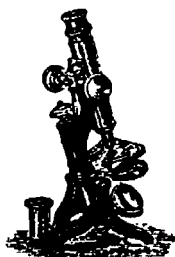


Medical Matters.

SIR ANDREW CLARK.



MANY Nurses will share the sorrow which the whole profession of Medicine feels at the sudden and dangerous illness with which its titular leader has been attacked. As President of the Royal College of Physicians, Sir Andrew Clark has for nearly six years filled the recognized headship of his profession with increasing honour to himself and increasing benefit to the Corporation over which he has presided so wisely and so well. Struck down in the midst of his daily duties, laid aside from work in which his energetic nature delighted, by an affection, the import of which all medical men realise with deepest regret, there is, at any rate, good grounds for hope that, to a large extent, health and bodily strength may be restored to the popular physician. He is, we are glad to learn, by inquiries made as we go to press, slowly, but steadily, recovering from the immediate danger of the paralytic seizure, and everyone will earnestly hope that the improvement thus commenced may increase and continue.

THE MEDICAL SCHOOLS.

THE statistics of the entries at the Medical Schools of the metropolis and the provinces are now published, and show two striking facts in greater prominence than before, although, for some years past, they have attracted increasing interest and attention. The total number of medical students commencing their pupilage shows a diminution instead of the progressive increase, which, until recently, occurred year after year. Considering the complaints which are made, on all sides, that the profession is over-crowded, and also the enhanced cost of a medical education, due to the curriculum of study having now been extended to five years instead of four, as hitherto has been the rule, this decrease in the number of students is not to be wondered at, and may be, perhaps, cause for legitimate congratulation. The other fact to which we refer is the rapid growth of the Provincial, at the expense of the Metropolitan, Schools. The cause for this is evident. In London, unless a student can afford the necessary time for the examination at the London University, he has no means of obtaining a degree. In Oxford, Cambridge, and Newcastle he can pursue his medical studies in the ordinary way and obtain a degree

without excessive cost. In fact, the London student is placed thus at a serious disadvantage as compared with his Provincial contemporary, and some reform is urgently necessary if the Metropolitan Schools do not desire to be completely out-distanced. Great efforts have been made for some years past to obtain a Teaching University for London, and last year it seemed almost within reach, but has again receded into the dim and distant future. The rivalry between the various Schools is so great that it may be seriously doubted whether they would ever unite with practical effect, and until they do so, the London University, strong and united, holds the field, although it confessedly does not meet the needs of the occasion. An interesting feature of the present returns is that the Guy's School heads the list for the first time for many years; in fact, since the memorable Nursing dispute some fourteen years ago. It is generally recognised that the greatest credit for the revival is due to the energetic management of the present Dean and Medical Superintendent, Dr. PERRY, under whose fostering care the School bids fair to rival once more its great traditions in the days of ASTLEY COOPER, ADDISON, and BRIGHT.

ISOLATION HOSPITALS.

It is evident that London has, during the past few months, been passing through an epidemic of Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, and other infectious diseases of almost unexampled severity. The resources of the Metropolitan Asylums Board have been tried to the utmost, and have conspicuously proved unequal to the demands made upon them. Cases have, unhappily, been frequent in which patients have been kept travelling for hours from Hospital to Hospital seeking without success for admission into fever wards, all the while spreading the infection broadcast. For the same reason, the inability to isolate poor people attacked by scarlet fever in overcrowded tenements, has caused an immense diffusion of the epidemic. London is so vast, that it takes a great many deaths to make any impression on the public mind; but there can be no doubt that the present system, or rather want of system, is most seriously dangerous to the health of the whole community. It would seem advisable that every Poor Law Infirmary should be provided with properly equipped isolation wards, so that, in the event of any overpressure on the beds of the Metropolitan Asylums, the Infirmary accommodation could immediately be utilized for the reception of the infection in its own parish, and for the prevention of the extension of disease elsewhere.

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