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Dr. TINKER (Hyde) consented to move the resolution as an amendment; and this was seconded by Mr. GEORGE JACKSON, who was in favour of it because he objected to the principle that a practitioner should have as many votes as qualifications; the true principle, he thought, was one man one vote.

The amendment on being put to the vote was lost and the resolution carried.

At the afternoon session, in the absence of the Chairman, Dr. HIME took the chair, and Mr. R. B. ANDERSON read a paper on A Medical Policy: Corporate and Medical Reform.

THE MIDWIFE QUESTION.

Dr. COX, in introducing his resolution,

That this Conference protests against any legislation that will have the effect of giving a legal status to midwives as a class, said that he meant to object to the principle of registering midwives as midwifery practitioners. He had been told it was now too late, but none the less he brought that resolution forward. The opinion of the profession had been repeatedly shown to be opposed to this legislation. It was bad for the public, and he thought the profession should honestly express their opinion on the subject, and if, in spite of that, the public chose to insist on this legislation, the harm that was likely to follow would be at the door of the public. He did not think it necessary to give reasons why the registration of midwives would be so harmful to the public, as he thought the delegates there must know as well as he did what they were.

Dr. DOLAN seconded the resolution, and a discussion ensued in which Drs. WHITTAKER, WOODCOCK, RITCHIE, NASH, LANGLEY BROWNE, REES, and RATCLIFF-GAYLARD opposed the resolution.

Mr. VICTOR HORSLEY also spoke against the sweeping character of Dr. Cox's resolution, and said that if the Conference adopted it, it would practically put the other resolutions on the subject that followed out of order.

Dr. MAJOR GREENWOOD asked Dr. Cox if, by his resolution, he objected to any legal status being given—as, for instance, that of an obstetrical nurse. He asked this question, as Dr. Ritchie had said that any control given by legislation implied a legal status, and it could hardly be said that no control was admissible.

Mr. ANDERSON, Dr. HELME, Dr. BROADBENT, and Dr. BRASSEY BRIERLEY agreed with the resolution.

Dr. COX, in answer, said he did not mean by his resolution that all control was inadmissible, but that there should be no legislation to recognise them as practitioners of midwifery. Because they existed it was not necessary for the profession to support them, any more than it was necessary for them to try to exterminate them. The only extermination that could be brought about would be by educating the public to see the wisdom of not employing them.

The resolution was put by the CHAIRMAN, and was carried, 19 voting for the resolution and 16 against.

The CHAIRMAN then ruled that the resolutions dealing with midwife legislation put down by Dr. Owen Morris (Birkenhead) and Dr. Ratcliff-Gaylard were now out of order and could not be considered.

MEDICAL EDUCATION.

Dr. STEWART (Manchester) then moved:

That while appreciating the action of the General Medical Council in raising the standard of preliminary education, this Conference is of opinion that a still higher standard would further raise the status of the profession, collectively and individually, and promote the public welfare.

This was seconded by Dr. WILKINSON, and after some discussion was carried.

Dr. CRAWSHAW then moved:

That it is desirable that every medical student should subsequently to the date of his passing the examination in anatomy, physiology, and materia medica, be compelled to spend, as part of his curriculum, twelve months with a general practitioner.

The mover said that the recent action of the General Medical Council in disapproving of unqualified assistants had become a means of depriving students of a certain kind of practical knowledge. It might be that that knowledge was not of a scientific character, but it was of a necessary kind and such as he could not get at the hospital. It should be limited to twelve months, and the pupil should be protected from having too much to do.

Dr. GEORGE JACKSON seconded the resolution, but he said he only approved of it *sub modo*.

Dr. REES objected to it.

Dr. WOODCOCK said it was really a return to the old unqualified assistants.

After some discussion the resolution was put to the vote and lost by a considerable majority.

There were present at the Conference 33 delegates. At different times during the day about a dozen practitioners attended as spectators of the proceedings.

SIR WILLIAM MAC CORMAC AND MR. TREVES AT THE REFORM CLUB.

THE Reform Club gave a dinner on April 28th to Sir William Mac Cormac and Mr. Frederick Treves, both of whom are members of the club, in recognition of their conspicuous services to the wounded in South Africa. The EARL OF ROSEBERRY presided, and amongst the company, which exceeded 100 in number, were Lord Russell of Killowen, Lord Burghclere, Sir H. Fowler, M.P., Mr. H. Gladstone, M.P., Sir N. Lockyer, Dr. Farquharson, M.P., Dr. Stephen Mackenzie, Mr. Malcolm Morris, Dr. Mapother, Sir C. Nixon, and several other medical members of the Club.

After giving "The Queen," LORD ROSEBERRY proposed the toast of the evening, "Sir William Mac Cormac and Mr. Treves." He said that in a war in which there had been such diversity of opinion, there had been unanimity only on one point—and enthusiastic unanimity—that the medical and hospital service had been practically perfect. The Government had been able to obtain the men and give the supplies which these men had used. The Government sent for the two most eminent men they could think of, and the Government gave them a free hand. All honour to the Government and all honour to the men. Without a second thought they left their great connections in this country and went out for six months to take a share in the hospital and surgical work for the army. Their names needed no mention from him, Sir William Mac Cormac's name was a household word. He had been for four successive years chosen President of the College of Surgeons, an honour he believed almost unprecedented, if not unique. In the Franco-Prussian war, in the bloody and thunderous scene at Sedan, Sir William Mac Cormac was continuously carrying on surgical operations. He had brought his experience and skill to bear upon our war and soldiers in their turn. Mr. Treves, too, had left a great practice, and applied his unrivalled surgical skill in the same way. His name was a household word among them, and he need not expatiate upon it. But he had seen it stated in a paper that he was about to enter Parliament. It was stated that he had been consulted about it, and that he had said he would rather enter the grave. He trusted that if this was authentic he would take the opportunity to explain it. Lord Rosebery concluded by saying that they were not merely honouring two eminent men and two fellow-members of the Reform Club; they were not merely honouring a consummate act of patriotism on their part, but they were paying honour to the non-combatant members of the army. They were glad to see that one, Major Babbie, received the other day the Victoria Cross. He was not sure that the non-combatant members of the army had received their fair share of the Victoria Cross. Their heroism was not less than the heroism of those engaged in forlorn hopes; and they had shown that they were as incapable of fear as much as the soldiers whom they tend.

Sir W. MACCORMAC, in reply, after returning thanks for the honour done him, said he went out to South Africa with some reluctance, he might now admit, but deemed it right to go from a sense of duty. Our soldiers had fought under conditions which might well dissuade the bravest, in a country of appalling difficulties, advancing in the open against an unseen enemy, who poured a pitiless hail of bullets into them like rain, and who themselves were practically unseen and safe from our assault. To illustrate this he referred to the

battle of Colenso. On that day we had some 1,140 casualties. We all believed, rightly or wrongly, that Boer statements on the subject of their losses were not very trustworthy. He had had an opportunity of learning, he thought on good authority, what the Boer losses were on that occasion. He heard from the other side, from the German officers who were there watching the methods of Boer warfare, and the statement was subsequently most positively confirmed by the Free State Secretary, Mr. Fischer, with whom he had several conversations, that the total loss of the Boers on that day was 5 killed and 25 wounded; and this, he thought, might well be true, for our people never caught sight of a Boer the whole day. Commandant Albrecht, the Boer artillery captain, calculated that 12 Boers were killed and 40 wounded for every 1,000 fired of our shells. The comparative want of gravity in the wounds inflicted by the Mauser bullet was very remarkable. Men recovered after being shot through every part of the body, and 96 per cent. of those treated in the base hospitals recovered from their injuries. Another very remarkable fact was the fewness of the amputations performed. During the first four months of the war only twenty amputations were performed at the No. 1 General Hospital at Wynberg. Our Lee-Metford projectile inflicted a very similar kind of wound, but the Boer wounded were not so well treated as ours were. The Boers did not possess, as our troops did, a first field dressing, whose speedy application doubtless saved much life and suffering. During his stay in South Africa he had an opportunity of examining the medical arrangements both throughout the Cape Colony and Natal, and he did not himself believe it would be possible—and he was able to contrast what he had seen with his experience of former wars—to have anything more complete or better arranged. On the part of the Government authorities there was nothing that was suggested, nothing that money could purchase, that was not forthcoming, when and where it was wanted. The supply of medical requirements was lavish, and, what was above all praiseworthy, these enormous supplies did not remain heaped up at Capetown, Durban, or Port Elizabeth, but were distributed to the various hospitals over many hundreds of miles of country. In spite of all the difficulties of provisioning such a large army so many miles from their base, he found that, wherever he might be, the soldier received a daily supply of fresh meat and bread, and that, therefore, except perhaps during the actual hours of fighting, the hardships experienced by our men in the matter of commissariat might be counted as not worth mentioning. Officers and men received the same supplies, and his own actual experience proved on many occasions the excellence of these commodities. After referring to the good effects of the war in uniting the Colonies to the Mother Country, he said of the medical arrangements that they were better than they had ever been before. Of the medical officers it might be said that they had shown themselves to be without fear, as most certainly they were without reproach.

Mr. TREVES endorsed what Sir William Mac Cormac had said about the treatment of the sick in South Africa. It was perfectly true that there had never been a campaign in which the horrors of war had been so mitigated and where the treatment of wounded had been so complete. His lot was cast with the field hospital which followed the Ladysmith relief column from beginning to end. He was present at every engagement, from the battle of Colenso to the relief of Ladysmith, and their hospital, small as it was, received the wounded during the whole of the Natal campaign, with the exception of the slight cases. After one night's battle, Spion Kop, 715 wounded were put into the hospital camp. One afternoon they had orders to clear the camp of wounded before sunrise next day, and men were borne on 150 stretchers by hand to Frere, twenty-six miles, a thing which he believed had never been done in a campaign before. The medical men serving in the war owed much to General Buller, who took a remarkable interest in the surgical necessities of the campaign, and showed great anxiety about the accommodation of the sick and wounded. During the time he himself was at the seat of war he saw much of the common soldier. He was struck not only with the patriotism and admirable pluck of these men, but with their almost feminine kindness to each other and their extreme unselfishness. So far as the sick were concerned there were two plagues in South Africa—

the plague of flies and the plague of women. The flies could be got rid of by means of horsehair wisps, gauze, and other appliances, and the flies disappeared at night. But the women mentioned in Sir Alfred Milner's proclamation were absolutely a terror. They came out in the guise of amateur nurses, having exhausted every other form of excitement; they took up the time of the officers, and, in fact, had the camp to themselves. Considering the kind of war in which we were engaged and the number of lives lost, the picture of a number of elaborately-dressed ladies masquerading in summer toilets and arranging picnics about Capetown was a blot on the campaign.

The LORD CHIEF JUSTICE proposed the health of "The Chairman," and LORD ROSEBURY in responding said Mr. Treves forgot to rise to the fly he threw over him about entering Parliament. He was inclined to think it was from a merciful consciousness that if he did choose to enter Parliament he would cut out most of the leaders in rhetoric that adorned those two chambers.

THE EFFECT OF SMALL DOSES OF ALCOHOL ON THE BRAIN.

THE second Lees and Raper Memorial Lecture was delivered by Mr. VICTOR HORSLEY, F.R.S., on April 27th at St. James Hall.

The chair was taken by Mr. AUGUSTINE BIRRELL, Q.C., M.P., who, after the Hon. Secretary of the Lees and Raper Memorial Fund had stated the facts concerning the inauguration of these lectures, said that they were met to hear Mr. Horsley, who was known as a fearless investigator of truth and the servant of science. He was a great authority on the brain, and what the country now wanted more than anything else in the supreme councils of the nation, on the battlefield, in literature and philosophy, was brains; and if Mr. Horsley could tell them anything as to how they were to maintain the little brain they had got and how they could increase that store his services would be in demand, not only by the temperance party, but by every political, literary, scientific, philosophic, and religious agency which existed in the country at the present time.

SELECTIVE ACTION OF ALCOHOL.

Mr. HORSLEY said that it was his duty to present to them from the scientific standpoint a plain statement of the present state of knowledge as to the effect produced on the brain by small doses of alcohol. It probably was not generally known that all drugs had a selective action on the organs and tissues of the body, that is to say, they affected by reason of their chemical affinity some organs or parts of organs and spared others, and this was particularly true of alcohol. As Professor Ehrlich had pointed out, it was merely a question of chemical affinity. They must, therefore, first familiarise themselves with the various elements of the nervous system, which investigation had shown to be the commonest point of attack. The speaker proceeded to give a rapid survey of the central nervous system, illustrating the subject by means of lantern slides. In considering the effect of small quantities of alcohol on the central nervous system it was necessary to discuss its effect on ideation, that is, the intellectual thinking apparatus, next on the voluntary action apparatus, and then on the cerebellar apparatus for the regulation of movement and equilibration. The activity of the highest psychical centres of the brain was estimated in various ways. The activity of the brain in executing the decision of a thought arising from the stimulation of a special sense centre could be estimated either by measuring the time the brain took to do some small task allotted to it, first in the natural state and secondly when under the influence of alcohol, or by estimating the amount of work done in a given time.

INCREASED REACTION TIMES.

The time occupied by the nervous system in observing and recording the simplest thing was called "the reaction time," and was so appreciable that in all minute and accurate records astronomers had to measure their reaction period, and to account for it. The lecturer then demonstrated by an experiment the method of measuring the reaction time. This plan in all forms and varieties had been very largely employed by Professor Kraepelin, whose investigations had been so thorough