

and a half linear measurement; then again, the patient is required to possess the power of uniting the double images by the isolated action of the weakened muscle; and lastly, he ought to possess a considerable amount of intelligence and perseverance, or the intention of these prisms will not be complied with. Let us examine this question a little more closely. It is assumed that when, by the action of a prism, say of 14, the double images can be made to coalesce, then, by supplying the patient with one of 10 or 12, the images will be brought so near together that the patient will, either by a voluntary or reflex action of the weakened muscle, unite them. Now, if such coalescence were really brought about by a reflex act, the advantage of this over other plans of treatment would be obvious; but from careful trials I have satisfied myself that in many cases the supposed reflex contraction is altogether illusory, and that if contraction does take place it is voluntary, accompanied therefore by a still greater contraction of its associated muscle, and a further separation of the double images. What really happens when a patient is supplied with such a prism is not a movement of the eye but of the head, as any one may readily convince himself of by first fixing the head before he makes trial of the prism. This treatment, therefore, requires, as I said before, many conditions to ensure success; the use and intention of the prism should be fairly explained to the patient, and he must be made perfectly to understand what he has to guard against, or he will certainly deceive himself, by substituting an easy and almost imperceptible movement of the head for an irksome one of the eye. For the reasons above given, then, I rarely employ prisms, except with the object of procuring complete fusion of the images, and thus counteracting the tendency to secondary strabismus in the unparalysed eye.

To pass now to the consideration of the *non-paralytic or muscular strabismus*, commonly called concomitant squint. This differs from the paralytic variety in almost every particular; it differs from it in its immediate and remote causes; in its phenomena, objective and subjective; in its course and tendency; and it differs from it, lastly, in the treatment required. But though the differences are thus marked in what may be termed the fully developed forms of the two affections, there is a small group of cases occasionally met with in which the two forms appear to be blended—a result due partly to imperfect recovery from a paralysis, and partly to secondary changes which it has induced in certain of the muscles during its continuance. But to proceed to the differences of the fully developed cases. First, there is the immediate cause of the distortion—muscular shortening—active, frequently intermittent and spasmodic at the commencement, and terminating in hypertrophy of the shortened muscle in the one form; altogether passive and continuous, and terminating not unfrequently in atrophy of the shortened muscle in the other. These muscular changes are brought about most frequently by some optical defect, as hypermetropia, in the first case; by some intra-cranial or intra-orbital mischief in the second. Then, as regards the phenomena, without going into all the differences, it may suffice to remark that the movements of the affected eye in concomitant strabismus are free in every direction and generally excessive in one, whereas in the paralytic form they are diminished, or entirely wanting, on the side opposed to the squint. Not less striking are the differences in the subjective phenomena. The vision of the squinting eye in ordinary strabismus is nearly always more or less defective; it takes no cognisance of external objects, consequently there is no diplopia, and the pa-

tient is in fact monocular. In paralytic strabismus all these conditions are reversed. The course and tendency of ordinary strabismus is generally to get worse; first, perhaps slight and intermittent, and affecting only one eye; then increasing in frequency and degree, and becoming continuous; then implicating the other eye; and with this gradual increase of the deformity, there is not unfrequently a corresponding deterioration of vision. In the paralytic variety, on the contrary, a considerable proportion of the cases either completely or partially recover, the vision of the affected eye does not undergo deterioration, nor does the patient become monocular. Lastly, the treatment of the two forms is altogether dissimilar.

In my next communication, I shall proceed to offer some observations on the treatment of concomitant squint.

[To be continued.]

Transactions of Branches.

SOUTH-EASTERN BRANCH.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

By CHARLES TRUSTRAM, Esq., Senior Surgeon of the Tunbridge Wells Infirmary.

[Delivered at Tunbridge Wells, June 14th, 1866.]

GENTLEMEN,—In bidding you welcome, in the name of my professional brethren, to this town, I must first thank you for the honour you have conferred upon me by placing me in my present position; for, when I consider the little attention I have been able to give to the interests of our Association, I can but feel that there are many members of the Branch in this neighbourhood who have far greater claims for the post. And, if I were to describe my feelings on hearing the fact of election, I should say they were much of that character which Pope uses when he speaks of flies in amber—

"The things themselves are neither rich nor rare;
We wonder how the devil they got there."

But here I am, and must redeem the mistake you made in the best way I can.

I shall, in the first place, take the liberty of troubling you with a short history of the rise and progress of this now large and fashionable watering place; and I am sure I cannot better engage your interest or bespeak your indulgence than by telling you that it was here that the much esteemed and venerable founder of our Branch, Mr. Martin, in the year 1798, broke his first lance against disease and death; the recollection of which, though sixty-eight summers have since marked their course on his well known brow, is still fresh in his memory; he still claims to be considered as the oldest practitioner of this place. Some of you will remember that it is now nearly twenty years ago since he, as our Secretary, read, in this place, and on this spot, one of the ablest reports (and many an able one we have had) of our proceedings, that ever came from his pen. That he is not able, from increasing infirmities, to be present at our meeting this day, is a matter which I am sure we all regret.

The town of Tunbridge Wells, of which I am about to attempt a short description, is situated in three parishes and two counties. Before you entered this room, which, as you see, is in the centre of this building, you were in the parish of Speldhurst, and in the county of Kent. When you had passed its threshold you were in the parish of Frant, and

county of Sussex. I need hardly add that, as its name implies, the larger part of the town is in the parish of Tunbridge. Its early history is purely a medical one. Whether the spring which has rendered it famous was known in the neighbourhood before it attracted the attention of the nobleman whose cure it effected, does not appear; but one at Tunbridge, called St. Margaret's Well, had long been used for its medicinal qualities. It was at the beginning of the seventeenth century that this nobleman, Lord North, who belonged to the court of that day, and who had ruined his health by dissipation, recognising the cause, and resolving to break off his habits, came for retirement to Eridge, the now well known seat of the Earl of Abergavenny. Whilst rambling in the woods of the neighbourhood he was struck by the peculiar deposit at some of the springs; and, luckily for himself, thought that this water might prove advantageous to him in his then state. He took the opportunity, on his return to town, to consult his medical advisers on the subject; and, finding they not only offered no objection to the use of them, but rather encouraged him in trying their effects; he returned early in the following summer, and, having drank them perseveringly for a time, he not only regained his health, but lived to his eighty-fifth year; and, as in duty bound, made them known by a small publication, so early as 1637.

Though the position of Lord North, and the fact of his having quite regained his health by their use, gave these springs great notoriety, it was a long time before Tunbridge Wells assumed anything of the character of a watering place.

The times did not permit, nor had even the great world begun, those habits of change in which every class can now indulge. For more than half a century the place was, and could have been, frequented only by those who came from a strong conviction of the medicinal effects of the spring, seeing that they were obliged to reside in the town of Tunbridge, a distance of more than four miles. This, it is said, gave the spring its name; but it is situated in the parish of Speldhurst. So great, in the course of a short time, became the repute of the spring, that persons of distinction, as well as invalids, began to visit the spot. Supply soon followed demand; and houses were erected at Southborough, only two miles (then looked upon as a short distance) from the spring, and others at Rusthall, not more than a mile from its site.

This state of things, inconvenient as it now seems, continued for some time; the world then thought, probably more than it does now, that their limbs were made for use.

The spring at this time was flowing at the bottom of a dell, surrounded by forest trees and underwood, (the last remaining hawthorn of which died but three years ago) and was approached by a circuitous path of more than a mile. Even a long time afterwards two small houses only stood near the spring, one of which was a coffee house for the ladies, and the other, which stood where we are now assembled, was called the Gentlemen's Pipe-House. Though the ladies and gentlemen of both parties managed somehow to meet at these two houses as on common ground, the partisans of the court invariably resided at Southborough; whilst the opposite party in politics invariably resided at Rusthall, where the first hotel of any size was built, the cellars of which now remain to mark the spot. This was about the middle of the seventeenth century.

It was not before the close of the second Charles's reign that any houses were erected where the town now stands; and even then division still marked their character. The Presbyterians and Independents

located themselves on Mount Sion, the Baptists on Mount Ephraim, where they each had their places of worship, long before any such was erected for the members of the Church of England. This was accomplished in 1688, when, curiously enough, the building now known as the Old Chapel was erected on a spot so near to the borders of the parish of Tunbridge, that its enlargement has placed a part of it in the parish of Speldhurst. Soon after this, about one hundred and seventy years ago, the ground now known as the Old Parade was cleared and planted; and buildings for temporary occupation were erected for the traders who came for the season. These were in a short time supplanted by more substantial ones, all of which were consumed by a fire soon after their erection. These were succeeded by a row of the quaintest looking buildings possible to conceive, on the same site, a few of which retained their character till within a few years. Did time permit, I might attempt some little description of the times and manners of the place, when visited by Charles the Second and his dissipated court, some of which are not a little interesting, and have been well depicted by a lively French writer.

Thus did the accident of a visit from Lord North determine the site of a town, which has now a population of 15,000; for, beautiful as the spot and scenery are, there are many others in the county equally beautiful, with chalybeate springs equally good. The soil of the neighbourhood abounds with iron, and, but for the want of coal, would doubtless have been another Birmingham.

Foundries, before the woods were cleared, and whilst charcoal was chiefly used for smelting, were common among us. In proof of this, I need only mention that the rails which enclose St. Paul's were cast at Lamberhurst, only six miles from where we are now sitting, and are said to be of a quality not equalled by the best Swedish iron of the present day. Perhaps it is not known to all of you that we are within twelve miles of the spot where the first cannon England possessed was cast. The caster's name was Hogg. His house is still standing, and an iron plate records the fact in two graphic lines:

"I, John Hogg, and my man John,
Did here cast the first cannon."

To this short history of the town itself I should have liked, had time and the object of the meeting permitted, to add some description of the numerous places which surround it, many of which are intimately associated with the history of our country, and demonstrate the manners of those who lived two centuries ago; for we have around us the ruins of many castles and mansions that were calculated to do justice to the customs which then prevailed—places whose extensive demesnes shewed the power of their holders, and gave signs of a lingering remnant of feudal times. Forests well stocked with game, and waters with fish were the attractions of the holders, much of whose wealth must have been derived from other places; for it was only here and there that cultivated spots, which provided only the more substantial necessaries of life and gave subsistence to their dependents, were to be seen. That soil which now supports a thriving population and yields to its owners princely incomes, was mainly devoted to the chase. Many of the ruins of those once stately buildings which witnessed the revelries of a bygone age are now doing duty as farm homesteads; whilst some of them, renovated and modernised in part, are the residences of their owners, who kindly permit the public and the visitors to this place to gratify a laudable curiosity, and wonder how the necessities of such grand hospitalities as the dimensions of the buildings indicate could have ever been provided for. As, in later

times, we read that one of them, Knoke, required a household of 108 persons to dispense its every-day hospitality, we may have some little idea of the retinue that these castles formerly possessed.

I will now say a few words of that spring without which Tunbridge Wells would never have been. The site of it, as I dare say some of you saw on coming here, is under a colonnade in front of a large China shop. I have no doubt many of you felt on passing it, as hundreds have done before, that it receives no very great attention at our hands. The fact is, the spring scorns all adventitious aid. Some years ago, the liberal-minded owner of the manor laid out £7,000 in building and fitting up a suitable pump-room and two large baths; but as the spring was a public one, the old dispensers of the water, who are called dippers, could not be dispossessed. War to the knife began between them and the more juvenile ones inside. The outsiders represented to the drinkers that the water lost half its virtue in passing through the pipes and pumps, and was not equal to that which they caught the moment it came from the earth in all its freshness; and as they had some truth on their side, they very soon gained the day. The pump-room was deserted and turned into a shop, and the baths forgotten. The water, as I dare say you all know, is a pure chalybeate, a protocarbonate of iron held in solution by carbonic acid, and can only be taken with advantage on the spot. Attempts have been made from time to time to bottle it, but have all failed; the iron invariably becomes oxydised in about a week and falls to the bottom.

The spring enjoyed a century ago a greater repute than it does at the present day. The present easy access to continental springs of the same character, and an improvement in the preparations of iron, now stand in its way. It formerly stood unrivalled for its effects in all forms of debility, and persons were sent by their medical advisers from far and near. Ladies have at all times been its chief patrons, and certainly not without reason, for it has had the credit of giving an heir to many of the large estates of England. Surgical corrections of the uterine organs were then unknown.

There is a tradition as to the origin of this spring, which, as it has rather a curious connection with its virtues in female disease, I will briefly relate. That noted saint, St. Dunstan, who was residing at Mayfield, one day whilst working at his anvil (in those days it seems that saints did not consider a little manual employment *infra dig.*), received a visit from a well-dressed and good-looking woman. Naturally surprised at the appearance of a lady in a monastic building, he became very cautious in his conversation (and it was well for his character in after times that he did so). His fidgettiness and awkwardness very soon required the good lady to withdraw from the position which she had taken up; in doing which she betrayed a cloven foot. The wary saint was too good a tactician to make immediate use of his discovery. He continued at his work, but took care to heat his tongs to a white heat; this done, he seized the lady by the nose. This unexpected proceeding, and the pain it caused, sent his Satanic majesty howling across the woods and forests; coming to a spring, he descended and dipped his nose; continuing his flight, with returning pain, he again descended at the spring about which we are speaking, and there deliberately cooled his burnt nose, and gave that character and virtue to the spring which its waters have ever since possessed. This explanation suited the age in which it was introduced well enough, and doubtless gave confidence to the early patrons of the spring.

And now, gentlemen, having I fear tired your

patience with the history of this town and its spring, I will say a few words about our Association.

Though association, ever since the day when the greatest of fabulists pronounced his story of the bundle of sticks (and I dare say the notion was not original even then), had had its beneficial effect on almost every other calling, it was a long time in the history of medicine before its members knew the benefit of it, at all events on a scale commensurate with their wants. The establishment of this association by Dr., now Sir Charles Hastings, is shewn by its results to have been one of the grandest ideas that have ever been propounded in the interest of medical practitioners. Our licensing bodies had given us a name, but no local habitation. This Association has supplied us with that great want; our voice is now heard by the legislature and the world at large. All honour, I say, to the founder of our Association.

The good effects of this Association, which was established more especially for the benefit of the provinces, soon became so manifest that an almost universal desire was expressed that it might be made a British institution—the one common ground of the medical profession of the country, the rallying point of the professional power and professional interests of the masses of its members.

Scarcely had the Association begun its work, ere a wish was felt, here and in many other places, that its benefits might be more immediately localised. Branches, under the control of the Parent Association, were soon established through the length and breadth of the land, among which this Branch takes no unimportant place.

Our principles are before the world, and our voice is now heard when matters affecting the public health are subjects of consideration. Professional brotherhood, and that sympathy which binds man to man, are already among the good results of its existence.

However isolated any member of our profession may be, he now, if a member of this Association, has a tribunal for the redress of his grievances, and a JOURNAL in which he can make them known; and an opportunity brought in turn to his door of meeting his professional brethren. No small advantages these. Then, let me ask, have we done, and are we doing, that which becomes us as members of such an institution? Are we working for the benefit of our profession and the common good of mankind? Are we all of us in our own localities lending that aid which the nature of our education enables us to do, towards those sanitary improvements on which the well being of the poorer classes so much depends? Are we seeking to develop that good fellowship which should exist among our professional neighbours and the profession at large. I hope we can all say that we have done all this.

But if we have done all this, there is still something wanted. It is wanted that each of us should act as if the character and well being of the Association rested on his individual shoulders. We, who have felt the good of the Association, should take care that every worthy medical brother be added to its ranks; and when we have done this, we should feel that one duty still remains to each of us—that that undying motto on its portals, *esto perpetua*, shall have had one touch from our chisel.

One more word as to the JOURNAL. Some have thought that this was a superfluity; I do not. The medical press has viewed it as an intruder; but I see no justice in this view. It was never intended to supplant the regular independent medical press, but to fill a void which that could never have filled. It has done its duty, and I trust it is destined to do so for all time.

Death during the last year has been busy, alas! too

busy, with our ranks. He has taken the aged from us; and, as if to show here, as elsewhere, his equal step, he has cut down the young in the outset of life. One of our Vice-Presidents has been among that number, Sisson of Reigate, a man whose retiring disposition and genuine worth secured the friendship and respect of all who knew him. Another, whose presence all must miss (at all events those who are in the habit of attending these meetings will) was the well known Sankey of Dover. He, as we all well know, had come to that time appointed for all men; he had, his medical brethren have a right to say, run a good course, and fought a good fight. It is but a few years since, as President of this Branch, he secured for us a most interesting and pleasant meeting at Dover, when his kindness and attention were felt by all. Those who had the benefit of his personal acquaintance (and I for one had) will feel that they have lost a kind and estimable friend. He is gone, but he has left us that best of all legacies, a good example. May we imitate it! I am sure I shall best express your feelings and my own when I say, "*O si sic omnes.*" The youngest member that has been taken from us was one who lived in this immediate neighbourhood, Alfred Monckton; and, though but three short summers had passed over his head as a medical practitioner when he fell a victim to a too close attendance on some cases of fever, he had during that short career so secured the affection of the village in which he lived, that the inhabitants, one and all, laying aside their vocations, assembled to pay the last tribute of respect to one who had so early earned it. A longer life could have done no more. Would that we all may do as much!

Of the others I cannot speak from personal knowledge; but I am quite sure that, had my post been occupied by those to whom they had been known, you would have heard the same tribute to their worth and memories.

Medicine. I propose, on the present occasion, to depart from the course pursued by my predecessors, and instead of confining myself to that stale subject, medical reform, and that everyday recurring matter of medical ethics, to take a cursory glance of the progress that medicine has made since our last meeting.

With the exception of those improvements that the treatment of diseases of the nervous centres has derived from the researches of Brown-Séguard and Lockhart Clarke, and the introduction of that new instrument for testing the character of the circulation (which, by the kindness of one of our members, Dr. Clapton, is now on the table, and which I have no doubt he will kindly explain to us), medicine proper seems to have made no very important advance. Pathology, physiology, and vital chemistry, have been pursuing the usual course of verifying, correcting, or rejecting the discoveries of past days. Chemistry, in its more extended sense, has been investigating the condition of the atmosphere, and trying to determine how far its constitution, as to that condition of its oxygen called ozone, determines the spread of epidemics and the character of disease; but as yet with no great practical result. But the question must some day arise, if it have not already done so, whether there is not another constituent which is exerting an influence on the animal economy; I mean an increase, at present inappreciable, of its carbonic acid gas. You are all aware that the subject of the possible exhaustion of our coal-fields, and its relation to the future of our country, which has often been hinted at by the philosopher, has just now seriously engaged the attention of our senate, not as a matter of public

health, but as one of political economy. A new senator, but an old philosopher, feeling that the consideration of the subject of the taxation of his country was one, and not the least important one, of his duties, and yet too honest to regard taxes as one of the many means of spending without regard to repaying, suggested that we should try to repay some portion at least of our national debt before we had exhausted that mine of wealth which our coal-beds give us. A new feature most certainly in politics, but one that speaks well for the coming times of legislation, and one from which I hope medicine may soon derive some advantage. "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof," and "After us the Deluge," has been too long the ruling creed of Governments, at all events in matters of finance.

But, I think, had he consulted the two sciences of physiology and chemistry, he need hardly have troubled himself about the matter. They would, I think, have told him that, when our coal-beds (at all events, if there be the quantity presumed) were gone, there would be nobody left to claim or to pay; for, before even the half of the coal of the world is consumed (and I do not suppose our national energy will before that time have exhausted the stock of our own country), the atmosphere will have again assumed a condition fatal to animal life—nearly that condition which a Book, in which I trust we all believe, describes it to have had, when its density, nearly three times that of the present atmosphere, held up and divided the firmament of water that was above it from that which was below it; when the very matter of these coal-beds floated in a gaseous form round earth's surface, waiting to be fixed and solidified by the action of a gigantic flora, and stored for the use of coming man.

From the sublime to the ridiculous is said to be but one step; and from our gigantic national debt to our own fireside, and domestic expenditure in this matter, is but a short one, and to us an equally interesting and important one. What would be our feelings, if told one snowy morning in December that we had come to our last bushel of coal? We who live near the woods of Sussex might hope to get through the winter with their aid; but we should certainly feel a strong disposition to move off to a warmer climate ere the next winter began, and leave our houses and lands to settle our debt; for, in this free country, whilst coal does last, the manufacturer will take care to have his wants supplied in spite of all forebodings.

To return to that medical point at which I hinted. Let me ask this question, Is the atmosphere suffering from the extraordinary evolution of carbonic acid gas which is now going on? Is the pigmy and stunted flora of the present age equal to its decomposition, to the absorption of the carbon which combustion is now daily producing? and if so, will it continue to be so, seeing that the spread of the human family is daily diminishing the forest growths? Must there not some day be a perceptible increase of the present proportion of carbon in the atmosphere? and may not some already inappreciable increase be the cause of the present type of disease, as distinguished from that which prevailed at the beginning of this century, and which I myself have lived long enough to witness?

May not the altered type of disease have been produced rather from the presence of a depressing agent in the shape of carbonic acid gas, than from a less vivifying condition of the oxygen or its compounds of ozone?

We all, I am sure, regret to find that that dire and fatal malady, the cholera, has again reached our shores. Though it is now nearly fifty years since this malady

first shewed itself in our dependencies, where it has preyed constantly been under the eyes of our professional brethren, and more than thirty years since it came among us, it must be confessed that, beyond treating the symptoms and succouring the powers of life, we have learned but little about it. Various plans of cure have been tried, and each has had its advocates; but as yet there has not been one that has been admitted to be the best by the general voice of the profession. I have ventured to bring this subject to your notice, because I hold that it will, should this malady again spread in this country as it did in 1832, be the duty of every one of us to try to add his mite to the elucidation of the disease or verification of any plan of treatment that may come before him. The last plan of treatment propounded, which its author calls the eliminative one, is founded on the assumption, undoubtedly a true one, that the disease is a blood-poison, and that, therefore, it is desirable to assist Nature in the efforts she makes to rid herself of the poison by mild purgatives, and not by the opiates and stimulants that have been hitherto used. It is asserted that the one rids the system of the poison, which the other locks up. Before we place implicit confidence in this view, it must, I think, be shewn that the diarrhoea that generally prevails at the same time as the cholera is not choleraic, or connected with that disease, but only an accompaniment, under the influence of which the poison of cholera has a better chance of exerting its power; for most assuredly hitherto it has been set down as a fact, that the cholera has generally attacked those in whom this condition has been neglected. Now, if elimination is to be the plan, it surely ought to be applied before that storm of symptoms begins, which, however curative they may be, so frequently prove fatal by their own severity. There is unquestionably a stage of incubation, even in those cases which die ere Nature sets up this eliminative action. The poison cannot well begin its action the moment it is taken into the system. Is there, then, no symptom by which this period can be distinguished? and is there no mode by which the poison can be neutralised, ere it makes itself an integral part of the blood? Can inhalation and hypodermic injection offer us no ready means of making a quick impression on the system? Certainly, if we are to look upon spasm of the smaller pulmonary arteries as the chief of the pathological conditions, inhalation would seem to offer us the readiest mode of reaching it. There is another plan of treatment which has been suggested in our JOURNAL; namely, that of transfusion of defibrinated blood. But I think the proposers of this would have done well to have taken a leaf out of the book of that sagacious cook who advised her readers to catch the hare before deciding how it was to be dressed; for, however good this plan, it would be only the rich who could hope to get it in any extensive epidemic.

Whilst doing all we can to treat this disease, we surely should not neglect to ask why and whence it comes, and what are the conditions that favour its spread? However convinced we might have been that the first epidemic was an imported one, we have lately had unmistakable evidence that it can arise in our own country. Then whence comes the poison, and what is it? Is it gaseous or molecular? Abounding, as the sunbeam shews us our atmosphere does, with matter, we can hardly regard it, however much it may assist the propagation of the disease by the deportation of its poisonous molecules, as the source of the poison. The mode of the progress of the disease forbids that. Dirt and bad water seem its almost invariable associates; but we had these for years without cholera. May we come to a conclusion

that Nature occasionally loses her power of re-combining the poisonous results of decomposition? or do some intensified electro-magnetic currents occasionally revivify some dormant changes and so evolve this poison? or does this agent occasionally act electrically on some older source which was locked up in the earth's crust ages past. The fitfulness of the disease favours the idea, either that the poison is not always present, or not liable to be evoked by every day recurring agency. On the other hand, if we are to believe what we hear of its origin among the Arabian Pilgrims, and look at what has lately occurred on board some emigrant ships, it would almost seem, that this poison, like that of typhus, may be produced by overcrowding and bad diet. What if in the end we should find it to be a modified typhus, which, instead of attacking the brain, tries conclusions with the sympathetic? If so, spasm of artery and engorgement of veins may be more dependent on the sympathetic than the direct action of a morbid agent.

Surgery, which owes a great debt to the indefatigable Dr. Richardson, for that valuable addition to its resources, the ether-spray, has, I believe, nothing new to boast of. New ways of doing old things have been plentiful enough. Acupressure, which was to supersede the ligature, has found little or no favour at the hands of practical men. Amputation of the hip-joint, itself no new thing, has lately brought under our notice an instrument which will be found a very useful one to the obstetric practitioner; I allude to that invented by Mr. Tufnell of Dublin, for compressing the abdominal aorta. Who is there among those who practise obstetricity, that does not now and then witness an appalling case of *post partum* hæmorrhage, the only right and safe way to my mind, of treating which is compression of this vessel? It is true that this can be accomplished by the fingers, a tiring process, and one which occupies the entire time of the practitioner; whilst an instrument of this kind permits him to attend to other matters. I can call to mind many cases where I have been obliged for an hour or more to perform this tedious and fatiguing duty, where I am sure nothing else would have saved the patient. If we reflect for a moment on the cause and nature of this hæmorrhage, we shall see why aortal pressure is the best plan of arresting it. Two large arteries which have become doubled in size, and trebled in length, are to be suddenly stopped by the action of what that ablest of obstetric professors, Dr. J. Blundell, called living ligatures. These will sometimes fail; and, in spite of our efforts to stimulate them to their duty continue to fail, and we know the trouble and anxiety which this entails. But, under any circumstances, I contend that, in any serious case of *post partum* hæmorrhage, this mode of arresting it, is the readiest, safest, and best for the patient.

I will now call your attention to those two surgical novelties, which, dirty as they are, are just now attracting a good deal of attention. I mean syphilisation and extirpation of the clitoris.

It has been discovered by some of our continental brethren, and one of its professors has lately been here to teach us the fact, that constitutional syphilis is best cured by again introducing the disease in its primary form into the system. Surely some homœopathic wag must have been at the bottom of this; for, although the plan of dilution is not followed, it must be admitted that the principle of "*similia similibus curantur*" is in full force. What a pity it is for the homœopaths that the subject is not one more fitted for its talkative patrons! Surely, if the high-born dames of the religious world can placidly con-

emulate the advantages of the extirpation of the clitoris, they will soon be able to contemplate and talk about syphilis; the connection is so natural.

It certainly will be a burning shame that so strong a pillar as that which the cure of syphilis by syphilisation would give their principles, should not at once be added to their building.

This proposal, though not without its advocates, has, I hear, met with no sanction at the hands of reflecting men. The sooner it is forgotten the better; for common sense and decency alike repudiate it. Fancy the feelings of our patients at being told that they must resort to the shrine of syphilis to be cured of its early consequences. Science cannot believe in anything so opposed to every law of nature. If we are to believe in this dictum of syphilisation, syphilis seems to hold the same relation to the body as learning does to the mind. A great author has said—

"A little learning is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring.
Those shallow draughts intoxicate the brain;
But drinking deep doth sober it again."

A parody of these lines is easy enough. Your own imaginations will readily make one.

If this doctrine of immunity by syphilisation be good, the Commander-in-chief's difficulties are half over; for we only need to make a corps of immunized victims to save the army from one of the greatest losses it now sustains.

We are also told by a continental brother (and I only wish that the specialists of our country were equally candid and honest), that we have fallen on a day when a secret unnatural use of the sexual organs is a matter of every day occurrence; and that the extirpation of the clitoris is the best, if not the only cure for its sad effects. (Some people, pitying this infirmity, have given this, which we used to call masturbation, the more delicate name of female delectation—a very proper thing, certainly, if we are to see it made, as we are now doing, a subject of remark in non-professional pages.) Now, without at all admitting this as a fact, let us discuss it as if so.

It certainly may be asked, what wonder it should be that that body, which was made for the wear and tear of earning its bread by the sweat of its brow, should, under the manners of the present day, when its muscular development is almost entirely neglected, and its nervous system worked to its highest pitch, when female education consists of accomplishments and dress, and when the female mind is fed on sensation and sentiment, and idleness and *ennui* are the portion of its days, should fall under the power of evil? Can we expect to sow the wind of folly, without reaping the whirlwind of some debasing result? We are now told that we are come to that; and that surgery must come to the rescue, and cure what morals should have prevented.

We are told that mutilation of that body which the Creator made is necessary for its preservation from the effects of its own wickedness; that the knife of the surgeon is a better cure than the precepts of religion and morality. At least, so it is said both abroad and at home; and one of the spiritual organs of the day already claims its assistance.

Now, from all this I for one most fully dissent. I have not time to discuss this matter on pathological or physiological grounds, but will ask a few questions on the grounds of common sense.

What, I will ask, is to be the social position of those on whom this operation is done? The world will place them, and their own reflections, when they awake to the fact, must place them, out of the pale of every social position; the sisterhood of respectability must and will eschew them; their position must be one of shamefacedness. View this matter

as dispassionately as we may, I am sure we shall all feel that this moral disease should be left to that cure which religion and morals provide, and which our science, properly directed, can aid and assist. Remove the local excitement as you may, the disease will still remain. The brain is the *fons et origo mali*. Trace its history, and you will find it began with voluptuous dreams, and will, in spite of all mutilation, go on till its cerebral connexion is removed and destroyed. Have we not abundant evidence that it is a cerebral disease, from the fact that we every day see it in those in whom advanced age tells us that it can be no local matter, and where its presence can only be accounted for by the existence of hyperæmia in worn-out cerebral matter, and its necessary result, unbalanced function?

Has medicine no other resource, the world will ask, than the knife? It would indeed be a disgrace, if it had not. This operation, which, I am glad to see, is called abroad by its right name, may, if generally adopted, fill the pockets of its doers for a time, but must end in disgrace to our calling. The old classical proverb, which says, "*Cœlum non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt*," applies here. You may cut off the pudic nerve to its very root; but, till you have destroyed the root itself, the disease will return.

Then, I say, let us at once denounce it as unnecessary and uncalled for. Though the English nation may have lost much of that masculinity of mind which formerly distinguished it, I do not believe that it is prepared to allow this stigma of mutilation to be fixed upon its daughters; nor will it consent that their characters shall be sacrificed to an experimental surgery which delights to crawl about the female pudendum. In spite of the approval of a portion of the clerical press and its confederates, I say, let morals cure morals; but let the knife of the surgeon be still unstained by this unnatural perversion.

If, indeed, these proceedings be necessary, and if we must regard clitoridotomy as a thing as essential to female morals as circumcision once was to cleanliness, let us institute a ceremony that will make it respectable, rather than brand those for whom we prescribe it with a stain that a life cannot wipe out.

What is to be the value in the matrimonial market, let me ask, of those whose organs have been mutilated by the knife of the surgeon? Nothing, positively nothing! Every young woman must wear a badge of warranty from this stigma. "Warranted entire" must be printed on her brow.

I shall not pursue this, to my mind, filthy subject, further, but express a hope that it may have been consigned to oblivion ere we meet again.

If, in discussing these subjects, I have used strong language, my excuse must be, that no other words would suit them. No other words sufficiently express my own, and, I have reason to believe, your feelings. Uncompromising language is the only means of meeting those heresies by which our profession, which ought to be a high and honourable one, is fast drifting to a low estate, and with which, to my mind, our licensing bodies, on whom the power, if not the onus, of protecting our body, belongs, have too long dallied. Our fathers had but a coarse and vulgar quackery to deal with. It came in our day to see an attempt made to submit the discoveries of ages of mental labour to the judgment of half-witted clairvoyants; and it has now come when the mysterious phenomena of life and disease are brought to the most moderate comprehensions by the slipshod slaverings of homeopathic symptomatology. Some of our profession, I regret to say, instead of manfully denouncing these heresies, are found every day bending our science to catch the popular gale. Oh!

that the day may soon come when the heresies of medicine may have shared the fate of astrology and necromancy—be things of the past. At all events, let us do our best to this end. If it does not fall to the lot of every one of us to advance our science, we all have the duty of upholding its honour and integrity.

There are some other matters on which I should, had time permitted, have liked to have touched. I have now to thank you for your patience and attention.

SOUTH-WESTERN BRANCH.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

By DAVID THOMPSON, Esq., Launceston.

[Delivered June 20th, 1866.]

AFTER alluding to the history and objects of interest connected with Launceston, and thanking the members for electing him the President of the Branch, he said—

It is not, gentlemen, my intention to read you a scientific essay on any one subject, but just to glance at some points in connection with the position of our profession with which we are most interested. Our Association has for one of its main objects the promotion of friendly intercourse and free communication among its members, and the establishing among them the harmony and good feeling which ought ever to characterise a liberal profession; and we shall all, I think, readily admit, that it has done, and is doing, much towards so desirable an object. Especially valuable do I think the Association is to those whose lot it is to live far away from the neighbourhood of large towns, and who have not the opportunities for ready access both to their brethren and information on the topics of the day. A hard life too often the country surgeon has; he has his joys and his sorrows, but too often more of the latter than the former. Hardened by habit, he becomes accustomed to the life, and can say with the Duke in *As You Like It*.

"Now my co-mates and brothers in exile,
Hath not old customs made this life more sweet
'Than that of painted pomp? Are not these woods
More free from peril than the envious court?
Here feel we but the penalty of Adam,
The season's difference: as the joy fang
And churlish chiding of the winter's wind,
Which when it bites, and blows upon my body,
Even till I shrink with cold: I smile and say,
This is no flattery; these are counsellors,
That feelingly persuade me what I am.
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

In years gone by we were as sheep without a shepherd, each taking his own course, unacquainted with the feelings or wishes of his brethren, and having no means by which he could arrive at such knowledge; but now, thanks to our Association, through its JOURNAL, every member has an opportunity of vindicating his wrongs, if he have any; obtaining the advice and support of his brethren; and enlisting the aid of our talented and energetic editor, who is ever ready to do battle in a just cause.

It has been the fashion of late years with some to abuse the JOURNAL and all connected with it; but to country members there cannot be a question that the JOURNAL, especially when conducted, as now, with ability and honesty, forms one of the most valuable agents of the Association. I should, as an individual member, be very sorry to see its publication discontinued.

You will, I feel assured, pardon my feeling some degree of timidity and hesitation in addressing you, in the position I have now the honour to fill. Not having yet arrived at a period of life to be enabled to look around, like the fathers of the profession who

have preceded me, and give useful and valued instruction and advice, it would be presumption on my part to map out the course of duty to be followed by those whose long period of honourable practice of a most honoured profession has placed them in the front as guiding stars to those who are younger in the journey of life. If we look around, a long list might be made of worthy names—worthy alike for the high professional standard of their conduct and their brilliant talents. We not unfrequently meet with dejected characters, who are always lamenting the falling off in the times, and declaring that "the profession is going to the dogs"; but we assuredly may look forward to a more hopeful future. The foundation has been well laid by our examining boards, who, by an improvement in the preliminary education, almost necessarily require that a young man shall be specially trained for the course he is afterwards to follow. It will be well if the preliminary standard is thoroughly maintained.

It has occurred to me and to many others, that much valuable time is wasted at College, by the desire which some teachers have to cram a student full—unnecessarily full—of their pet subjects, associated with collections of scientific terms enough in themselves almost to occupy the period allowed for the study of that particular branch. Doubtless, each lecturer thinks his own course the most important, and endeavours to impart as much as possible of it; but it is usually to the exclusion of others to the man who is intended for general practice of much greater importance; his mind is prevented from being stored with the most useful of all knowledge to him, a practical acquaintance with diseases, and the best methods of treatment. The multiplication of hard words and long scientific terms must always be to the student a source of annoyance. They will be of no use at the bedside; in fact, nowhere, except to the writer on medical subjects; and very few of our most practical writers, men who thoroughly understand what they write about, draw largely on them even for that purpose. It is nothing unusual, now that the old apprenticeship system is almost extinct, for men—fully fledged doctors—to be sent from college perfectly unacquainted with the practical rudiments of the profession, crammed with scientific terms and theoretical knowledge of rare diseases—hobbies perhaps of their respective teachers—but never having performed or seen many of the most simple operations connected with the ordinary practice of their profession. To see that every student has the opportunity of becoming practically acquainted with the methods of treatment of most value, is, I believe, one of the most valuable and efficient aids in improving the standard of general practitioners. I say the methods of treatment of most value—for, in the present day, when almost every man has his hobby in treatment, and writes about it too, it is a very difficult matter for the young surgeon to determine what course to adopt, so that he may do the greatest amount of justice to his patient and credit to himself. It is an easy matter to bring two men into the witness-box; the one, a great authority, will swear that the plan adopted by a sincere and well informed surgeon has been the best possible; the other, perhaps also a star of some magnitude but belonging to another school in treatment, is ready to affirm, and does it too, that the treatment has been very wrong. We are bound to give each credit for honesty of purpose and truth in believing himself correct in his opinion. Sad though is its effect. Its influence is felt only in lessening the respect felt for the profession generally.

In giving evidence in courts of law, due allowance is not made for the very difficult position in which a

medical witness is placed. He has no time for reflection or reference in forming his opinion on questions put to him; and is expected to give it, as though not from the result of reasoning on evidence presented to him, but as of things he had seen or heard. From such uncertain data, it is not peculiar that men with minds differently constituted should sometimes differ in their conclusions. We have not, like the lawyers, Acts of Parliament to guide us; or, like our clerical brethren, canons and rubrics by which to steer our course; or known and unvarying laws, as the engineer has to work by; but we must be guided by judgment and experience, based on uncertain rules, rendered still more varying by seasons, habits, and constitutions. Is it, then, to be wondered at, that men should differ as regards the value they place on evidence presented? or that when expected to have the knowledge of supernatural beings, and found only to be mortal, they are abused, because they cannot reduce the million variations of constitution to one definite rule, or the thousand points of observation to one general focus? Most readily can we make full and generous allowance for the man who, in a court of justice, unwillingly opposes the opinions of his brother from a conscientious belief that such is a true course; but we must condemn with the true feeling of honest indignation the man who rushes into opposition or leads himself to injure another for the sake of advertisement, popularity, or gain; and those who have recently aided in visiting such conduct with the punishment it so richly deserved, merit our warmest praises.

The spirit of freemasonry, unhappily, does not obtain among us to the extent it should do. I do not for one moment advocate the shielding a man in culpable negligence or want of skill; but condemn the want of that generous allowance to the value of the opinions of others, when those opinions are founded on uncertain rules. Lower your neighbour, if you can, and raise yourself on his foundation, is, though we must with pain allow it, the course followed by some who should set a brighter example.

There are various kinds of quackery. Even in the profession, it is seen under various guises, clothed in a variety of garments, garbed in high-flown words and glowing English. Still we may say, that even here quackery is rampant. Specialities, and books upon them; hospitals for the cure of this or that disease, with long lists of patrons, and wonderful accounts of extraordinary cures advertised in pamphlets, periodicals and papers, to attract the attention of suffering humanity from that special disease towards the benevolent author or founder; testimonials to this drug or that preparation, with the intimation from the grateful recipient that the eminent man who gives it has largely used the drug in particular diseases,—all these things savour strongly of quackery—a desire to push into notice faster than can be done by force of ability or steady perseverance. Tools they become in the hands of interested vendors, who, in return, repay the favour by holding up their friends as eminent persons to the gaze of a wondering public.

Another matter it is time for us to consider is the extent and abuse of medical charities. To the poor, in the proper sense of the term, I trust we shall always have our hearts and hands open, ready at all times to relieve their sufferings, and administer to their necessities; but it is the use made of such charity by persons often as well able to pay as we are to give. The editor of our JOURNAL has repeatedly called the attention of the members to this circumstance, and has shown the abuse and its effects, as instanced in Brighton. When relief is given at one time, it is often not valued at another;

and when received by one person without consideration, the other who has to pay for it often thinks himself an ill-used individual. Why should we so lavishly distribute that which we have dearly to acquire, and which is often unthankfully received?

We are requested to remind members of the Association that the Annual Subscriptions became due on the 1st of January. They can be paid either to the Secretaries of the Branches; or to the General Secretary, T. Watkin Williams, Esq., 13, Newhall Street, Birmingham.

British Medical Journal.

SATURDAY, JULY 21st, 1866.

THE BRIGHTON TRAGEDY.

OUR readers will have seen all the details of the strange tragedy lately enacted at Brighton. All the facts tend to show that Dr. Warder was the murderer of his wife. Some few incidents of the inquiry, however, are worthy of note.

We may remark, that it is nowhere said the urine was examined; and yet we read that Mrs. Warder passed large quantities of urine; that she drank much liquid; and we think one witness said that she had a ravenous appetite. If we are right in these particulars, it would have been satisfactory to know that there was no sugar in the urine. The other symptoms, it is true, did not tally with the idea of diabetes; but all doubt of such a suspicion would have been removed by an examination. The unqualified verdict of the jury was scarcely warranted by the facts; viz., that Mrs. Warder died from the administration of aconite.

Dr. Taylor's analysis was entirely negative; and he rested his opinion as to the cause of death wholly upon the description of the symptoms observed during life, and said that these symptoms were such as might have been produced by aconite. One or two remarks of Dr. Taylor require comment. He tells us that "he was much struck with the appearance of the contents of the stomach and bowels, which were coloured with blood, showing that there had been a great source of irritation." Now this statement seems scarcely warranted by the facts on which they were founded. Dr. Taylor says, in his detail of the analysis, that he received, amongst other matters, "a bottle with the contents of the stomach, containing a brown liquid slightly reddened by the presence of a small quantity of blood." Now, surely Dr. Taylor should have had positive evidence that no drop of blood had accidentally mingled with the contents of the stomach before he accepted the blood-colouring of the stomach-contents as proof