

REPORTS AND ANALYSES

AND DESCRIPTIONS OF NEW INVENTIONS, IN MEDICINE, SURGERY, DIETETICS, AND THE ALLIED SCIENCES.

THE ALLEN SURGICAL PUMP.

The Allen surgical pump, a highly ingenious application of a novel pumping method, was demonstrated to the Section of Obstetric Medicine at the annual meeting of the Association at Glasgow by a representative of the firm of Messrs. Charles Truax and Co., of Chicago, who are the manufacturers. We have since carefully tested the capabilities of the instrument, and have been much impressed by the simplicity of its construction, and by its adaptability to many of the requirements of modern practice.

The construction of the pump will be easily understood from an inspection of the accompanying drawings. It consists of a shallow cylindrical metal box (Fig. 1), within which a small wooden

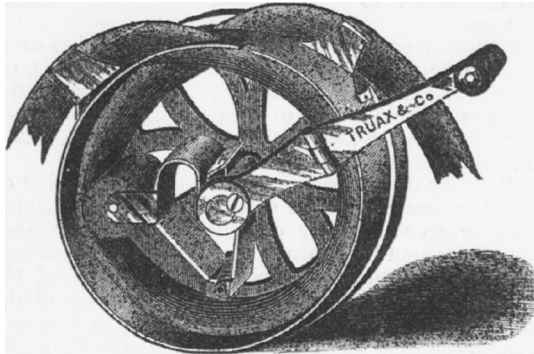


Fig. 1.

roller, carried by an adjustable spring attached to a central axis, revolves; a loop, formed about the centre of a piece of india-rubber tubing a yard or so long, is introduced by a suitable aperture, and lies in the box between the roller and the side of the box. By adjusting the spring the roller is made to press firmly upon the tubing, and by turning the crank the roller is made to



Fig. 2.

travel round the box, squeezing the tubing empty in its passage; as much air or liquid as is in that part of the tube is thus displaced in one or other direction, and by continuing to turn the crank a continuous stream flows in at one end and out at the other end of the tube.

Fig. 2 shows the pump attached to the back of a chair and

ready for use; by turning the crank in one direction the operator pumps the contents from the basin, and a continuous stream issues from the tubing which he holds in his hand. If the description has been followed thus far, it will be at once understood that by reversing the crank the current of fluid is also reversed, and the pump acts as an exhaustor, returning fluid to the basin. It forms a very convenient and simple stomach pump. A stomach tube is attached to one end of the tubing, while the other end is in a basin of water, and the stomach may be emptied and washed out by merely turning the crank alternately in either direction, it being only necessary to remember that fluid is forced in the direction towards which the handle is turned, and withdrawn from the opposite direction.

One great advantage of the instrument is its simplicity; there are no valves, stopcocks, or pistons to get out of order or to retain dirt; the liquids only come into contact with the india-rubber tubing, which can, of course, be easily changed at a trifling expense, and separate lengths of tubing can be used for different cases if desired. Under many circumstances the ease with which the current may be reversed will be a great convenience.

The pump may be used as an aspirator by attaching to the main tube the apparatus shown in Fig. 3; a vacuum can be produced

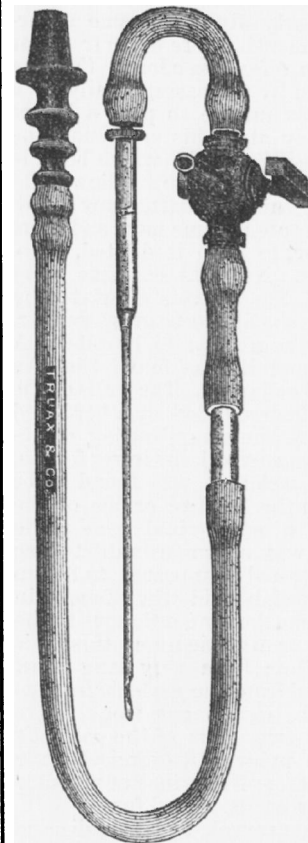


Fig. 3.

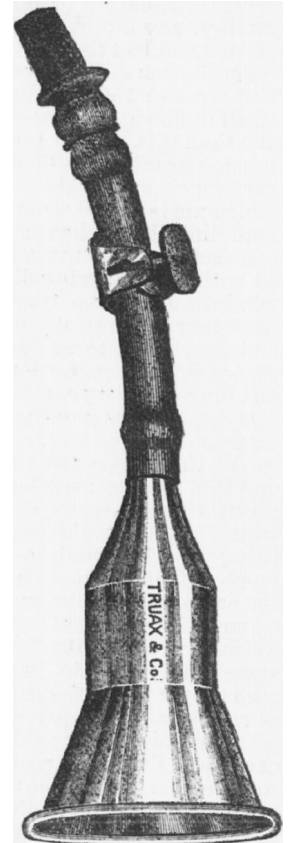


Fig. 4.

while the needle is being introduced, by directing an assistant to turn the crank slowly, and as soon as the cavity is reached the fluid will begin to rise, and will be seen passing through the small glass joint, which, as in most aspirating apparatus, is introduced into the tube leading to the needle; if the eye of the needle becomes clogged an attempt may be made by reversing the current to dislodge the occluding substance. By regulating the rapidity with which the crank is turned the rate at which the fluid is aspirated may be adjusted to a nicety. The two-way stopcock shown in Fig. 3, just above the needle, is designed for use if it is desired to inject the cavity. While the crank is still kept turning the cock is turned, and the communication with the aspirating needle cut off; the free end of the pump-tubing is then put into the fluid to be injected, and the current reversed; by this manoeuvre the fluid is pumped through the tubing and out at the aperture of the stopcock, thus washing out the whole, and filling it with fluid. After the fluid has been noticed to run clear and free from air, the stopcock may be turned back to its original

position, and the fluid injected into the cavity. It is, of course, necessary to test all the connections in the first place, to ascertain that they are air-tight.



Fig. 5.



Fig. 6.

The pump may also be used for filling Barnes's bags, or other elastic dilators devised on the same principle. The quantity of fluid injected can be measured in two ways: if a dilator is being filled, another of the desired size is first filled by the pump, the dilator to be used is then attached, introduced, and, by turning the crank until the other dilator is emptied, it is known exactly how much fluid has been introduced and how much the dilator has expanded. The other method of measuring is of use in washing out the bladder, for which purpose the pump-tubing may be attached to any ordinary gum-elastic catheter by a piece of soft tubing; the amount of fluid pumped at each turn of the crank is uniform, and may be ascertained by a preliminary experiment. Thus, the pump of the size which we have tested injects two ounces for every five revolutions of the crank. The pump can be adapted to a cupping glass (Fig. 4) or breast pump; it can also be used for douching the nasal, aural, vaginal, or other passages of the body.

The apparatus was originally designed by Mr. E. E. Allen, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, as a blood transfuser, and a special form can be obtained for this purpose. Another purpose for which it is said to be well adapted is embalming; a trocar-pointed evacuating tube (Fig. 5) is first used, and the embalming fluid is injected through the hard rubber tubes (Fig. 6) constructed for the purpose.

We are informed that the apparatus can be obtained through any surgical instrument makers in this country.

BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1888.

SUBSCRIPTIONS to the Association for 1888 became due on January 1st. Members of Branches are requested to pay the same to their respective Secretaries. Members of the Association not belonging to Branches are requested to forward their remittances to the General Secretary, 429, Strand, London. Post-office orders should be made payable at the West Central District Office, High Holborn.

The British Medical Journal.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29TH, 1888.

THE MEDICAL PROFESSION.

It was said of the Napoleonic armies, that every private soldier bore the *bâton* of a marshal in his knapsack, and it may be written with equal truth of the medical profession—for the encouragement of those about to join its ranks—that to each practitioner its highest honours and its most distinguished positions are possible of achievement. It is no respecter of persons, but offers its chief prizes with liberal hand to every honest seeker; its only requirement for their attainment—knowledge. Its only passport to success—diligent and intelligent work.

But though success is thus attainable by any candidate who will use the proper means to gain it, it does not follow that even when obtained it is of a kind which will satisfy the ambition of most men. And therefore it behoves every youth before he finally chooses medicine as his profession to be quite sure of what he seeks, and to be well furnished with the necessary weapons, wherewith, having decided, he may fight his way to victory.

If wealth be his goal, he has mistaken his calling. "Some of us," says Sir James Paget, "may indeed make money and grow rich; but many of those that minister to the follies and vices of mankind can make much more money than we. In all things costly and vainglorious they would far surpass us if we would compete with them. We had better not compete where wealth is the highest evidence of success."

If social distinction be his aim, he could nowhere have hit on a more hopeless choice, for he will find the claims of his calling so onerous and so incessant that he will have little time to cultivate those graces and opportunities without which social distinction cannot be won.

If he has entered it merely to earn a morsel of bread, he is prostituting a most noble profession to an object not in itself perhaps improper, but as a sole end most unworthy.

It is unfortunately true that many of those who join our body do so with a most inadequate appreciation of the responsibilities they incur. For them medicine is neither more nor less than a means of earning a livelihood. They either adopt it by accident or from unworthy motives, or because it is a cheap profession. Hence our ranks are filled with so many unsatisfactory recruits: hence the space of our medical journals is taken up by complaints of ungentlemanly and unprofessional conduct; hence our law journals contain such reports that cynical lawyers boast there is no case

THE AUSTRALIAN RABBIT PEST.—The Intercolonial Rabbit Commission, the constitution of which has already been stated, held its second session in Adelaide, where it was chiefly occupied in taking the evidence of Professor Watson with regard to the "rabbit scab," a disease of rabbits due to the presence of *sarcoptes cuniculi*. It was elicited that the disease only spread in a moist climate, and that it would not be communicated from rabbit to rabbit in the dry parts of Australia. The Commission had still many witnesses to examine and inquiries and investigations to make before commencing to prepare its report.