

Annotations.

THE NEWTON OF PHYSIOLOGY.

Sir William Church, President of the Royal College of Physicians, presided on Saturday over a large gathering of fellows and members of the College, when Dr. David Ferrier, Professor of Neuro-Pathology at King's College, delivered the Harveian Oration. Dr. Ferrier referred, in the course of his oration, to the sympathetic interest in the work of the medical profession shown by the King, and to His Majesty's efforts on behalf of the metropolitan hospitals, which had resulted in the foundation of so liberal an endowment fund. The illustrious Harvey, who had truly been described as the Newton of physiology, had also in King Charles I. a Sovereign keenly interested in scientific progress, and who often attended his demonstrations in person. The special significance of Harvey's work was, said the lecturer, the admonition it conveyed to search out the secrets of Nature by way of experiment. As Newton's discovery of the law of gravitation revolutionised the study of the universe, so Harvey's discovery revolutionised the study of the microcosm of man.

A HOSPITAL OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION.

We are glad to note the formation of a new Association of hospital officials, under the name of the Hospital Officers' Association. The Society held its inaugural dinner at the Florence Hotel last week, when Mr. Lewis Glenton Kerr, the popular Secretary of the Great Northern Central Hospital, presided in the unavoidable and much-regretted absence of Mr. Adrian Hope, Secretary of the Children's Hospital, Great Ormond Street, and a most enjoyable evening was spent. The Chairman briefly explained the objects of the Association, the principal of which were:—To promote social intercourse between the various branches of the hospital services, to disseminate practical information and progressive ideas concerning hospital work, and to arouse a keener interest in the advancement and prosperity of the medical charities of the country. It would be a happy idea, and certainly help to forward the objects of the Association, if an after-dinner speech were invited from a hospital Matron. We could name several, genial and progressive, who are well calculated to promote social intercourse, and disseminate practical information and progressive ideas. We present the suggestion to the new Association.

Medical Matters.

THE PREVENTION OF LEPROSY. IN SOUTH AFRICA.—A WORD ABOUT SANDALS



Dr. Alfred Eddowes, writing in the *Medical Times*, says:—In a letter to the *Times* (September 2nd, 1902), Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson urges the Cape Government to institute a careful supervision of the fish industries as he still adheres to his now well-known theory that the chief cause of leprosy is the consumption of fish decomposed owing to faulty methods of salting or preserving. He predicts an increase of the disease in the mining and rural districts unless this be done. Space will not permit anything like a full discussion of the merits of the above theory. One may, however, ask whether the disappearance of leprosy from this country could not be as fairly attributed to the wearing of boots and stockings, and greater general cleanliness with advancing civilisation, as to any change in the amount eaten or manner of preserving fish. While Mr. Hutchinson gives the warning about stinking fish, I should like to take this opportunity of giving a warning, and a very serious one, in another direction. I refer to the modern and dangerous fashion of allowing children to run about even in the dirty streets of London in sandals instead of stockings and properly-fitting boots or shoes. It is simply appalling to reflect how the more tender portions of the feet are exposed to injury and inoculation with such germs as those which produce tuberculosis, syphilis, tetanus, &c. Even in the literature of leprosy it has been suggested that the common use of sandals by natives in leper districts has almost certainly formed a means of contagion, and possibly explains the appearance of the disease in the first instance in many individuals upon the lower extremities. By all means let the Cape look to its fish, but why should we expose our children to unnecessary risk of inoculation through the feet, as if sufficient mischief were not unavoidably wrought by wounds on the hands and elsewhere? This morning (September 9th) I was consulted by a little patient for a sub-ungual abscess of a toe. She was wearing sandals without stockings, and the bed or sock of the sandals, being of wool, was ready to catch any discharge, render it more virulent by acting as a

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