

EDITORIAL NOTES.

WHATEVER EXCUSE may exist for the jealousies of medical men, in their private relations to each other, there can be no condoning attempts to thwart public charities. Personal antagonisms and rivalries become doubly offensive when invading a field, consecrated even in advance by self-sacrifice. The perusal, therefore, of the late letter of the Resident Physician of the Massachusetts General Hospital, in opposition to the establishment of a hospital for children in this city, has caused us regret, to use no stronger word. It is not possible that Dr. Shaw, himself a fair and generous-hearted man, could have published such a letter upon his own individual responsibility. Its tone, moreover, as well as its signature, is official, and it becomes necessary to hold the trustees of the hospital, or, more properly, the professional staff, accountable for its publication.

There has been far too much of intentional blocking the way, in matters medical and surgical, in Boston, and it is high time to file an effective protest. The evil is one that has brought discredit, in more ways than are at first apparent, upon the city.

It has caused an undue subservience upon the part of the younger men to supposed authority; a fear to assert one's professional manhood; an unwholesome autophobia, sporadic originally, then epidemic, but now seemingly the disease of the place. From the day when James Jackson struck hands with John C. Warren, in friendly compact not to interfere with each other in practice, articles of copartnership were in reality drawn by which the medical honors and emoluments of New England became the exclusive property, *nemine contradicente*, of themselves, their heirs and assigns.

That partnership has never as yet been dissolved or broken. Its establishment was recognized at the time by the associates of the principals, and old men still tell, with admiration, of the astuteness and mutual respect of that truly remarkable pair, — how that Jackson, returning from Europe an accomplished surgeon as well as physician, recognized the talent in that particular line, and the mental force of Warren, every drop of whose blood was, by inheritance, that of the reigning surgeon, and gracefully yielded to his suggestion, that parallel lines permit brotherly love, but converging ones sometimes lead to conflict. Of many of the results of that association we can all speak with an honorable pride. It gave birth to the Massachusetts General Hospital, a monument with which the name of Warren is as imperishably associated as it is with the shaft at Charlestown. It started the Medical School of Harvard University into a position at that time in advance of all others, and it inspired the Massachusetts Medical Society with a scientific enthusiasm worthy the aspiration of its founders. Two of ourselves shared the friendship of those august and venerable fathers, and they themselves disclosed to us matters that are now of history, but which, during their lifetime, it would have been unmasonic to utter.

With the wheat sown by Jackson and Warren, there were also planted tares, and, as often happens, the bad stock has grown apace. Monopolies were established that, in their infancy, were for the general good; and for this reason, and their very infancy's sake, were protected by artificial shelter. The monopolies referred to, thus fostered, soon attained a controlling power. The Medical School succeeded in destroying that attempted to be established by Brown University, prevented that essayed by Dr. Huntington and his associ-

ates at Lowell, persistently endeavored to strangle the Berkshire Medical Institution at its birth and after; a process it has since tried to accomplish in the late legislative conflicts concerning the giving the right to Tufts College to confer medical degrees, and the establishment of the Boston Dental College.

The Massachusetts Medical Society came soon to be managed, as indeed it had always been in great measure, by Boston graduates, and in the interests of the school there was established that discriminating tariff upon the alumni of other medical colleges desiring to practise in this Commonwealth, which is still in full practical force,—a disgrace to us all.

And the Massachusetts Hospital, our especial pride, has so far descended from its high estate, as to view with the jealous eye of comparative old age the progressing strength of charities rendered necessary by the growth of the city and an advanced public sentiment, but in reality its own children. It requires no effort to recollect the attempts made to prevent the establishment of the City Hospital, and the epithets applied to those through whose efforts its success was ensured. One would have supposed that the lesson then taught the circle at the Massachusetts would not so soon have been forgotten.

Of course, as every one knows, the opposition just now displayed by that institution towards the Children's Hospital is not from private misunderstandings among the medical men most interested, but from two underlying causes of a more powerful character; one of them being a fear, upon the part of those of the hospital staff in the Harvard employ, that a new hospital may serve as the nucleus of a second medical school, which was the engrossing apprehension at the time the City Hospital was founded, and which was prevented from be-

coming realized, only by the most adroit engineering; and the second, the fact that two of the "four physicians," whose masterly "statement in reference to the establishment of a Children's Hospital in the City of Boston" initiated the movement already so successful, are members of the attending staff of the other rival of the General Hospital, the Carney.

It would be unworthy to refer to a third reason that has been suggested as possible, namely, a desire to retain in the old channel any streams of beneficence that may flow from charitable coffers, save to express our disbelief in such a slander. It was very wrong of Judge Hoar to quote at the recent commencement dinner at Cambridge that malicious fling of the New York journalist, who stated as "an astonishing occurrence, that two rich men had died last month in Boston, neither of whom left anything to Harvard College, and neither did either of them leave anything to the Massachusetts General Hospital; another sponge," says the vile satirist, "that has sucked up its hundreds of thousands from the community." May a gracious Providence send it hundreds of thousands more, provided only that a little broader professional charity on its part be the result.

The time has passed for petty trifling like that lately displayed. Despite a prejudice to the contrary, it is far more difficult to keep up a reputation than to found one. The old Massachusetts, if carrying itself too haughtily, will only lose the fast hold it has had upon the affections of those who have walked its wards, and few New England men there are who do not owe to it most of their practical knowledge of science made art. There are Boston men upon the stage who have not yet had their share of the public work for which they are so well fitted, and there are others coming upon it who are

destined soon to succeed those now playing their brief parts. It is not for the present incumbents of hospital posts to assert so offensively that "adequate provision exists in the city of Boston for the medical and surgical treatment of the diseases of children," or to endeavor to render futile the philanthropic exertions of Drs. Ingalls, F. H. Brown, Langmaid, and Greenough. When some time since we visited that enchanting children's ward at St. Luke's, in New York, we could not help longing for the establishment of such a school for all that is good in grown people here at home, and we heartily give its near-coming God-speed.