

THE
JOURNAL OF LARYNGOLOGY,
RHINOLOGY, AND OTOTOLOGY.

As we approach the Millennium I thought it would be interesting to see what our forebears were writing about 100 years ago. The Journal of Laryngology, Rhinology and Otology was then published by Rebman Publishing Company, Limited, 11 Adam Street, Strand, London, W.C.—Editor

PACHYDERMIA LARYNGITIS

Dr. HERYNG (Warsaw) apologised for speaking at all, as he had not been able to prepare a paper, and then proceeded to describe the operative treatment of vocal cords in which a pachydermatous condition has been produced by repeated or chronic catarrhs. He first remarked that it was not the beautiful pearly-white cords that produced the finest voices; indeed, owners of such vocal cords had very frequently to come to the laryngologist complaining of vocal troubles. In such cases it was frequently possible, by using a Huischberg's prism, to find that the pearly whiteness was produced by numerous layers of thickened epithelium. On the other hand, some of the best singers had distinctly red catarrhal-looking vocal cords, *e.g.*, Jean de Reszke's vocal cords were slightly red before and very red after singing. From these and other similar facts in his experience the speaker drew the conclusion that we should never be in a hurry to treat a singer's larynx in any radical way.

He warned specially all the younger laryngologists to be extremely careful in their dealings with singers; he did not know any sort of people to equal them in thanklessness. Proceeding then to his theme proper, he said it was easy to understand how pachydermia should be frequent among singers. In the first place, they were exposed by the nature of their calling to frequent catarrhs. Secondly, they were unable to give their catarrhs proper treatment, but must sing, whether they were fit or not. Thirdly, smoking, over-eating, and over-drinking were the worst things possible for voices; but nearly every singer smoked too much, eat too much, and drank too much. By these means a slight catarrh easily became chronic and proceeded to produce pachydermia.