

hol is contra-indicated. The *Medical Times*, commenting on the Guy's Hospital Reports of 1866, says: "Two of the most important papers, are by Dr. Rees and Dr. Sutton, who have recorded cases of rheumatic fever, complicated and simple, *treated without active medicines*. We say 'treated' because we hold that rest, a regulated diet, temperature, &c., are no mean aids to recovery in acute diseases."

While on fevers I may quote Dr. Wilks' remarks in *Lancet*, 1865: "At the present time there are advocates for a universal method in favor of alcohol in all cases of fever. In my intercourse with medical men, I judge that very many are scarcely alive to the fact that typhus fever is very rarely fatal in young persons, and therefore that they are apt to attribute recovery to their medicine. Young persons always do well if let alone; (this opinion is also put forward by Dr. Beale in a recent paper) of this fact I could quote a larger number of cases in proof; and on the contrary the few instances which I have seen end fatally have been those *in which a large amount of stimulants have been given* from the commencement of the disease, and, what is perhaps even more to the point, the withdrawal of stimulus in some cases where it was adopted as the method of treatment has been attended with the most decided advantage." The late Dr. Bentley Todd is responsible, more than any other, in recent times for the stimulating doctrine, and Dr. A. W. Barclay, in his work "Medical Errors," points out the fact that the mortality rate in Dr. Todd's own practice in rheumatic fever was always very large: that of 18 cases reported 15 were complicated with heart disease, while in common continued fever eleven deaths occurred among 24 of Dr. Todd's cases. Gastric fever, or rather, the gastric form of typhoid fever in which the local parts affected are the mucous follicles and glands of the stomach, is another of those peculiar phases of low continued or paludal fever, in which alcoholic stimulants are not well borne, and prove prejudicial and not beneficial. And it will be within the recollection of many how rapidly, under this stimulating plan of treatment, the Prince Consort sank, furnishing an illustration of a patient, who it is possible may have been "stimulated (as Dr. Ainstie remarks) off the face of the earth."

The fact that medical opinion has been rapidly undergoing a profound change on the subject of alcoholic medication, in the mother country, is patent to any one who watches closely the opinions put forth in medical reviews, hospital reports, &c., and such comments as the following, by a leading journal like the *British Medical Journal*, so long ago as June, 1868, is sufficient to shew in what direction medical opinion has been drifting for the past few years in England.

In reporting a lecture by Dr. Gardner, of Glasgow, on the limits of alcoholic stimulation in acute diseases, it says: "The author condemned the practice, and also the theoretical views leading to the practice of the late Dr. Todd, and continues: "It is nearly as possible a demonstrated fact, that much of what is spent in wine and spirits for the sick in hospitals, and, therefore, probably in private practice, is unnecessarily, if not injuriously, spent."

(To be concluded in our next.)

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE TO THE FORTIETH SESSION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF McGILL COLLEGE.

DELIVERED 1ST. OCTOBER 1872, BY THE REV. WILLIAM WRIGHT, M. D., Professor of Materia Medica.

(Reported for the *Canada Medical Record*.)

GENTLEMEN,—I thank you for your warm greeting, and in acknowledging it, let me assure you that the joy of meeting is mutual. Your Professors are as happy as you are at the introduction now taking place on this the first day of the Session. And in return for your applause which we accept as your welcome, I have great pleasure, in their name, in extending to you a most cordial welcome. This day begins a future which we trust will enrich you with an abundant harvest of professional usefulness, and when a little while has rolled by we hope to place in your hands the sickle by which its golden fruit may be gathered into your garner; or to change the figure, we trust that before a long while we shall find you round our necks with other esteemed jewels in the long race of graduates who are our sons in medicine. May the morning you first crossed these halls of learning be ever a red letter one in your life's calendar; may enthusiasm so swell at the remembrance of the time spent here that you will be eager to exclaim: "We hail from McGill." And may others read the great fact in your superiority, so that they too will be constrained to confess that from McGill, and McGill only, could you hail. This day, again, will ever appeal to our hearts because it marks a new era in our position. We now inaugurate the stately building wherein we are met. It has been built by the Governors of the University out of the funds at their disposal, at a cost of \$27,000. They have placed it exclusively as a free gift in the hands of the Medical Faculty. Long will the memory of their liberality be green. Whenever we look round, we read in every part of the substantial structure their good will towards us, and the munificent scale by which our wants should be met. "*Si videres monumentum, circumspice.*" As part of the College buildings, it forms a handsome wing being where medicine should always be, conspicuous in the company of the learned. No more healthy, no more picturesque site could have been chosen.