

Barrett, Thorburn, Graham, Oldright, McFarlane, George Wright, Reeve, Langstaff, and Zimmerman.

Mr. Orr, Vice-Chairman, proposed the "College of Physicians and Surgeons," which was responded to by Dr. James Ross.

On behalf of the graduates Drs. Riddell and Ray returned thanks.

Mr. Boulster sang the "Vicar of Bray," and, as an *encore*, "My Name is Dr. Quack." Dr. Nelles, of Victoria University, replied on behalf of the Educational Institutions. The usual toasts of the press, ladies, &c., followed, and the party broke up shortly after twelve, having spent a very enjoyable evening. We think such annual gatherings are beneficial to all concerned, and hope to see them continued for many years without a break, keeping up the bond of union of a common *alma mater* between past and present pupils of medical schools.

The *Canada Medical Record* comes to us in what may be regarded as a new dress. We are glad to see it follow our example and cut its leaves. We intend to follow its example in some other respects. We never take up an uncut journal without wishing the publisher . . . was near us, and we made up our minds long since that the readers of the CANADIAN JOURNAL OF MEDICAL SCIENCE should not have that stumbling-block in their path. Both of our Montreal *confreres* now cut their pages. Always welcome before, they are doubly so now.

INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CONGRESS, GENEVA, 1877.—The International Medical Congress to be held at Geneva in 1877, under the auspices of the Swiss Federal Council and of the authorities of the Canton and of the city of Geneva, will be formally opened on Sunday, the ninth day of September, and remain in session one week. The committee charged with the organization of the Congress is officered as follows: President, Prof. C. Vugt; Vice-President, Dr. O. Lombard; Secretary-General, Dr. Prevost; Adjunct Secretaries, Drs. D'Espine and Reverdin. The proceedings of the Congress will be exclusively scientific. The official language will be the French. All communications relating to the Congress should be addressed to the Secretary-General, Dr. Prevost, at Geneva.

## Communications.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN JOURNAL OF MEDICAL SCIENCE.

### THE CAUSES OF SUPPURATION.

BY F. LE M. GRASETT, M.B.,  
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During the discussion, following a paper, read by me, on antiseptic surgery, before the Dominion Medical Association, in August last, many of the speakers, then, showed by the remarks that fell from them, a want of familiarity with the causes which lead to suppuration, viewed from an antiseptic standpoint.

Thus, one gentleman stated as his experience of the use of carbolic acid, that in a case of empyema, in which he had diligently syringed out the cavity of the pleura with carbolic acid lotion, suppuration was not in any measure checked, but rather the reverse, which statement speaks more highly for the correctness of his observation than for the profoundness of his knowledge of the action of the common antiseptic agents. Another distinguished member of the Association could not accept the theory of germs causing putrefaction and suppuration, as in many cases matter is formed without any contact with the atmosphere, and he would shelve the difficulty of the cause of putrefaction by calling it "an order of nature," whatever that term may be held to express.

To remove such erroneous ideas, and others of a similar nature, I will give shortly the views of Professor Lister, the originator and able advocate of the antiseptic system on this subject. He puts the causes of suppuration under two classes, one of which is divided into two sub-classes, thus: (1) Excited action of nerves—(a) inflammatory; (2) Chemical—(a) putrefactive, and (b) antiseptic.

In the first class, suppuration is due to ordinary inflammation, an example of which is seen in the case of a deep-seated abscess, the inflammation is due to excited action of the nerves—the nerves are præternaturally irritated—and the cause of their being so irritated is, in the great majority of cases, due to tension, the result of blood or serum being allowed to collect and remain in a cavity or wound. Thus, take the case of a Syme's amputation at the