

## MEDICAL CHIT-CHAT.

Sir Dominic Corrigan, M.P. in addressing the students at St Mary's Hospital, said:—The fact that of all men the members of the medical profession were pre-eminently seekers after truth had always afforded him consolation and support. Errors of judgment or observation may occur to any man, but an honest one will confess his errors when convinced by further investigation or otherwise of their fallacy. This he may safely do, for the medical profession is not, as is often ignorantly imagined, a jealous profession, but most liberal in its sentiments, and appreciates the candid renouncement of error as highly as the enunciation of the most important truths. It will, he said, be found a rule, to which there are few exceptions, that the only trustworthy road to eminence is by diligence and hard work. Some men by a mere stroke of fortune may suddenly rise into popularity, but without the elements of hard work they will soon sink again into mediocrity.

Frequent in the temperate zone, phthisis is popularly imagined to be rare in inter-tropical countries. In Brazil, however, Dr. O. E. H. Wucherer tells us the disease is not only frequent, but increasing every day. This result is not due to European immigration. The greater condensation of the people and certain alterations in their mode of living are the most probable causes. Overcrowding in manufactories, heightened cost of necessaries of life, greater indulgence in luxuries, pernicious prevalence of drinking habits, enormous consumption of tobacco, have all their special influence in accounting for the increase of phthisis in Brazil. In 1843 in all Bahia, says Dr. Wucherer, there were but one or two cigar-shops; now they are to be seen on all sides. Now also school-boys and little slave children smoke. In the changes in the habits of life of the people Dr. Wucherer finds the principal causes of the increased frequency of phthisis in Brazil.

There is no adequate work on the remedies and nostrums in use among the English common people. It is a mistake to suppose that their *Pharmacopœia non scripta* has not still its believers. In Gloucestershire, to this day, fits are thought to be cured by "a few drops of blood got by pricking a live mole with a pin. The drops to be taken in a wineglassful of water just as the convulsion is coming on." The "paties" of the mole, sewn up in a bag, and worn round the neck, are a certain cure for epilepsy. The snail has also a prominent place in this pharmacopœia. Sewn up alive in a bag, and worn round the neck nine days, it is then taken out and thrown into the fire, where it shakes like the ague, and the patient is never troubled with the complaint again. In Carache the snail is not less efficacious. You prick the mollusc, and allow the exuded froth to drop into the affected organ.

Tyler Smith began his career as a teacher in the private school of the late Mr. Dermott. The lecture-room was a back kitchen of a house in Bedford square; the access was by the area steps. But there was a good class, and a teacher whom no hospital in London could surpass. For deficiency of material he made up by ambition, by a powerful intellect and by determined industry. His manner was ungainly, his utterance not good, he was not a fluent speaker. In spite of these disadvantages, he resolutely declined to write out his lectures; he trusted to spontaneous expression, and by dint of dogged perseverance he became an impressive and effective lecturer and speaker. He was always cool, self-possessed, quick to catch the effect produced by what he was saying. His mind was not sympathetic. He rarely excited enthusiasm in his hearers. But he rarely failed to instruct, to convince, and to lead. No one could hear him without

feeling that he was listening to a powerful intellect whose working was not merely suggestive, but fruitful in its originality, definite and practical in its conclusions.

## ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS, Kingston, in affiliation with Queen's University.

TWENTIETH SESSION, 1873-74.

The School of Medicine at Kingston being incorporated with independent powers and privileges under the designation of "The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, Kingston," will commence its Twentieth Session in the College Building, Princess street, on the first Wednesday in October, 1873.

## TEACHING STAFF.

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FIFE FOWLER, M.D., L.R.C.S., Edin., **REGISTRAR**, Professor of Materia Medica.

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MICHAEL SULLIVAN, M.D., Professor of Surgery and Surgical Anatomy.

OCTAVIUS YATES, M.D., Professor of the Institutes of Medicine and Sanitary Science.

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THOMAS R. DUPUIS, M.D., Professor of Botany.

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