

PARIS AS A MEDICAL CENTER.

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EDITOR OF THE PHYSICIAN AND SURGEON: *Dear Doctor.*—The average floating population of Paris is estimated at about one hundred thousand, and, during three quarters of the year, a large proportion of the strangers are students, who come from nearly every country under the sun to enjoy the opportunities here so freely offered. American physicians I think oftener go to Great Britain or Germany when they find a convenient season for additional study, but I am convinced that they might very profitably spend at least a portion of their leisure here. Having myself thus spent a very satisfactory six months, I take pleasure in recording some of my observations and impressions for the benefit of your readers.

The needs of the sick and poor of this community, of over two million persons, are met by numerous and extensive hospitals and hospices the latter of which correspond to our almshouses. Many hospitals are devoted to special classes of diseases and are richly endowed, and, since all such institutions as well as the various branches of public instruction are controlled by the government, most favorable conditions exist for clinical teaching.

All things which can serve the student in his work are made easily available to him. He has only to show his card, bearing the cherished "M. D." or to say "I am a doctor, or a student of medicine and wish to follow such or such a course," in order to obtain the benefits of hospitals, museums, clinics, laboratories and lectures. If he wish to graduate, some small fees are required, but these are not burdensome, and, without matriculating, he may study as long as he likes and have nothing to pay.

The French language offers but a slight obstacle to his progress. If he have a fair knowledge of the grammar and a tolerably extensive vocabulary, the ear soon becomes accustomed to the sound, and every lecture attended becomes a lesson in French as well as in medicine. Clinical lectures will, naturally, be

more readily followed at first, the cases presented to the eye, giving meaning to the terms which the ear is not prepared alone to recognize.

To women, as students, Paris offers peculiar attractions, and contrasts agreeably with London where some of the most desirable clinics are only open to men. Here, however, they will find everything open to them exactly as to their confreres; and, although this condition exists only on account of an accidental omission in the by-laws, and one might wonder if the situation were agreeable to all concerned; the artistically perfect French manners do not permit any dissatisfaction to appear, and I for one have allowed myself to believe that none exists.

Certainly, the eminently liberal policy of the French government; which makes education free and admits to its classes, without partiality, all who seek instruction, deserves our admiration and gratitude.

I have met quite a number of English, Russian, German and American ladies, following the courses and only wonder that there are not many more.

One great difficulty in planning a course of study here is to decide what can be left out with least disadvantage. The clinics of the faculty are, I think without exception, held in the forenoon, and to attend one is to miss several others equally important. This may not be an evil, however, as there is a limit to the rate at which one can assimilate knowledge; and the course at Paris is not arranged with the belief that the science of medicine can be mastered in a few months, or even in the five years of study required before graduation. There are also various supplementary courses and private clinics which may be attended in the afternoon, and some of these are very valuable.

By choosing wisely, one may study a single subject from various directions, as, for example: the course of M. Charcot on the diseases of the nervous system is beneficially supplemented by the course of his interne, M. Ballet, on the localization of nervous diseases in the brain and spinal cord, and also by another course on the use of the ophthalmoscope in the diagnosis of disease of the brain and the nerves. The latter course includes instruction in the use of the ophthalmoscope and examination of the field of vision and perception of colors; and the student has at his service cases in point, drawn from the large number constantly treated at the Salpêtrière. Another course given also at this hospital has for its subject mental disease in its relation to legal proceedings.

The advantage of such a combination is evident and one may with profit become thus temporarily a specialist even if his career is to be general medicine.

In diseases of children the student may follow several courses and among them he will probably find none more attractive than one to be found at the Hospice des Enfants Assistés.

This may be visited every morning at half-past eight o'clock, but the best days are Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. The medical service is conducted by M. Parrot, member of the faculty, and doubtless well known through his writings to your readers.

Several thousand patients are treated yearly in his wards, and consultations for out-patients are also held. Fortunately for the student; and perhaps not less so for the patients, who are often abandoned children, brought into the hospital in conditions from which recovery is hopeless; the dead house is never empty. The lesions of tuberculosis, pneumonia, bronchitis, rachitis, meningitis, syphilis and other diseases are demonstrated almost daily.

M. Parrot has probably made as many autopsies as any man in Paris. He accomplishes them with great celerity, assisted by the younger physicians, and has given to the world some important results of his labors in his writings on hereditary syphilis and rickets.

Students may be present at the autopsies and should by no means fail to do so.

Subjects for dissection and operation may always be obtained here.

The examinations of patients in the wards and at the consultation are very careful and complete. The diagnosis is so accurate and apparently inevitable in many cases, and the symptoms are so clearly defined and so significant when pointed out by the professor, that the student is sometimes inclined to think that he has himself diagnosed the case and to give himself credit for close observation and sound judgment.

Two cases which occurred recently in this clinic will serve to illustrate the kind of material to be found.

An infant of about ten days was brought into the wards during the visit, attacked with convulsions, rigidity so intense that the body was sustained in the horizontal position when lifted by the ankle; jaws firmly locked.

This condition continued for several days with hardly any intermission and the child died.

At the post-mortem the thymus gland was found nearly doubled in size and weight and the foramen ovale only half closed. M. Parrot accounted for the symptoms during life by the coöperation of these two conditions, the communication between the auricles permitting the blood to reach the brain without sufficient oxygenation and the pressure of the thymus upon the great veins of the neck preventing its free return from the cranium.

A second, and somewhat analogous case, was that of a child of eight or nine months in whom a tumor was developed below and in front of the angle of the jaw on the right side and occupying nearly all the space between the jaw and the clavicle.

This patient was also attacked with convulsions which occurred frequently until the pressure of the tumor was removed by operation. The two cases thus seemed to confirm each other, and the coincidence served to fix in the mind a definite idea in regard to the etiology.

It is here that M. Parrot has introduced the use of asses' milk for the nourishment of the infants. He claims for it good results, finding that it more nearly resembles human milk than does that of the cow. His conclusions should doubtless have added weight as the trial is often made upon children who, on account of specific taint, cannot be nursed by a healthy woman. The animals are kept in a clean, light and well ventilated stable closely adjoining the nursery and when the infants require feeding, they are carried to their foster mothers from whom they take the milk with avidity and evident satisfaction.

The little animals are so docile and fulfil so well the functions of wet-nurse that I do not know who shall say that they have not at last found the sphere of their usefulness and, from being the most despised of domestic creatures, may come to rank among the most useful and honored members of society.

Among the clinics on diseases of women that of Prof. Gallard is considered one of the best and is largely attended by students, but I would recommend also that of M. Chiron, which is private, but to which students are made very welcome. M. Chiron has contributed to the better understanding of this class of diseases by his clinical and other investigations, many of which are published in the journal which goes by his name.

The course of Prof. Charcot has been so satisfactorily reported in American journals that I will not attempt to speak of it here, not doubting that all students who come to Paris will hear him at least several times.

Space would fail me indeed to do more than name the many clinics and courses which I have found profitable. I will content myself with mentioning a few clinics of ophthalmology, only stopping in passing to make a suggestion in regard to laboratory work.

The laboratory of the college of France is designed liberally for the promotion of science and anyone wishing to make investigations in physiology or chemistry, may conduct his experiments here, receiving such assistance as he requires in his work. Instruction, however, is not given and persons not qualified for independent research or not having definite ideas of what they wish to accomplish, had better abandon this path of usefulness or go first to other laboratories, of which there are plenty in the city, intended to give preliminary training.

It is not pleasant to hear Americans spoken of as superficial or ignorant because some have made this mistake in regard to the object of these institutions, but I am confident that my fellow graduates of Michigan University, who have made the best

use of their opportunities at Ann Arbor, need not hesitate to undertake work in the College of France.

Paris is not lacking in specialists and among them are many oculists of eminence. Passing over the well-known names of de Wecker and Galizowski, I come to Prof. Panas who holds his clinic at Hotel Dieu. On Mondays and Fridays the course commences with the consultation, patients are numerous and the student is allowed to examine them personally and may ask questions of the professor. He is also sometime questioned in turn and may cover himself with glory by his replies if he find himself qualified.

After the consultation, comes the lecture, generally relating to the cases just examined or to those which are to be operated upon in the following hour.

M. Panas employs in favorable cases a modification of the de Graefe operation for cataract, dispensing with the iridectomy. If, after the incision is made and the capsule opened, the iris is found to impose too great an obstacle to the extraction of the lens, it is cut as in the unmodified operation. The immediate results and the appearance of the eye are very pleasing, and so far as I have learned, the cases have done well; but I think the judgment of most oculists would be that the operation with iridectomy is safer.

On Wednesdays the programme is changed. Patients requiring ophthalmoscopic examination have been directed to come on this day; and immediately after the consultation, the large clinic room is darkened, and lamps are placed on the numerous small tables by which the patients are seated. Students may examine as many cases as they wish, and are instructed in the use of the ophthalmoscope and the study of the fundus. Rabbits and artificial eyes are also provided for the use of beginners. I do know that students cannot find a better place than this to begin their studies.

A private clinic which I have found very useful is that of Dr. E. Meyer on "rue Jacob". It is long established, cares for a large number of patients and the fact that students are not numerous is an advantage to those who attend, as they have more time to make examinations, and leisure is of great importance, especially in learning to use the ophthalmoscope.

M. Myer is never tired of explanations which he gives in French, German, English or some other language, to suit the convenience of his audience. The clinic may be attended every afternoon at two o'clock.

Dr. Landolt, Consulting Physician of the National Institution of the Young Blind, etc., is the author of several works on diseases of the eye, among them a complete treatise published conjointly with de Wecker. A smaller "Manual of Examination of The Eyes" translated by Burnett, of Washington, is in use in America, and a larger work is also soon to appear in

English. His clinic, rue St. Andre des Arts, 27, is open to students on Wednesdays and Saturdays, for which occasions many interesting cases are reserved.

One sees here numerous and varied operations performed with skill and almost invariable success.

Among the attractive features of the clinic are the lectures or talks in which the most advanced teachings and the latest discoveries are presented. Various important matters have been discussed during the winter, notably some questions relating to the movements of the eyes, the power of convergence of different eyes and the relation between convergence and accommodation. M. Landolt has sought out many inventions for aiding his observations which seem to me more than usually careful and accurate. One device for measuring the perception of colors is particularly ingenious and satisfactory. A description of it will be found in the manual above referred to.

This clinic is frequented by physicians nearly as much as by students and one is liable to meet here eminent men of Paris and other cities. From the fine abilities, the earnestness and the devotion of Dr. Landolt, we may be sure that his clinic will be in the future as it has been in the past the scene of classic investigations and the source of useful discoveries in the science of ophthalmology.

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