of the Association drew the attention of the Registrar-General to the steady increase in the mortality from cancer, and begged that measures might be taken to obtain more detailed information regarding the conditions in which the disease proved fatal. Especially it desired "the tabulation, through a course of years, of the cancers of each part of the body separately." It was thought that such a tabulation would soon discover whether the cancers of all parts alike are increasing in frequency, or whether the increase is taking place in the cancers of certain tissues and organs; and by these means a clue might be obtained to some, at least, of the causes which determined the occurrence of the disease. Dr. William Ogle replied on behalf of Registrar-General, and his reply did not hold out any hope of more detailed statistics than have been hitherto published. We are, therefore, a little surprised that Mr. Williams has discovered from the reports of the Registrar-General that "the increase has not been confined to any particular organ; all the usual seats of the disease have participated in it, the commoner ones, however, in a less degree than the others." So far as we

are aware, there are no reliable figures or materials on which such a statement can rest. But we are glad that the attention of the profession has been once more called to the increasing mortality from this terrible disease, which not merely kills nearly twenty thousand persons in the course of a single year in England and Wales alone, but kills the vast majority of them by slow and cruel torture continued during a long series of months, sometimes of years. And we hope that representations will be once more made to the government, for further statistics as are needed can only be obtained by steady application and some outlay of money during a series of years. The inquiry must of necessity, from the character and slow progress of the disease, be tedious and long in bearing fruit. These probably are among the causes which have hitherto debarred the government from expending as much labor and money as would be unhesitatingly bestowed on an inquiry into the causes of an outbreak of diphtheria or typhoid fever in a country town or village.—*British Medical Journal*.

A NEW MEDICAL MARQUIS.

Dr. Matias Nieto Serrano, founder, proprietor and editor of the leading Spanish medical paper, *El Siglo Medico*, has had the title of Marquis of Guadalerzas conferred on him "in recognition of the numerous and eminent services rendered by him to science, to his country, and to the state." The Marquis of Guadalerzas, who is now 80 years of age, has been a member of the Royal Spanish Academy of Medicine since 1839, and has been Perpetual Secretary of that learned body for thirty-nine years. He has also been a member of the Council of Public Instruction for nearly twenty years. He is the author of numerous works on "Medical Re-