

Dr. Love's well-known work upon this subject is given, with additional facts, and the measures to be taken for the prevention of acquired deafness are summarised. A short chapter on the hearing test asserts that the best is some form of speech, and advocates the "six-foot rule," *i. e.*, that a child whose hearing is below that measure for whispered speech cannot profitably remain in the ordinary classes of an elementary school.

Chapter VI is occupied by a masterly exposition of hereditary deafness from the Mendelian point of view, and, after a few words upon educational arrangements, the book proceeds to general considerations on the medical treatment of school children. It is pointed out that the parents of children with deafness and children with running ears are, as a rule, ignorant of the dangers of these conditions and of the possibilities of treatment, and that this ignorance can best be dispelled by the carrying out of effective treatment through school clinics by the school authorities. Moreover, the solution of the problem of the prevention of deafness and of ear diseases lies ultimately in better housing, better feeding, and more sunlight. Nearly all deafness is due to infectious disease or wrong marrying. Hereditary deafness treated on Mendelian principles for two or three generations would become a curiosity.

Dr. Kerr Love's book should be perused by every otologist; it contains lessons for all.

Macleod Yearsley.

"THE CONSERVATIVE MASTOID OPERATION."

To the Editor of THE JOURNAL OF LARYNGOLOGY, RHINOLOGY, AND OTOTOLOGY.

SIR,—I have read in your March number the criticism on Heath's "Conservative Mastoid Operation."

From my experience of Heath's operation I find it applicable in a big percentage of operable cases.

The more experience I have of this particular operation, the more convinced I have become of its value to otologists.

It has undoubtedly come to stay, and its advocates are perceptibly increasing in number.

Mr. Heath's one ambition is to conserve the hearing, and if he succeeds in this we must commend his attempt to improve the lamentably lethargic condition which exists at the present moment.

The surgical instruments that he has introduced for this particular operation are very ingenious, workmanlike, and exceedingly adaptable.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

18, UPPER WIMPOLE STREET, W. 1.

MILSOM REES.

March 27, 1919.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

Dr. A. J. Brady, of Sydney, Australia, writes under date December 30, 1918: "We had a congress of specialists in Melbourne last November. It was notable as being the first of its kind held in this part of the world. We had representatives from all the States of the Commonwealth with the exception of Western Australia, which, however, might be counted to have one in the person of Mr. Andrew, formerly of Perth, now practising in Melbourne. New Zealand was also represented. It was a combined congress of ophthalmic surgeons and oto-rhinolaryngologists. I was honoured by being asked to be president of the latter

section. I thought we had a most excellent congress. The men were all keen on work. We had a morning session each day at one of the three Melbourne hospitals, where practical demonstrations were given. We had afternoon and evening sessions for the reading of papers and discussions on same. The "transactions" are not yet published. They will be all right as regards the papers, but I fear the discussions will be inadequately reported. We intend holding the second congress in Sydney next year, when I trust we shall benefit by experience and make better provision for reporting discussions. Our method, of course, is to supply each member with a pad and ask him to supply a short abstract of his remarks at the end of the meeting. Now that the nightmare of war, thank God, is over, we all can take more interest in life and in our work. There will be nothing to prevent someone from the old country paying a visit to one of our conferences. It is a very pleasant voyage and an excellent rest.—Very truly yours, A. J. BRADY."

THE SECTION OF LARYNGOLOGY, ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE.

We extract the following from the editorial columns of the *Medical Press* for February 26, 1919:

"The first laryngoscope, Dr. Donelan tells us, was invented by Benjamin Guy Babington in 1829, and it is worthy of note that Manuel Garcia was domiciled in England at the time he invented his auto-laryngoscope in 1854.

"Dr. Donelan was for many years closely associated with Morell Mackenzie, the father of British laryngology. Mackenzie founded the Throat Hospital in Golden Square in 1863. For a man harassed from boyhood with almost continuous attacks of spasmodic asthma, his writings, based upon twenty years of pioneer observation, are, as Dr. Donelan observes, a remarkable achievement, for his views and conclusions have stood the test of time. Another pioneer was Lennox Browne, the founder of the Central London Throat Hospital.

"Dr. Donelan refers with just pride to the valuable work which has been done in this country by present-day laryngologists, notably in regard to tuberculosis and malignant disease of the larynx, thyrotomy, œsophageal disease, nasal lupus, submucous resection, and the operative treatment of frontal, maxillary, and sphenoidal abscess.

"I have observed that the Laryngological Section of the Royal Society of Medicine is a popular one. It is always largely attended."

THE AURIST KNIGHT.

About 1822 a brace of quack doctors succeeded in obtaining the honour of knighthood at the levee at Carlton House, which caused Lord Sidmouth, then Secretary of State for the Home Department, to have a paragraph on the subject published in the *Gazette*. This transaction occasioned the following lines:

"The wights who of late not for honour or fame
But for pelf stole the prefix of 'Sirs' to their name
Are no Knights of the Thistle, the Bath or the Garter
But Knights of the Clyster, the Pestle and Mortar.
The one puffs himself

The other's an Aurist! Pray, sir, do not stare,
You may hear of quack Aldis about Nelson Square.

The King not a sword should have used then but shears
And stripped these impostors of two pairs of ears:
Thus giving the Aurist, tho' with slight chance of pelf,
Two patients to doctor, his friend and himself."

The Spirit of the Public Journals, 1825, vol. iv, p. 240.

WYATT WINGRAVE.

SWIFT'S VERTIGO.

Dr. Wyatt Wingrave, in the February issue of the JOURNAL OF LARYNGOLOGY, RHINOLOGY, AND OTOTOLOGY, has revived in an interesting manner the question of Swift's deafness, and has communicated a number of very just observations on this subject.

As a reader of the works of Swift during a period of many years, and as a profound admirer of the genius of the "Copper-farthing" Dean, may I be permitted to offer certain remarks which, although they do not pretend to a complete solution of the problem of that bodily affliction which lasted throughout the greater part of the life of Swift, may yet be judged of some value towards the attainment of that solution.

Swift himself seldom makes any serious reference to this subject. The reader of his collected works in the editions of Sheridan or Hawkesworth, if he wishes to obtain all the references, will have to search through volume after volume of the journals, letters and miscellaneous trifles of which the twenty odd volumes are so largely made up.

There is to be found throughout frequent complaint (appearing for the most part in a strain of ironical and bitter humour) of the disease that persecuted him, sometimes in the form of doggerel verse, sometimes in epigram, or in the form of casual entries in the "Journal to Stella," and until that journal comes to a close with that last fateful evening upon which he heard the news of her death, and so composed himself under the stress of many and sorrowful memories, to write down the brief narrative of her life.

Johnson's account of the disease from which Swift suffered is simple and direct: "The disease of Swift was giddiness with deafness, which attacked him from time to time, began very early, pursued him through life, and at last sent him to the grave deprived of reason." That these seizures were of a sudden and violent nature is shown by other remarks of Johnson in his life of Swift. "As his years increased, his fits of giddiness and deafness grew more frequent. . . ."

As he was writing a poem called the "Legion Club" (1736) he was seized with a fit so painful and so long continued that he never after thought it proper to attempt any work of thought or labour.

Buried amid the rambling and shapeless collection of ephemeral verse and topical epigram which fill several volumes of the collected works, the following lines, written by the "Rev. Doctor Swift," occur:

"Deaf, giddy, helpless, left alone,
To all my friends a burden grown;
No more I hear my Church's bell
Than if it rang out for my knell.
At thunder now no more I start
Than at the rumbling of a cart;
Nay, what's incredible, alack!
I hardly hear a woman's clack."

The Dean makes game of his infirmity. It is, however, impossible to doubt that under the persecution of this disease, so relentless, so long continued, and often so violent in its effects, Swift suffered much.

His friends appear to have had but little notion of the nature and severity of the complaint. His very true and warm-hearted friend, Dr. Arbuthnot, writes to him (1723): "I have as good a right to invade your solitude as Lord B—, Gay, or Pope, and you see I make use of it. I know you wish us all at the Devil for robbing a moment from your vapours and vertigo."

John Hawkesworth, in his life of Swift—the materials for which, by the way, were largely supplied or communicated by Johnson—refers in many passages to the fits (sometimes of a severe and sudden nature) of giddiness and deafness by which Swift was attacked.

The truth is that while so much in the life of this cynical and arrogant genius is still unexplained, and must therefore remain matter for conjecture, the affliction under which he suffered is possibly capable of being clearly and simply stated. All accounts seem to agree in showing it to have been a chronic affection of the auditory labyrinth, or of the auditory nerve, or of both, and the manifestation of the disease as shown in those frequently recurring fits of vertigo and deafness was simply the manifestation of the familiar Menière symptom-complex. I do not say that fits of this nature comprised the whole of the symptoms of which Swift complained. Sometimes he suffered from headaches, most probably of aural origin, and sometimes he complained of his head and ears being stuffed.

As Dr. Wyngrave has very rightly observed, there is nothing in any record of his affliction that indicates a chronic septic disease of the ears. The records wherever they occur point to the sudden, spasmodic and violent nature of the complaint, and seem to fix its seat within the nerve mechanism of the internal ear, or within the brain itself.

Did there exist beside this dreadful bodily affliction some affliction of the mind, which may have been at the root of that strange savagery of temper, and of that equally strange depravity of intellect—a depravity that induced him to devote to purposes too often trivial and debased vast powers of mind which, in its effect, clouded his life with misery, and which at the end vitiates and darkens nearly all the work of this great but lonely and sinister genius?

ARCHER RYLAND.

THE NATIONAL BUREAU FOR PROMOTING THE GENERAL WELFARE OF THE DEAF.
Medical Committee.

A meeting of the above Committee was held on Friday, March 14, 1919, at 4 p.m., at the offices of the Bureau.

Ministry of Health.—Major Yearsley explained to the meeting that the following proposition of his, "That the Bureau shall take steps to safeguard the interests of the deaf and of the prevention of deafness in the coming Ministry of Health," had been brought up before the Executive Committee meeting of the Bureau, held on Friday, March 7, and that it had been passed and referred to this Committee for further action, and to formulate steps for the carrying out of this proposition.

Dr. Saleeby gave his views on the subject, and it was decided that a letter should be sent to Dr. Addison, asking him if he would receive a deputation from the Bureau on the subject of the prevention of deafness, or, if the time was inopportune, at a later date when it would be convenient to him.

It was also decided that a letter should be drafted, pointing out the policy of the Bureau, the figures giving the destruction of ears going on at the present time, and showing how easy the prevention of such destruction was, and should be sent to the Press. In this letter it was decided that the Ministry of Health should be mentioned, that it should be shown how such a Ministry would be of the greatest benefit to the deaf, and that a constructive policy should be suggested.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS.

ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE, SECTION OF LARYNGOLOGY.

A Monthly Meeting will be held on Friday, May 2, at 4 p.m.

A Summer Congress will be held on Friday, May 2, 1919. Members of the Section are invited to contribute Papers, which may be read at the Congress. Papers will be read in the morning, demonstrations of cases, operations, specimens, instruments, will take place in the afternoon; and it is proposed to arrange a Pathological Museum of specimens relating to the subject. Those who intend to read papers or join in the discussion are requested to notify the Honorary Secretaries (see also p. 133).

ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE, SECTION OF OTOLOGY.

The next Meeting will be held on May 16 (Annual Meeting).

THE AMERICAN LARYNGOLOGICAL, RHINOLOGICAL AND OTOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

The President of this Society for the current year is Brigadier-General H. S. Birkett. It will hold its Annual Meeting on June 6 and 7, at Atlantic City.

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, SECTION OF OTO-LARYNGOLOGY.

The Annual Meeting of this Section will be held in Atlantic City between June 9 and 13.

AMERICAN LARYNGOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.

The Annual Congress will be held on June 16, 17 and 18, in Atlantic City, conjointly with the American Congress of Physicians and Surgeons.

THE FRENCH OTO-LARYNGOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

The Société Française d'Oto-Laryngologie will hold its first meeting since 1914 on May 12, 13, 14 and 15 next at the Hotel des Sociétés Savants, Rue Danton, Paris V^e.

SOCIÉTÉ BELGE D'OTO-RHINO-LARYNGOLOGIE.

It is hoped to arrange the first meeting of this Society for the month of July in Antwerp. Further particulars can be obtained from Dr. Trétórp, 46, Avenue Van Eyck, Antwerp, Belgium.

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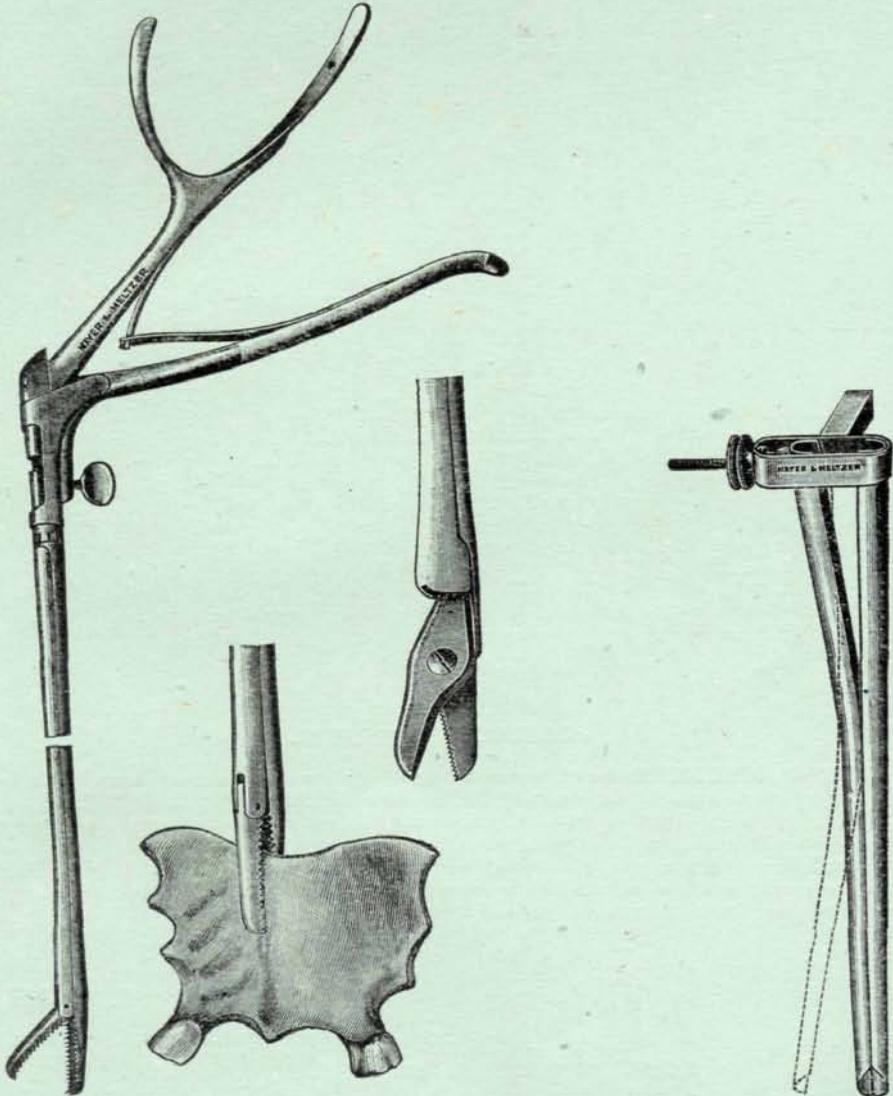
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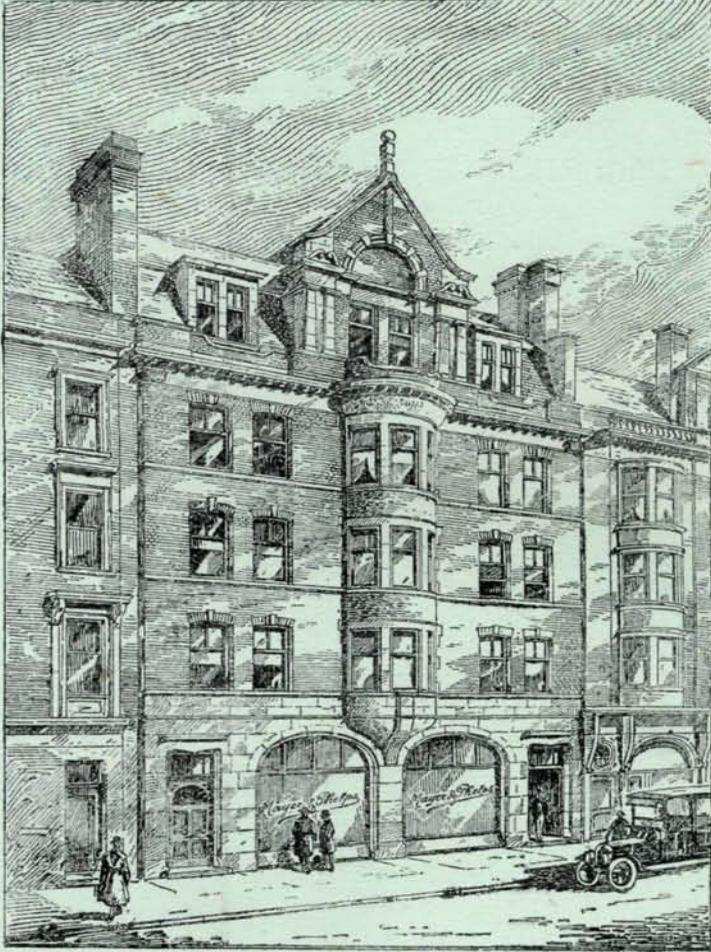
See *LANCET*, May 13th, 1916.



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