

and 343 to measles. Small-pox was also fatally prevalent in Madras, Vienna, Buda-Pesth, and Alexandria. Measles caused 539 deaths in Bombay, and 208 in Madras; and the fatality of diphtheria was excessive in Berlin, Vienna, Rome, and New York. Diarrhoeal diseases caused 2,078 deaths in Berlin, 1,169 in St. Petersburg, 1,459 in New York, and 1,043 in Paris.

## ASSOCIATION INTELLIGENCE.

### NORTH WALES BRANCH.

THE thirtieth annual meeting will be held at the Bulkeley Arms Hotel, Beaumaris, on Tuesday, August 31st.

The "Clio" boats will be in waiting, at 11.30 A.M., on the Bangor side of the Garth Ferry, to take members to view the North Wales training-ship.

On arriving at Beaumaris, members will be driven to Baron Hill, the seat of Sir Richard William Bulkeley, Bart, who has kindly especially opened the grounds to the Association.

On the return to Beaumaris, the ruins of the castle will be visited.

The meeting will commence at 1.15 P.M. A debate upon Dyspepsia will be opened in the President's address. It is requested that the titles of other papers may be communicated to the Honorary Secretary.

Dinner at 3.30 P.M. Tickets, 10s. 6d. each, inclusive of wine.

The return steamer leaves Beaumaris at 5.45 P.M., to meet the 7 P.M. up train.

J. LLOYD ROBERTS, *Honorary Secretary.*

Denbigh, August 10th, 1880.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### CREMATION OR BURIAL?

SIR,—After hearing a paper on Cremation, last Thursday, in the Section of Public Health, at the Cambridge meeting, many of the members present signed the following address to the Home Secretary:

"We, the undersigned members of the British Medical Association assembled at Cambridge, disapprove the present custom of burying the dead; and desire to substitute some mode which shall rapidly resolve the body into its component elements by a process which cannot offend the living, and may render the remains absolutely innocuous. Until some better mode is devised, we desire to promote that usually known as cremation. As this process can now be carried out without anything approaching to nuisance, and as it is not illegal, we trust the Government will not oppose the practice when convinced that proper regulations are observed, and that ampler guarantees of death having occurred from natural causes are obtained than are now required for burial."

I have been informed that many more members would have signed this address if they had heard of it or seen it; and it is probable that members who were not at Cambridge, or others not members of the Association, might wish to sign it before it is presented. I shall therefore be obliged if you will allow me to make known through your columns that I shall be glad to receive, by note or post-card, the name of any gentleman who may desire to append his signature to the memorial.—I have the honour to be, yours, etc.,

T. SPENCER WELLS.

3, Upper Grosvenor Street, W., August 17th, 1880.

### CHIAN TURPENTINE IN CANCER.

SIR,—In reply to Mr. Brown's extraordinary letter, published in the JOURNAL of August 7th, on Chian turpentine, I beg leave to state that it appears, from a careful perusal of the letter, that Mr. Brown has never used the remedy in cancer. I find, also, that only one of Mr. Brown's assumptions is supported by fact—namely, that a large number of specimens sold by chemists as Chian turpentine are fictitious—a statement with which I entirely agree; and it is probable that the "sickness and horrible loathing of the drug" of which he has heard may have arisen from the use of such impure articles. I may state, for Mr. Brown's information, that it is within my knowledge that both men and women have taken the genuine Chian turpentine for months without experiencing the unpleasant symptoms from its use which he describes: and I have the testimony of a number of patients that pain is relieved by the medicine. I regret that Mr. Brown should have thought it necessary to make use of the statement "only in Mr. Clay's hands has it been at all successful". If Mr. Brown read contemporary medical literature, he will not only find that pain is relieved by the use of the drug, but he will learn that it is not a fact that "all others have lost faith in its effects", and that it is not correct to say that "most of the patients have been disgusted with the drug and refused its administration". I am

able to confirm my original statement, that "true cancer of the uterus" does disappear under the influence of the true Chian turpentine, and I am supported in this view by competent independent observers. Moreover it is certain that, in the cases referred to, the disease, after an interval of twelve months' supervision, has not returned. It is not by any means proved that the Chian turpentine exerts its influence on cancer by reason of the oil it contains. I do not ask Mr. Brown's favour "for Chian turpentine and its reputed effects"; nor do I seek to wear the laurel crown which he mentions. My object is to benefit suffering humanity, to observe facts, and to record them for the benefit of the profession. I hope to be enabled to pursue this course still, although as a consequence I may subject myself to the criticism of Mr. Brown.—I am, sir, yours obediently,

JOHN CLAY.

### THE HISTORY OF OVARIOTOMY.

SIR,—I desire to express my approval of Dr. Keith's manly letter, rescuing, as it does, from an unmerited oblivion, the name of a great surgeon, to whom we owe much, and upon whom misfortunes fell to an extent larger, surely, than was merited.

The value of Mr. Baker Brown's work, and the resuscitation of its principles by Dr. Keith, have been steadily forcing themselves upon me for the last two years, since which time I have entirely discarded the clamp.

The last case in which I used it was my fifty-ninth operation (August 8th, 1878), and the patient died. Reviewing my results with the clamp, already published, they seemed to me so bad as to be entirely unjustifiable, and I determined never to use it again.

I have, since that time, up to this morning, operated seventy-three times with the ligature, and only two of my patients have died. One of these died suddenly during her recovery, the cause of death being an accident to her mitral valve; and the other died, as I believe, from the effects of thymol used in the Listerian method. It is hardly, therefore, to be considered surprising if I begin to think, as Dr. Keith evidently does, that it would have been better if we had never heard of the clamp.

The question as to whether the cautery or the ligature forms the better of the two intraperitoneal methods of dealing with the pedicle, yet remains to be settled. So far, I do not see any advantage for either plan over the other.

Dr. Keith asks, very naturally, what would antiseptics (Listerism) be without drainage? I cannot answer him, for I do not think the question worth further discussion. I never have drained one of my cases of ovariotomy, and I do not think I ever shall; and I have abandoned Listerism, as a source of more danger than advantage; and yet I am getting now success as great as Dr. Keith's.—I am, etc.,

Birmingham, August 7th, 1880.

LAWSON TAIT.

SIR,—Now that you are upon the subject of ovariotomy, and disposed to do justice all round, there is one little point in the literary history of the operation about which you may as well be exact.

It was Peaslee who first made the calculation as to the amount of life gained by what had been done by ovariotomists in America. The writer of the article in the *British and Foreign Medical Review*, on three books published simultaneously on the subject in 1872, applied this mode of calculation to the operations done by Wells. Lord Selborne merely quoted this review in an unreported speech made at the Samaritan Hospital. Why, then, the incessant parading of his name in reference to the matter? The review is silenced, but the Lord Chancellor still counts for something.—Your obedient servant,

Paris, August 9th, 1880.

WILLIAM WOODHAM WEBB.

SIR,—In justice to Dr. Clay, it is my duty to say that, in stating that Dr. Thomas Keith was present at one of his operations for ovarian disease, before he had operated himself, he has confounded me with my brother. I assisted at an operation by Dr. Clay in Edinburgh, when he removed a large ovarian tumour from the sister of one of our most distinguished surgeons, long since dead. I am not quite sure of the date; but it must have been about the year 1846.—I am, your obedient servant,

Edinburgh, August 7th, 1880.

GEORGE S. KEITH.

SIR,—I ask you to insert the following replies to the statements of Dr. Keith, Auctor, and Mr. T. S. Wells.

Dr. Keith will correct his former communication through your columns himself.

With regard to Mr. T. S. Wells, I have nothing to do with his memory nor yet with his diary, as it is quite evident (if the latter existed) he would not need to use the words "I think" and "I may", etc. I repeat, I never invited Mr. Wells until he asked me. And