

apical isthmus of resonance. *Coinciding as these did with squint, the case was clearly one of consumption.*" (Italics ours.)

The author adds that such a case was one of a type likely to do well in a sanatorium.

Dan McKenzie.

### OBITUARY.

WILLIAM LAIDLAW PURVES, M.D.(Edin.),  
Consulting Aural Surgeon, Guy's Hospital, London.

WILLIAM LAIDLAW PURVES, who has recently passed from among us, did not mix in the otological world as much as could have been wished. This was much to be regretted, as those who knew him were convinced that his influence could only have been a powerful and good one. Among his friends he was a fearless and downright opponent of anything which he thought a deviation in the slightest degree from absolute scientific accuracy; he had no sympathy with that interested credulity which leads to the adoption of practices which are beneficial to the practitioner quite as much as to the patient, nor with such publication of opinions and results as savours less of information than of self-advertisement. His views were somewhat severe, but his own standard was a very high one, and he commanded the confidence and esteem of all with the warm regard of those by whom he was best known and understood. Had he not shrunk from publicity and ostentation his place would have been one of the most prominent and none would have better deserved to occupy it.

He was a native of Edinburgh, where he went through both his school and University career. His earlier professional years were spent in practice in Australia, but he returned to Edinburgh to graduate as Doctor of Medicine. He continued his studies at Berlin, Vienna, Paris, and particularly at Utrecht under the instruction of Prof. Donders, of that University. He then settled in London and was appointed Lecturer and Aural Surgeon to Guy's Hospital in 1874, an appointment which involved his having a Diploma of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, and he was the last to obtain this on the strength of the *ad eundem* rights of those holding diplomas from other colleges of surgeons.

In the earlier part of his career in London he was an industrious student of the current literature of otology, and his "abstracts" from German articles were of great value at a time when abstracting was in the hands of a very few. His own writings were not numerous, but of great value, and it is regrettable that there were not more of them. A paper on Rinne's test in a far-back number of *Guy's Hospital Reports* was in its time a valuable addition to otology. In Bryant's *Surgery* the section on "Diseases of the Ear" was from his pen, and when we realise the amount of information on the subject which he compressed into the limited space we can only regret that he did not allow himself the scope which a full treatise on otology would have afforded him. He was a zealous student of the refraction and diseases of the eye, and, indeed, had not circumstances led him to adopt otology as a career we believe he would have thrown himself with still greater joy into the practice of ophthalmology. He worked up elaborate tables and a slide-rule for the calculation of refraction figures at the time when the transition from fractional focal distances to metrical dioptries was taking place, and

Purves's refraction ophthalmoscope held the field as the instrument *de luce*.

The writer is indebted to him for many kindnesses, and among others for instruction as to the value of the artificial drum and the method of applying it to the best advantage, as well as other refinements of otology and otoscopy of importance in dealing with the ear as an organ of hearing, which have fallen in interest since the brilliancy of the surgery of suppurative disease of the ear has put them so much in the shade.

A man of vigorous frame, he enjoyed the *mens sana in corpore sano*, and devoted what time he could spare from his work to outdoor physical exercise. In the golfing world he was highly esteemed both as an exponent and a promoter of the game.

He had reached the age of seventy-five when he died, having enjoyed the pleasures of an active physical life and with the appearance of youthfulness more than falls to the lot of most men.

His family by his second marriage (he had no children by his first) are models of physical fitness, one of his sons having been an international football player for Scotland, and all have served their country in the present war. One of them has found his last rest near the shores of Lake Doiran.

D. G.

## NOTES AND QUERIES.

### THE JOURNAL OF LARYNGOLOGY, RHINOLOGY, AND OTOLOGY.

At an informal meeting recently gathered under the auspices of the President of the Laryngological Section of the Royal Society of Medicine the topic of the position of our Journal was brought forward, and an interesting discussion took place, which left all present more than ever animated with the desire to keep this particular flag of British Otolaryngology flying.

Many suggestions were offered, and the proceedings as a whole were full of animation and the warm desire to help.

Some doubt was expressed, among other points raised, as to whether authors writing oto-laryngological papers in journals of general medicine were allowed to send their own or "authors'" abstracts to our Journal. We have much pleasure in saying that abstracts of this kind are always welcome.

It was suggested also that the JOURNAL OF LARYNGOLOGY, RHINOLOGY, AND OTOLOGY should publish a short *précis* of each meeting of the Otological and Laryngological Sections of the Royal Society of Medicine, shortly after the meeting, *in addition* to the official reports, which cannot, of course, appear for several months after each meeting. This we hope to do in future.

Several voices were raised in favour of opening our columns to the discussion of points of practical importance, such as the details of treatment, medical or operative.

This also we welcome, and we extend an invitation to all our subscribers to make the fullest use possible of the Journal in this matter.

Dr. Brown Kelly's proposal in the interesting Presidential Address before his Section when the present Session opened, that once a year a scientific meeting of British laryngologists should be held, at which papers could be read, was alluded to and warmly supported by many present.