clear and bright. It shows us, also, how science has too often received detriment from the moral weaknesses of her votaries; it paints in their true colours, as the giant enemies of progress and of truth, the vices of envy, selfishness, and greed of gain. Above all, it encourages us under those impressions of weariness and disappointment which must at times steal over the minds of all of us. It shows us what has been really gained; that the barren moor of the old maps is now a cultivated farm; that morasses have been drained; that roads have been planned; and that a country once an almost impassable wilderness is now of easy access to all.

I have ventured to hint, that our profession might with advantage neglect politics and newspapers; and I would now suggest to those who require occasional amusement and change of thought, that they should seek these, not in the pages of the sensation novel, but in the original documents of medical history. Do not take up any modern synopsis of old opinions; but read the books themselves in all their quaintness and peculiarity. They contain much valuable information, and in human interest they far exceed a large proportion of the productions of our modern press.

In concluding these remarks, I may perhaps be allowed to add that, although I have insisted throughout on the importance of earnestness and of close application to our own work if we would do anything for the advance of physic, that nothing is further from my wish than to advocate asceticism or painful labour. My assumption has been that there are few higher pleasures than those which we earn in the pursuit of duty, and which come as the reward of successful work. I have endeavoured to show that the advance of science depends almost as much upon the physical as on the mental vigour of those who devote themselves to her cause. In a certain sense I have urged what has been fairly called the duty of delight, advocating frequent resort to the sea, the mountain, and the moor, as the only means by which we can expect to maintain that healthy tone of body and mind which is so essential to scientific success.

It remains but to express a strong confidence as regards the future of our profession. Never perhaps had it brighter prospects than at present. Never did discoveries follow each other with greater rapidity than they have done during the last quarter of a century. Never, probably, were there more earnest workers, and certainly at no former period had we such splendid tools. Still, however, it is most needful that we stimulate our minds by reminders of the comparatively little that has been accomplished, and the much that is possible.

"It appears to me," wrote large-brow'd Verulam, "it appears to me, that men know neither their acquirements nor their powers, but fancy their possessions greater and their faculties less than they are. Whence either valuing the received knowledge above measure, they look out no further; or else despising themselves too much, they exercise their talents upon lighter matters without attempting the capital things of all. And hence, the sciences seem to have their Hercules pillars which bound the desires and hopes of mankind."

Let us trust for the advance of physic, that her disciples may avoid these errors; that they may recognise clearly that there are no limits to the possible extension of our science, that estimating fairly our own powers, opportunities, and responsibility, we may go forth

"Strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

CASES OF SKIN-DISEASE.

By John Barclay, M.D., F.R.C.P., Leicester.

I.—Simple Alopecia.

In the report of the meeting of the Liverpool Medical Institution, at p. 204 of the current volume, Dr. Balman's remark is quoted that "the records of medicine supply but a very few examples of the complete loss of hair." I would, therefore, add one to the list.

A. B., master printer, was seen on Feb. 24, 1853. He was aged 24, married, steady, never had syphilis. In the middle of September 1852, he noticed his hair falling off, not in patches. He could give no possible reason for it, except that he had been closely confined and working hard.

I found him a robust, very active young man. His hair had been dark brown; he was now absolutely hairless, except one or two eyelashes. The scalp was perfectly smooth; and with a magnifying-glass, no trace of hair-follicles was to be seen. The eyebrows and eyelashes were gone; also the hair on the pubes and in the axillæ; as well as the downy hair all over the limbs. He was perfectly smooth over the whole body. There was no heat of skin; no unhealthy appearance; no patches; but a simple absence of hair.

I kept him under treatment with tonics for some time, and applied various stimulating lotions and unguents to the scalp; but with not the slightest effect. The one or two eyelashes left soon disappeared; and his only inconvenience seemed to result from their loss, as he had always slight palpebritis.

He now—twelve years later—is in exactly the same state as when he left off treatment, and in perfect health.

I have met with one other case of complete and total baldness in an old gentleman suffering from calculus in the kidney; but, as he was 81 years of age, it may be considered as merely an extreme degree of the loss of hair incidental to old age.

II.—Psoriasis of Twenty Years' Standing Cured(?) by Arsenic.

In church, on Christmas-day 1863, some hundred miles from home, I observed a young lady whose face and neck, so far as I could see, were covered with red-looking scars and scaly patches of lepra or psoriasis.

I was afterwards told, when expressing my sympathy for such a sufferer, that the poor girl had always been so—a martyr all her life. Of course, in conversation, I inquired if every means of treatment had been exhausted, and learned that the family was of the straitest sect of the homœopaths. My objurgations were wanting in neither loudness nor depth; they reached the parents' ears, and the result was, an inquiry of me, by letter, whether I considered there was any chance of cure by medicine; and further, whether I would undertake to try that chance. In spite of the impossibility of communicating except by letter, I did not hesitate to do so; for I felt that it would be such a triumph for legitimate physic, such a satisfaction even to myself in these days of doubts and scepticism—of heresies, among which I rank the do-nothing theory as about the worst—to see the power of medicine exerted and evidently (though, perhaps, not logically) demonstrable. I only bargained that no remarks should be made on my want of success for twelve months.

The history I gathered was this. C. D., aged 21, was a strong, healthy, robust young lady, with not a single symptom of disease or derangement of any kind, except her one misery. There was said to be "scrofula" in her father's family. The eruption ap-

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peared when she was cutting her first double teeth, and had continued to increase, and of late years had been a source of much distress. It disappeared once for a few weeks, at seven years of age, after a long course of sarsaparilla and cod-liver oil by the sea-side; but it soon returned worse than ever. At the age of 12, she had measles; and then it again disappeared of itself for a few weeks, and she was "lame in her feet" until the eruption came out again in all its virulence. "Besides the face, the eruption spreads over neck and shoulders, arms, and legs; and on the knees and elbows thickens very much, and comes off in large dry scales, and then gathers again." It was, therefore, nine years since there had been any mitigation of the disease, and twenty since it first appeared.

The treatment I adopted was, three daily doses of some form of arsenic—either the arsenite of potash or of soda; a little cod-liver oil; and sesquioxide of iron. As regarded diet, the only prohibition was fish and stimulants—neither of which she had habitually used. I directed her to drink largely of cold water or barley-water, etc., to promote the "metamorphosis of tissue". The details of treatment are superfluous. Very little of the cod-liver oil could be taken because of nausea. A recommended change of air was found impracticable; so that the treatment was very much narrowed to the ingestion of arsenic. It was only discontinued during two weeks from February 11th to December 31st. Improvement commenced about August, and steadily went on, till at Christmas the cure was complete. There was a little conjunctivitis occasionally, and at the end considerable anæmia and debility, now rapidly disappearing under the use of tincture of sesquichloride of iron.

On February 6th, 1865, she came here for my inspection. The only remains of her former enemy were slight stains on the cheeks, which showed when she was excited or hot. The whole surface of the body was clear, smooth, and healthy. She looked upon life as now something desirable, as she had entered on, as it were, a new phase of existence.

Post hoc, certainly; *propter hoc*, surely.

Captain Gordon, who has lately so distinguished himself as leader of a Chinese army against the Taepings was accompanied in his perilous enterprise by only one officer—a medical officer. The *Times* says: "Gordon accepted the very perilous offer. He went upon half-pay, thus risking his prospects of promotion, and taking a step in which only one officer—a medical officer—was found to follow him."

Bequests. By will, Miss Rachel Lemage, of Stoke Newington, has left the following bequests: To the German Hospital, the Royal Free Hospital, London Fever Hospital, Middlesex Hospital, St. Thomas's Hospital, North London Hospital, Margate Sea-Bathing Infirmary, Hospital for Incurables, each £100; Charing Cross Hospital and Stoke Newington Dispensary, £50 each.—Miss Julia Olivia Brodie, of York Place, Portman Square, has left the following legacies: The Cripples' Home Refuge, Infant Nursery, and Laundry, Marylebone Road, £300; British Orphan Asylum, Slough, £300; Idiots' Home, Redhill, £200; Royal Westminster Ophthalmic Hospital, £200; Infirmary for Consumption, Margaret Street, £200; Samaritan Hospital for Women and Children, £200; Cancer Hospital, £100; Establishment for Invalid Gentlewomen, £200; Orthopædic Hospital, £50; Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, £50; St. George's Hospital, £100; Middlesex Hospital, £100; University College Hospital, £100; Guy's Hospital, £100; Hospital for Consumption, Brompton, £100.

We beg to remind the members of the Association that the annual subscription for 1865 became due on January 1st. Payment of the same can be made either to the Honorary Secretaries of Branches; or to the General Secretary, T. Watkin Williams, Esq., 13, Newhall Street, Birmingham.

British Medical Journal.

SATURDAY, MARCH 25th, 1865.

MEDICAL EVIDENCE ON RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

There appears to be something more in the results of many railway accidents, in which human beings are concerned, than is usually dreamt of in the philosophy of medicine. With many medical men, it would appear as if *de non existentibus et non apparentibus eadem est ratio*, in reference to certain of the phenomena which represent these accidents. They do not seem to believe in any of those morbid symptoms of which the patient tells, but of which they cannot themselves seize the physical demonstration. Of course, we are now speaking of those medical men who appear as witnesses in courts of law to defend railway companies against the pecuniary damages sought from them by their injured passengers. That the injured individual should endeavour to make the worst of his case against the company, is a matter of course; and therefore the company is quite right to defend itself against the attempts of extortion. Of this we do not complain; but we think—indeed, we are sure—that our profession greatly errs in lending its aid, as it so often does, in depreciating the amount of injury suffered by an individual. We do not believe that railway companies have gained much by the practice of calling witnesses to declare that the plaintiff is doing something like attempting to humbug them; and we are sure our profession has not gained much credit with the public by assisting the companies in the matter. That medical witnesses on behalf of the companies often give very unfair—we mean incorrect—evidence, is certain. We know more than one case in which it was asserted by certain very high medical authorities, that the plaintiff was, in their opinion, perfectly sound—as well as he was before the accident; or, in other words, that he was trying to extort money from the company. And we also know that in such a case, to this day—now three or four years after the accident—the patient has never perfectly recovered from the *shock*. A collection of certain of the consequences of these modern kind of accidents, with a true history of their results, would be a very valuable addition to our pathology. We mean the kind of accidents which present no external signs of

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