

TRINITY MEDICAL COLLEGE.

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This department of the journal is devoted entirely to matters of interest to graduates and under-graduates of Trinity Medical College.

All contributions intended for this department must be addressed to the Editors, Trinity Medical College.

The names of the contributors must be appended to their communications, not necessarily for publication, etc.

Editorial.

SUBSCRIBERS wishing to receive the summer numbers of the REVIEW will kindly leave their summer addresses with the janitor at the College.

THE Medical Editors of the REVIEW cannot be tempted from their retirement during the months of March and April. They apologize to their subscribers for the meagreness of their columns in this April number, and only suggest to them the dread word "Examinations" as their excuse, to find it at once accepted. Not a medical student in the city, or any other city, but will feel at once a responsive systolic throb of his myocardium at the suggestion of that word, and excuse us at once for the lack of personals and items of School and College news. What a grim phantasmagoria the word "Exams." suggests! The prowling proctors, the very tread of whose shoes is enough to disturb the train of thought and shock out of continuity the delicate adjustment of the nervous Primary man's memory, and dim the brightness of the scintillations of the anxious Final man's inner consciousness; the squeak of flying pens; the intervals of awkward pause when one's memory congeals, his ideas are "off the tap," and he is in all those "throes of literary composition" so graphically described by the creator of that distinguished character, the late Mr. Noddy Boffin. By reflection upon such painful themes as these the Editors are confined to their grisly *sanctum*, and shall emerge only by the end of the month to public view.

Contributions.

RECENT ADVANCES IN SURGERY AND MEDICINE.—(Concluded.)

II.

DEALING with improvements in surgery, the credit is given by the author of the article almost wholly to the introduction of chloroform at the middle of the century. This anæsthetic, of course, was followed by many others—ether, ethylene bichloride, nitrous oxide, down to the last addition in the hydrochlorate of

cocaine. Improvement in manipulative and operative skill, and in the knowledge of general anatomy, of course, can not be said to have taken place in regard to operations which are common to both the pre-anæsthetic period and the present. But in the departments of conservative and plastic surgery, the treatment of deformities, the partial removal or extirpation of diseased organs, the introduction of anæsthetics has been an incalculable boon to suffering humanity. The system of surgery in vogue immediately before Sir James Simpson's introduction of chloroform is best illustrated in the work published by Robert Liston in 1846. He was, in the words of Mr. Erichsen, "by universal consent the boldest surgeon and most skilful operator of his time, and did more to advance surgery than any other in his generation." But such operations as excision of a joint, or invasion of the peritoneal cavity, he would not have ventured on. The removal of portions of the brain substance, of the pylorus, parts of the intestine, of the kidney and spleen, the uterus and its appendages, and of other parts till recently thought to be forbidden to the knife, would have startled even so bold an operator as Liston, and are to be ascribed entirely to the anæsthetic, which, by stilling the agonies of the patient, saves him from the shock which used to kill in operations less serious, and leaves the surgeon free to perform undisturbed his work of "merciless kindness."

Ranking next only in importance to the introduction of anæsthetics is the theory of antiseptics, with which the name of Dr. Lister must remain to all time honorably associated. Though his theory and practice have been much criticized and modified, the fruitful germ had its origin with him, and as the reviewer says, "though others may have been working as energetically and making discoveries, he deserves the highest and most enduring credit for his share."

In this connection, the work of the late Sampson Gamgee on the "Treatment of Fractures and Wounds" is noticed. The methods of Mr. Gamgee were similar in principle to Liston's, and the result of the labors of these and other giants of the profession is that "the months and weeks which used to pass while recovery took place a generation ago, have been succeeded by the weeks and days of our time, while complete recovery is far more frequent."

The address given by Dr. Erichsen in 1886, at the Brighton meeting of the British Medical Association, is largely quoted from, and the pessimistic views expressed by him as to the surgery of the future strongly combatted. This address created some sensation at the time of its delivery, as Dr. Erichsen advanced the theory that "from our present standpoint the final limits of the field of operative surgery may now be easily reached. . . . that the final limits of surgery have been reached in the direction of all that is manipulative and mechanical, there can, I venture to think, be little doubt."

Whether the famous surgeon is right or not may well be questioned. His opinion may originate in the not unnatural feeling, so common to all generations and to all successful men in any walk in life, that "we are the people, and wisdom shall die with us." Certain it is, however, that some point must be reached