

Medical Society has been recently reorganized, and the following officers have been elected:—Dr. Beemer, President; Dr. Waugh, Vice-President; Dr. Payne, Secretary - Treasurer. Since the reorganization the attendance has been very good, and some very interesting and instructive papers read and discussed.

APPOINTMENTS.—Dr. Robert L. McDonnell has been appointed physician to the Montreal General Hospital vice Dr. Osler; Drs. Blackader and F. W. Campbell, assistant physicians; Dr. Jas. Bell, assistant surgeon; Dr. W. Gardner, gynecologist, and Dr. Major, laryngologist. Dr. M. McD. Seymour has been appointed surgeon and Dr. F. S. Keele assistant surgeon, of the Winnipeg Battalion of Infantry.

W. R. Warner & Co., of Philadelphia, have received the first premium at the World's Exposition, New Orleans, for great uniformity and solubility for their sugar-coated pills. This is the ninth world's fair prize which attests to their excellence.

The epidemic which has prevailed so extensively in and around Plymouth, Pennsylvania, and which was not at first fully understood, is now said by competent observers to be typhoid fever.

Books and Pamphlets.

THE CURABILITY AND TREATMENT OF PULMONARY PHTHISIS, by S. Jaccoud, Paris. New York: D. Appleton & Co. Toronto: Williamson & Co.

The title of this book is certainly very attractive. The practitioner or student who reads of the curability of intermittent fever by quinine, certain skin affections by arsenic, gout by colchicum, syphilis by mercurials, or hooping-cough by resorcine, may be led to expect that he will find in Jaccoud's treatise on pulmonary phthisis a therapeutic pearl of incalculable value in the control of a malady which has hitherto resisted all the weapons of the pharmaceutical armoury. He will therefore read the book with very sanguine expectations, but when he has reached the end of it he may wonder how it has been that the cures related have fallen very far short of his fond anticipations. We are told that "exceptions prove the rule," but this does not signify that they constitute the rule. That Jaccoud's treatment

of pulmonary phthisis has been, in his hands, *exceptionally* successful, it would be very indecorous to deny; yet when the reader summarizes results, he will most probably find that of the entire category of the cases of this disease, the percentage of cures, even including the shadowy class designated "relative,"—that is, temporary—is mournfully small. The author distinguishes three "varieties of phthisis:—the hereditary, the innate and the acquired form." "Of these," he tells us, "the hereditary form, from the mere fact of its being hereditary, offers the least prospect of recovery." It probably consists with the experience of the majority of practitioners, that this form represents a very large percentage of the whole number, and we fear it has very seldom been the good fortune of any physician to secure the cure of an hereditary case; and if so, the field for the achievement of success must be but limited—far too limited, indeed, to warrant the use of the term "*curability*," unless in a mournfully restricted signification. The term "*innate*," in contraposition with "*hereditary*," seems to us rather inappropriate. Innate literally is equivalent to inborn, ingenerate, inherent, not adventitious. Are not all hereditary diseases such? But it is right to allow the author to speak for himself, which he does in the following words: "Innate phthisis, which must not be confused, as I have already said, with the hereditary form, is observed in the descendants of those who, though not tubercular, are weakened by scrofula, cachectic diabetes, alcoholism, or simply by bad hygienic conditions; besides these causes the innate form may also be due to consanguineous marriages." Now when we shall have added this category of cases to that of the hereditary form, we fear the margin left to curability will be so narrow and shadowy as almost to escape gratifying observance. The author very frankly tells us that we are not to look for great success in this form. "Thus," he writes, "in the innate form there is a possibility, a *chance*, which removes from it the character of absolute incurability, which we were *bound to admit* in hereditary phthisis, when this diathesis was once realised." (The italics are ours.)

Now, as to two, at least, of Jaccoud's factors of innate phthisis,—"*alcoholism*" and "*consanguineous marriages*"—we are very much inclined to doubt their specific efficiency, when they are not allied to hereditary predisposition. Alcoholism,