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BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

Historical Sketch. Objects Attained.

Twenty-five years ago Dr. W. T. Hayward, when retiring from the position of President of the South Australian branch of the British Medical Association, which he had assisted to form, delivered what was the second President's address. After a quarter of a century, held on Wednesday afternoon, at the annual meeting of the branch, when retiring again from the office, favoured the members with another fine utterance. There was a large attendance.

—Advantage of Presidential Addresses.—

Dr. Hayward said:—'A year or two ago a retiring President, in the course of his address, made the suggestion that it would be well if the delivery of a presidential address were made optional. As a matter of fact it is optional, there being no rule or bylaw rendering it incumbent that such an address should be delivered. The first five Presidents of the branch contented themselves, on vacating the chair in favour of their successors, with making a few valedictory remarks. It was reserved for the sixth— Dr. Charles Gosse— to deliver a formal address. I succeeded him in the position, and was greatly exercised in my mind as to whether I should, on retiring, adopt the practice of the early Presidents, or follow the precedent of my immediate predecessor. I felt that if I adopted the latter course the innovation would probably be converted into a custom. I came to the conclusion that the custom would be a good one, and though very diffident as to my ability to deliver an interesting address, I decided to risk a possible personal failure in the desire to establish a custom that would be of benefit to the branch. This was 25 years ago. I have had the pleasure of listening to 22 of the succeeding addresses and reading the other two. All have been interesting, and many valuable. I have never had reason to regret my decision. hold the same opinion now as I did then— that any man who attains the honourable position of President of this branch should be in a position either to deliver a message to his fellow-members on a subject which, he has more or less made his own, to seize the opportunity, owing to the publicity given by the press, to address the general public, or to collate or bring into focus the experience and work of others and place it prominently before members in a manner perhaps not possible in an ordinary paper. It is not necessary that his remarks shall be absolutely original: the information he may give may be such as to impress his hearers, and he may sow seed that, falling on good ground, may flourish exceedingly. I will give you a personal illustration of my meaning.

—Personal Illustration.—

'In my presidential address of 1886 I brought under the notice of my hearers— I think for the first time in South Australia— the then embryonic subject of bacteriology in relation to medical practice. Many years later Dr. Thomas Borthwick told me that it was this address that first directed his attention to the subject. When I consider the valuable work done by Dr. Borthwick both with regard to bacteriology and public health— work that has caused him to be regarded as one of the foremost men in Australia in this department of our profession—I feel that the time I spent over my address was not wasted.

—Association and Its Members.—

'But to-day I intend to speak to you, not on a scientific subject, but on one that I think should be of interest, for I believe you will be interested to hear of the origin of our branch of the British Medical Association, and to learn something of the men who not only founded it but gave to it a reputation second to none in Australasia. Some are with us now, but others live only as dear friends and comrades in the memories of our oldest members, as past teachers to others, and names only to the younger generation. South Australia, say in the year 1875, was a very different country to South Australia of to-day. The English mail with the medical papers arrived only once a month; there was no University or Medical School to keep medical men alert and up to date, and doctors had neither the time nor the money, for they were not a wealthy class, to take trips to Europe to brush up their knowledge, and on their return to disseminate what they had learned. The leading members of the profession were, as a rule, elderly gentlemen, able enough no doubt, but more versed in the practice of the past than of the present. New ideas were chiefly introduced by the young men imported as house surgeons to the Adelaide Hospital, which institution, by offering good salaries, was able to attract good men; and good men they were as you will agree when I mention that Drs. Corbin, Davies Thomas, Gardner, Poulton (at a later date) were included in the number. Certainly there was a 'medical society,' but not an active one.

—Renaissance of the Medical Profession.—

"About the time I have mentioned, or soon after, five exceptionally able men came to Adelaide, Charles Gosse, Edward Willis Way, J. Davies Thomas, William Gardner, J. C. Verco (four of whom were Australians), who had had brilliant careers in the medical schools of England or Scotland. I date the renaissance of the medical profession Adelaide from the advent of these men. A stimulus was given to the younger members of the profession already here, and they decided to make a forward move, and with this object determined to form a Branch of the British Medical Association. I believe that the suggestion first came from the late Dr. Cawley. It was enthusiastically taken up by Drs. Corbin, Gardner, Cleland, Baily, Way, and others. A preliminary meeting of medical men favourable to the formation of a 'medical society' was held on May 31, 1879, when it was decided to invite the attendance of the medical men in the colony, with a view to forming a South Australian branch of the British Medical Association. Dr. Corbin was appointed secretary. The meeting was held on June 19 at what was then called the South Australian Club Hotel, a hotel very different from the South Australian Hotel which now occupies the same site. Between 20 and 30 medical men from Adelaide and various parts of the colony attended. Dr. William Gosse was elected Chairman. Dr. Corbin moved the first resolution— 'That a society be formed to be called The South Australian branch of the British Medical Association.' This was seconded by Dr. Baker, who at the time resided at Willunga, whence he had ridden that night to attend the meeting. Drs. Seabrooke and McIntyre, representing the old Medical Society, opposed the motion, on the grounds that another society was not required. Drs. Cleland, Rees of Hindmarsh, and Blood, of Kapunda, supported the resolution, and I, as the only member of the British Medical Association present, was called upon to describe the aims, objects, and mode of action of the association. The resolution was carried with two dissentients. The honour of moving the second resolution also fell to my lot. Six other resolutions dealing with the objects, management, &c, of the new society were also passed. The subscription was fixed at three guineas for town members, and two guineas for country ones. An 'ethical committee' of five members was appointed, and it was decided to issue a quarterly journal of proceedings. The meeting then proceeded to elect the first council with the following result:— President Dr. William Gosse; Vice-President, Dr. T. W. Corbin; Treasurer, Dr. Hawkins; Hon. Secretary, Dr. Cleland: Ordinary Members of Council, Drs. Gardner, Clendenning and Way. There is no exact record of the men who were actually present at this meeting, but I believe I am correct in saying that only four survive, viz., Drs. Corbin, Cleland, J. C. Verco, and myself.

—History of Society.—

'With a view of tracing the history of this society, which has been fraught with such benefit to the medical profession, and indirectly to the inhabitants of the State, I have carefully gone through the minutes of the proceedings, and have extracted excerpts that may be of interest. I think it probable that after the first council meeting, which was held early in July, the members may have thought that they had undertaken more than they had bargained for, for I find that the first business was the consideration of a complaint made by a member as to the conduct of a certain lodge, and a pretty trivial complaint it was. The only other item was the discussion regarding the eligibility for membership of a well-known member, now deceased, owing to his alleged homoeopathic tendencies. The first general meeting was held at the University classrooms, Moriarty Chambers, Victoria square. Seventeen members were present and two visitors, Dr. J. A. G. Hamilton being one of the latter. Dr. Gardner exhibited a case of 'ozena,' in which he had removed a piece of necrosed bone from the nares, the upper lip, and soft portions of the nose being detached from the superior maxillae, and turned upwards. The next business was the election of Drs. Blood, Curtis, Cleland, Toll, and Verco, as the 'ethical committee,' and Drs. Baily, Corbin, and Gardner as the 'journal committee.' Dr. Corbin read the first paper entitled 'A case of ovariectomy. Spencer Wells's clips had been used, and a fecal discharge had occurred from the stump of the pedicle. Considerable discussion took place as to how this had arisen. Dr. Gardner followed with 'Notes of a case of hydatid of the ovary:' The treatment adopted had been by tapping, and the contents of the cyst had become purulent. In answer to Dr. Way, Dr. Gardner said he had taken no antiseptic precautions. Several members mentioned cases of hydatids when the cyst contents had or had not become purulent. At the next council meeting members had still to discuss the lodge question raised at their last meeting. At the second general meeting Dr. Baily read 'Notes of a case of hydatid of the spleen' treated by a series of tappings. Dr. Curtis read a paper on 'Labour with acephalous monsters' At the following council meeting it was decided that the general meetings for the future should be held in the board room of the Adelaide Hospital. At the October meeting Dr. Way brought forward 'A case of ovariectomy.' This paper is particularly interesting, owing to the remarks made by Dr. Gardner, who said that this was the seventh case of ovariectomy that had been performed at the Adelaide Hospital, and the first successful one! At the present time, with men recording series of hundreds of cases without a fatality, it seems hardly credible that a little over 30 years ago the mortality following ovariectomy should have been so terrible; but from the experience I had had as a house surgeon in England a few years before this time I know that a case of recovery there

was exceptional. At the same meeting the ethical committee brought forward 'A proposed code of ethics,' but it remained a proposal only; for the minutes laconically record, 'Most members took part in the discussion, but their remarks were not complimentary to the code.' It is not astonishing, therefore, to learn that the proposed code was withdrawn, or that subsequently the committee resigned. At the following meeting Dr. Verco read 'Notes of two cases of vesicular mole. At the annual meeting of 1880 Dr. Corbin succeeded Dr. W. Gosse as President. The Vice-Presidency was contested, Drs. Clendenning and Way being proposed, and Dr. Clendenning was elected.

—The Second Year.—

'The minutes of the proceedings of the branch during the second year of its existence are in marked contrast to those of the first year, for whereas the meetings of the past year had been occupied by the reading of many valuable papers and interesting discussions, those of the succeeding year were too frequently devoted to personal questions. I note only two papers worthy of mention— one by the President (Dr. Corbin) on the treatment of 'post partum hemorrhage,' a valuable practical one that elicited an interesting discussion; and one by Dr. Nesbitt on 'Ablation of the tarsus in cases of club foot.' I think Dr. Nesbitt was the first surgeon in Adelaide who practised this method of treatment. —Further Advance.— 'Dr. Clendenning succeeded Dr. Corbin as President at the annual meeting of 1881. Drs. Astles and Gardner were nominated for the vice-presidency, and the former was elected. There was also a ballot for the ordinary members of council, resulting in the election of Drs. Corbin, Way, and J. A. G. Hamilton. Drs. Hawkins and Cleland were re-elected as hon. treasurer and secretary, but the former, who had been in bad health for some time, died before the next monthly meeting. Dr. Corbin succeeded him as hon. treasurer, a position he continued to hold for 20 years. A notable addition to the membership of the branch was, made by the election of Drs. Davies Thomas and Charles Gosse (who for personal reasons had hitherto refrained from joining), and Dr. Stirling, who had recently returned to South Australia; and their influence was soon noticeable in its proceedings. Dr. Davies Thomas suggested the formation of a 'medical benevolent fund.' The trustees of the defunct Medical Society, by handing over their accumulated funds, provided a handsome nucleus. Two papers of more than ordinary interest were read during this year — the first by Dr. Gardner was 'A case of abdominal section for hydatid disease.' This is apparently the first case in which laparotomy had been performed for this disease. Dr. Gardner was taken to task for not having adopted the usual practice of the time, viz., successive punctures or the use of potassa fusa, in order to obtain a preliminary adhesion of the hydatid to the abdominal wall. Dr. Davies Thomas described the case as almost unique. The second paper was entitled 'Two cases of hydatid of the lung, treated by incision and drainage,' and was read by Dr. F. W. Baily, and to him must be given the credit of first introducing this method of treatment in Australia. Dr. Baily was a young general practitioner, residing in Norwood. That he held no hospital appointment; that as there were no private hospitals in those days, the operations were, by my knowledge far from palatial. I therefore consider these operations among the most notable in the annals of Australian surgery. Unfortunately, Dr. Baily died a few months later. Had he lived, doubtless he would have held a foremost place among Australian surgeons. At the annual meeting of 1882 Dr. H. E. Astles became President. There were five nominations for the vice-presidency, and Dr. Gardner was elected. From 10 nominations for members of council, Drs. Clendenning, C. Gosse, and Stirling were appointed. The proceedings of this year were characterized by the reading of several interesting papers, One requires special mention— that of Dr. Dunlop on 'A case of myxoedema,' the first recorded in the colony. The mention of this disease immediately calls to mind the memorable papers on its treatment by the administration of thyroid glands; delivered three years later by Dr. Lendon. A little incident occurred which I think is worthy of note. In a discussion following the reading of a case of a foreign body in the eye, Dr. Stirling is reported as suggesting the use of the electro magnet. This was in 1882; in 1910 the Adelaide Hospital was furnished with a powerful electro magnet; certainly a small one had been in use for a few years. Dr. Gardner took the chair in June, 1833. After a ballot, Dr. Charles Gosse was elected Vice-President and Drs. Dunlop, J. A. G. Hamilton, and Way members of council. The annual meeting was memorable as the last occasion on which the vexed question of homeopathy was discussed. Dr. Gorger had framed a resolution to the effect 'that no legally qualified practitioner meeting homeopaths in consultation can be or become a member of the branch.' An animated discussion ensued. It was pointed out, however, that whereas the branch had progressed greatly during the past three years, and its influence had extended, 'homeopathy was on the downgrade, and that probably active opposition would act as a stimulus. The majority of the members present adopting this view, Dr. Gorger withdrew his resolution.

— Hipjoint Disease.—

'The minutes of the July meeting of 1883 are particularly interesting to me. They record that read a paper on 'Hip-joint disease, with special reference to the use of Thomas's splint.' As a house surgeon in Liverpool, I had had a good deal to do with the introduction of Thomas's splints to the Royal Infirmary, by Mr. Rushton Parker, and subsequently into the

infirmary for children. Mr. Thomas had very kindly sent me out models made by his own makers, and these I exhibited. After the reading of the paper, Mr. (after wards Sir Thomas) Fitzgerald, who was present at the meeting as a visitor, was invited to speak. He did so, and had nothing favourable to say either of the splint or the treatment. He advocated subcutaneous . incision down to the joint, to lessen de formity, drilling the great trochanters(sic) in certain cases, and the administration of small doses of mercury. He objected to straight extension. Dr. Clendenning, who followed, agreed with every word Mr. Fitzgerald had said, but he in addition, advised the use of leeches. Dr. Gardner also had little to say in favour of the splint and suggested certain mechanical alterations. I remember that I felt completely pulverized . by the criticisms, but I am glad to find by the minutes, that, despite the heavy artillery brought against me, I, in my r**** stuck to my guns. Time was on my side. for since then no splint has been more generally used, and it remains to-day exactly as Thomas designed it. -Valuable Exhibits. 'At the annual meeting for 1884 Dr. Charles Gosse became President. Dr. Way having declined to stand for the vice-presidency, I was elected without opposition. Drs. Cockburn, Gardner, and Nesbitt were the new members of council. During the year papers were read by Dr. Stirling, on 'A case of supra vaginal amputation of the uterus,' the first case in the colony; by myself, on 'A case of carcinoma of the uterus,' in which Dr. Gardner removed the uterus per vaginam. This was unsuccessful, but at the next meeting Dr. Gardner recorded a successful case of the same operation. These were the pioneer cases of hysterectomy. Dr. Lendon contributed the first of a long series of valuable papers and exhibits. This year was also memorable as the first occasion on which Professor Watson had exhibited and demonstrated pathological specimens to the society, which demonstrations have been such a marked feature at our meetings, from that time to the present day. In June, 1885, Dr. Charles Gosse, on retiring, delivered the first presidential address. I had the honour to succeed him, but at the July meeting I had the painful duty of moving a vote of condolence to his widow, he having in the interval succumbed to the effects of a carriage accident. The papers stand out in marked relief during my year of office. Dr. W. Anstey Giles brought under our notice for the first time the subject of 'post-nasal' vegetations,' and demonstrated the method, for their removal. Dr. Gardner read a paper on 'nephro lithotomy.' and exhibited a patient from whom he had successfully removed the stone. These two papers and those of the previous year on uterine surgery exhibit the advance surgery was making in South Australia.

—Intercolonial Medical Conference.—

'An incident of a different kind occurred ' which, insignificant as it appeared at the time, was destined to have far-reaching results. Dr. Poulton brought before the council the question as to what steps should be taken with respect to the reception of medical men who would probably visit Adelaide on the occasion of the forthcoming Jubilee Exhibition. Drs. Gardner, Stirling, and I were appointed a committee on the subject, and at the next meeting Dr. Poulton was added as hon. secretary. The outcome of the committee was : the resolution to hold an Intercolonial Medical Congress during the year 1887. but to Dr. Poulton is to be ascribed the suggestion; and to his efforts the remarkable success of the first congress, which was held under the presidency of Dr. J. C. Verco, was mainly due. This fact is recognised, throughout Australia. Dr. J. C. Verco succeeded me in 1886, and Dr. Stirling was President in the following year. The time at my disposal will not permit of my going further into the history and doings of our branch. I trust that some day a full and complete history of the branch will be written. It will be replete with interest, The data are to be found in the elaborate minutes of the early meetings, and in the published proceedings.

— Hydatid Diseases.—

'Judging from the excerpts I have given you it must be admitted, I think, that in the early days of the branch's existence good, solid professional work was done. It is most interesting to trace the gradual and cautious development of the treatment of hydatid disease; this, you will have noticed, frequently occupied the attention of members at that time, and more so at a later date. At first the recognised treatment was simply aspiration and puncture; and, despite Dr. Baily's notable cases of successful incision and his own case of laparotomy, we find Dr. Gardner going out of his way to explain "that he did not." as the minutes might infer, 'advocate the general treatment by incision; this should only apply to cases that had become purulent; the live hydatid should be aspirated.' But in the course of a few years, thanks greatly to the labours of Dr. Davies Thomas, who combined untiring research with practical experience, the strenuous work of Dr. Gardner himself, combined with that of Drs. Verco, Stirling, and others, there arose what Dr. Stirling happily termed the Adelaide School, which eschewed all temporizing methods, and boldly challenged the surgical world of Australasia at the second Medical Congress, held in Melbourne in 1889. Those of us who were present at the memorable debate on the treatment of hydatid disease in the surgical section, under the presidency of Dr. Stirling, will remember with pride how Drs. Gardner, Davies Thomas, and J. C. Verco read magnificent papers on the subject, and combated the representatives of the rest of Australia. It was the feature of the congress. It changed— though not, of course, all at once— the treatment of the disease throughout

Australasia, and I have no hesitation in saying that this result was due in a great measure to the frequent debates that had taken place at the meetings of our branch. Is not this something of which we may well be proud? —Some of the Presidents.— 'Perhaps you may be interested to hear something of the men who were prominently associated with the origin and rise of the society from one who knew them. Our first President (Dr. William Gosse) was a typical English gentleman, refined, gentle in manner, and extremely courteous. The founders did well to elect him as their leader, for at a time when the brotherhood of man was not conspicuous among the members of the medical profession he was universally respected. If Dr. Gosse was a typical English gentleman, Dr. Clendenning was a typical Irish one; of fine presence, especially when in uniform— for he was the P.M.O. of the Military Forces— with a delightful brogue, and a cheery, friendly disposition. If he had said that he had descended from the Kings of Ireland, which I don't know that he ever did say, no one would have disbelieved him. Dr. Gardner was, I should say, the most forcible personality of the medical profession; a dexterous surgeon, bold, perhaps overbold; thoroughly up to date in all matters pertaining to, surgery; having perhaps the biggest practice every enjoyed in Adelaide, yet always finding time not only to attend the meetings of the branch, but always being ready to read a paper if required. His papers, like his speeches, were terse and gritty, at times caustic. He was a strong man, and his removal to Melbourne was a great loss to our branch. Dr. Charles Gosse had a charming personalty, and naturally was popular with all classes. He was a very neat surgeon, and had the advantage of being ambidexterous. He was the first ophthalmic surgeon to the Adelaide Hospital, relinquishing his surgency (sic) to take up the position. In the last year of his life he became practically the first specialist of which Adelaide could boast. His untimely death was deeply regretted, and the Charles Gosse Lectureship on Ophthalmology at the Adelaide University was a tribute raised to his memory. Dr. Davies Thomas will always be remembered for the valuable work he did in connection with hydatid disease. Wonderfully industrious in all matters connected with his profession he made himself proficient in the German language while he was in active practice in order that he might study German medical literature. A ready writer and fluent speaker, his papers and speeches were a feature in the work of the branch. Death overtook him at the zenith of his fame. Words fail me when I attempt to depict Dr. Edward Willis Way— the kindest, most lovable of men, the truest friend man could have— with the spirits of a boy, and full of fun; yet, when seriousness was demanded, as earliest and thoughtful as could be desired. He was a man of exquisite tact, and his judgment was sound. These qualities made him the recipient of the troubles and difficulties of his fellow-practitioners. When in doubt on any point 'See Way' was almost an axiom among his friends, and no one consulting him was sent empty away. There is no need to mention his attainments, they are known to us all. The manner in which he personally faced an incurable disease was an object lesson never to be forgotten. Death robbed us as a profession of a noble member, the State of a worthy citizen.

—Two Present Members.—

I would like to mention other interesting personalities, but I must refrain. I must however, refer to two gentlemen, still happily with us, to whom the branch owes a debt of gratitude which can never be repaid, for, but for their initiation, it probably would not have been formed for many years later than it was, nor would it have survived from its early difficulties but for their arduous attention. I refer to Dr. T. W. Corbin and Dr. Cleland. Dr. Corbin was the provisional secretary before the branch was formed, the first Vice-President, and its second President, and for 20 years treasurer. In the earlier days of its existence his contributions to the meetings were many and able, and he took an active part in the discussions, both professional and ethical. He managed the finances with skill, and throughout his long connection with the council the branch was indebted to his strong commonsense and business aptitude. Dr. Cleland was the first secretary to the branch, a position he retained for 10 years, when he was appointed Vice-President, and subsequently President. From my personal knowledge of him as secretary, I was well aware that he was an excellent one, but till I went through the records of the past I had no idea of the completeness, the thoroughness, of his work. Many of the debates that took place he recorded in a manner that would do credit to a skilled reporter; and, moreover, during the long period he was in office he hardly seems to have been absent from either council or monthly meeting. Would that we had a hall, on the walls of which we could hang the pictures of these two men, and of the worthies who have passed away, as a memorial of the work they did in the past, and as an incentive to all younger members to follow their example.

—Good Men of To-day.—

I do not wish to pose simply as *laudator temporis acti*. We have had good men in the past, and good work was done; good men we have now, and good work is being done. Year after year new men have arisen who have carried forward the work of their predecessors. One name stands out conspicuously in the records, from the first meeting 32 years ago to the present day; he read the fourth paper contributed to the branch, and every year since then members have had the advantage of listening to his valuable work. I need hardly say that I refer to Dr. J. C. Verco. I cannot in his presence say all I would like to, but all of you, from the eldest to the youngest member, will agree that he has been and still is the foremost pillar in our society.

—Has the Branch Succeeded?—

'A few words more and I have finished. In the early part of this address I mentioned that I had moved the second resolution at the meeting, when it was decided to form this branch. It reads— 'That the objects of the association are to promote the advancement of medical and surgical science, by the reading and discussion of original papers, and exhibits of specimens and cases; to form a bond of union among the members of the profession, and a medium through which their opinions can be easily ascertained and expressed; and to advance the general and social interests of the profession.' Have these objects been attained?

Unhesitatingly I answer 'Yes.'

' Medical and surgical science has been promoted by the reading and discussion of hundreds of valuable papers. Specimens have been shown that would gladly be received by any pathological museum. Cases have been exhibited that would do credit to the profession in any country in the world. Who will deny that it has been a bond of union among us? It has enabled us to know each other; to introduce the younger members to the older ones, the country practitioners to their fellows in the city; it has enabled us at times to speak with no uncertain sound on matters of importance, and it has endeavoured to do all in its power to advance the general and social interests of the profession. And I will go further, I will maintain that it has advanced the interest of the State, for it has raised the professional education of its members. By associating together the elder ones have kept in touch with the advances of the profession, while the younger men have benefited by the experience of their elders; thus the citizens have at their command the services of a body of men, taken as a whole, not to be surpassed anywhere.

My fervent hope is that this branch over which I am proud to have again presided, may long continue successfully its sphere of usefulness.'