

MANITOBA, NORTHWEST AND BRITISH COLUMBIA LANCET.

WINNIPEG GENERAL HOSPITAL.

We have received the annual report for 1887 of the above institution. The gentlemen who take such an active interest in the charity are to be congratulated on the very successful result of their labors and are deserving of the thanks of the community for their generous devotion, especially the secretary-treasurer, on whom devolves a very large proportion of the troublesome duties in connection with the working of the hospital. We would gladly stay our pen here; but, unfortunately, the report contains a paragraph of such vital interest to medical men that it is impossible for a journal devoted to the profession to pass it by without comment. We are not advocating the cause of any particular individual. No doubt the gentleman who finds himself aggrieved in this case will adopt measures to right himself in the eyes of the profession as well as those of the public, and in doing so he will have the practical sympathy of the profession at large. The paragraph alluded to announces the removal of one of the medical staff. We are informed that this action of the managing committee was in consequence of the medical officer not replying to a letter or letters addressed to him by the board, his explanation being that his not doing so was because of the terms in which these communications were couched. No doubt the committee would have been entirely justified in holding an enquiry and calling on the official for a *viva voce* statement concerning any act of his in connection with the institution of which they had the management. But without further action or enquiry on their part, they, with indecent haste, took the extremest step which they were in a position to do, and publicly removed a member of the medical staff, publishing it through the columns of the daily papers to the world, and by this act inflicting on him the greatest injury that it was in their power to do. We have no hesitation in saying that such a course on the part of the committee was entirely and

altogether unjustifiable, and if such acts are tamely submitted to by the profession it would place over them an autocratic, irresponsible tribunal, whose motives and actions might be in accord with justice and right or which might be influenced by the very contrary feelings. It is to be remembered that the governing board of a hospital is elected from the general body of the subscribers, and that men become subscribers from very mixed motives, a proportion from pure charitable and philanthropic feeling, a larger proportion for other reasons and other incentives. If this autocratic power were vested in the governing body, how easy would it be for persons hostile to a member of the medical staff to gain such positions for the mere purpose of working out his ruin. And when it is remembered that the medical staff is the pivot on which the institution works, that these self-sacrificing men willingly devote their time and their labor to aiding the good work; that they act as the members of no other profession or calling act; that without hope of fee or reward they give freely of all the Almighty has endowed them for the benefit of their fellow-mortals. When we remember this, surely it is not too much to expect that their faults of omission or commission should be generously considered, and that their inestimable public services should not be employed as a means to work out their ruin. True, an hospital appointment is an honorable position, reflecting credit on the holder; but what professional man with any self-respect would accept office in an institution presided over by a star chamber committee with power to crush him to the ground, ruin his professional reputation, and hold him up to the scorn and derision of the world. In the case we allude to, namely, not answering the committee's letter—and it would appear their consequent assumption unproven—was far too flimsy a pretext for this act of arbitrary power which might be damning to the prospects of a professional man and blasting to his reputation, and this deliberately done without the endorsement of others interested in the charity, who in a case so fraught with injury in this particular case