

magistrates abusing their power in committing persons alleged to be dangerous lunatics, and recommend that the practice should be checked, as it tends to increase taxation. The general management of the asylums, according to the inspectors, is satisfactory.

ASPIRATING PUNCTURE IN DROPSY OF THE KNEE.

Consecutive on a communication presented to the Société de Chirurgie de Paris by Dr. Dieulafoy, a report was read on the above subject by Dr. Després, and ended in a general discussion carried on by MM. Verneuil, Demarquay, Dolbeau, Panas, Marjolin, &c. The conclusions of the report were generally approved of. They are not much in favour of the new proceeding, and may be summed up as follows:—In traumatic hydarthrosis, the ancient methods are as good as this new one; in rheumatic hydarthrosis, aspirating puncture is of no use; in blennorrhagic arthritis, the use of blisters should be preferred; in chronic hydarthrosis, having resisted the employment of classical means, aspirating puncture may be employed with advantage; in articular effusions of blood, punctures would be dangerous. In acute hydarthrosis, Dr. Verneuil said he preferred immobilisation of the limb. Dr. Dubreuilh's case of death through aspirating puncture of the knee was referred to, and generally it was considered that the usual means of treatment were better than the puncture system, whilst they were free from danger.

MEDICAL NEWS.

The city of Salisbury exhibits perhaps the best instance of the truth of Mr. Diasoli's adage: "Sanitas sanitatum, omnia sanitas." Twenty years ago its average death-rate was over 26 per 1000. With a perfect system of drainage and water-supply and proper sanitary supervision, the mortality for the present quarter was only 2.7 per 1000, or about 10 per 1000 per annum.

The following may be regarded as representing tolerably accurately the number of students who have entered as the first-year's men at the metropolitan medical schools this year:—St. Bartholomew's, 105; Guy's 90; University College, 83; St. Thomas's, 55; King's College, 40; Middlesex, 38; St. George's, 37; the London, 32; St. Mary's, 21; Charing-cross 16; and Westminster, 10.—[Lancet]

North Shields has lost an able and energetic practitioner in Mr. Elliot, who met his untimely death by neglecting a slight erysipelatous attack, for which he was recommended to seek rest in the country. Mr. Elliot, in zeal as assistant sanitary inspector of the Tyne Ports, could not resist postponing his departure till he had examined an infected vessel recently arrived. His attack was, in consequence, exacerbated, and after a few days' illness, in which he received every attention from his professional friends, he died in his thirty-first year.

The General Committee of the Queen's Hospital, Birmingham, in February last requested the Charity Organisation and Mendicity Society to make an inquiry into the circumstances of patients attending the hospital. This has been done. Of 88 in-patients, 67 were found legitimate objects of charity. Of 356 out-patients, 260 were found legitimate. The sub-committee to which the subject was referred have shown an intelligent appreciation of the complicated circumstances that determine the suitability of cases, but we would desiderate still more attention to the history of the ill-health of families. The sub-committee recommend, as remedial measures against imposition—(1) the abolition of governors' tickets; and (2) the establishment of a system of examination into the circumstances of patients. The

General Committee have adopted the suggestions, and propose to co-operate with other medical charities in the town in carrying them out.

DWELLINGS OF THE LONDON POOR.

The accuracy of a statement which appears in a recent report of the medical officer of St. Giles's, to the effect that to his knowledge not a single underground room in the district is now illegally occupied, is called in question by a writer in the Daily Telegraph, who describes from personal observation the appalling condition of a domestic group inhabiting a cellar in a street in the far-famed Mile-end colony. He concludes by availing that "Today, as yesterday, are to be seen in Dudley-street, Seven Dials, thirty deep black cellars, reached through a gap in the pavement, and by means of a steep ladder, and in each, at a greater depth in the earth than the sewers and the nests of the sewer rats, families of human beings—fathers, mothers, and little children—live, and eat and drink, and make themselves at home." Sanitary reformers have need of patience. But one element of hopefulness in cases as depressing even as the above is the fact of the gradual awakening of vestries and corporations to the pecuniary disadvantage of allowing such moral and physical plague-spots to remain in their midst, as nurseries of crime and foci of disease—a brace of the hangriest rate-devouring monsters that afflict modern civilisation.

PROSTITUTION IN JAPAN.

Japan has many "soiled doves"; and, among the social reforms of last year, it has freed them from the obligation of their contracts, to which in many cases, according to the last consular report, they "had never been willing parties." The uncaging, however, has been effected without due regard to consequences, and their escape from the brothel-keepers and subsequent flight through the settlements has converted them into "carrier-pigeons" of a very dangerous breed, distributing disease right and left among natives and foreigners. Thanks to Staff-Surgeon Hill, R.N., in charge of the Lock Hospital at Kanagawa, whose post would have declined into a sinecure from the hasty action of the authorities, street prostitution has been suppressed, and the majority of the women gradually disbanded and sent to their homes either in the neighbourhood of Yokohama or at a distance from it. Under the new system each woman pays a license fee of three dollars a month to the local Government; but Dr. Hill views with regret the action of the authorities in compelling the women to pay their own Lock Hospital expenses. The Consul at Kanagawa is in hopes that a portion at least of the revenue thus derived, which is likely to amount to some 30,000 or 40,000 dollars per annum, may be applied to the relief of the unfortunate class.

MACAULAY ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF SURGICAL SCIENCE.

Macaulay made a crushing reply to "Mr. Orator Hunt" in support of Mr. Warburton's Anatomy Bill in the House of Commons, Feb. 27th, 1832. Hunt's contention was that the Bill would benefit the rich at the expense of the poor. Macaulay showed that it was in the interest of the poor that surgical education should be as easily and thoroughly acquired as possible. "Does," he asked, "the hon. gentleman know from what cruel sufferings the improvement of surgical science has rescued our species? I will tell him one story, the first that comes into my head. He may have heard of Leopold, Duke of Austria, the same who imprisoned Richard Cœur de Lion. Leopold's horse fell under him, and crushed his leg. The surgeon said that the limb must be amputated; but none of them knew how to amputate it. Leopold in his agony laid a hatchet on his thigh, and ordered his servant to strike with a mallet. The leg was cut off, and the Duke died of the gush of blood. Such was the end of that powerful Prince. Why, there is not now a bricklayer who falls from a ladder in England, who cannot obtain surgical assistance infinitely superior to that which the Sovereign of Austria could command in the twelfth century. I think this a Bill which tends to the good of the people, and which tends especially to the good of the poor."

PROSPECTUS.

THE CANADIAN

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The Undersigned being about to enter on the publication of a new Medical Journal in Canada, earnestly solicits the co-operation and support of the profession in his undertaking.

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If the interest of a correspondence can be maintained and its freshness preserved by a weekly publication, it must be yet more valuable to have weekly notices instead of monthly ones of the advances which are continually being made in the medical art. Obviously the sooner a medical practitioner hears of an improvement the sooner he can put it in practice, and the sooner will his patients reap the benefit. In this manner, the value of a weekly over a monthly or semi-annual medical journal may sometimes prove inestimable. Medical papers and clinical lectures, in abstract form or in extenso, will regularly appear and constitute a considerable portion of the new journal. In this way it is intended to furnish the cream of medical literature in all departments, so that a subscriber may depend upon its pages as including almost every notice of practical value contained in other journals.

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