

This remedy is digitalis given in poisonous doses. In the case referred to, when the prodromata of poisoning—vomiting, etc.—were excited by the digitalis, the menorrhagia ceased; “and although in this case the digitalis did not produce any serious toxic effect, the pupils remained for a long time enormously dilated.” M. Trousseau also signalised another remarkable English therapeutic invention. “In puerperal menorrhagia, some English accoucheurs use large doses of alcohol. A glass of brandy or rum is administered every half hour; and when the patient wakes up next day from her alcoholic stupor, her menorrhagia is arrested, and there only remains a little headache to trouble her.” The reporter of the case thinks it impossible to offer any explanation of so strange a fact! It is, however, satisfactory to find that our French brethren are at length beginning to open their eyes to the necessity of giving their patients food and stimulants whilst passing through the crises of fevers, etc., of the adynamic sort. The *eau gommeuse* and *diète absolue* and leeches of the Broussaie æra are gradually shading away; yet we do not hear French physicians say, that diseases have changed their type!

The subject of the treatment of incurable diseases afflicting the poorer classes of our countrymen has been taken up in a most wise, humane, and, as we think, very practical way, by the Workhouse Visiting Society. The plan suggested by the Society, through the voice of its Honorary Secretary, Louisa Twining, has, we are told, already been adopted with complete success by one large and important union. This is the plan:

“Let all persons in the workhouse suffering from acute and distressing disease, such as dropsy, consumption, cancer, etc., be placed by themselves in wards apart, to be called the wards for male and female sick and incurables. In these particular wards let private charity be admitted to introduce whatever may alleviate the condition of the inmates.

“On the passing of such rules by any board of guardians, it would follow that the members of the Workhouse Visiting Society would raise and employ the moderate subscriptions needful to convert these wards into suitable and comfortable hospitals for incurables. Under the sanction, and with the cooperation of the surgeon, and in concert with the other officials, they would provide good beds for the bedridden, easy chairs both for those who cannot lie down and for those who ought for some hours each day to leave their beds, the salaries of trained nurses if required, and such other trifles as lemonade, extra tea, books, etc., as may seem desirable.”

We believe that our profession will readily concur in the promotion of so reasonable and Christian-like a project. None so well as they can know the greatness and extent of the sufferings it is hereby sought to alleviate. Cancer, consumption, and, in short, all special hospitals, whose special object is the treatment of incurable diseases, can never cope with the misery they propose to alleviate. They are, in fact, when we com-

pare the minimum amount of good which they are capable of doing with the immense sum of ill which they cannot touch, little more than mockeries, deluding the public into the idea that it is doing much, when in fact it is doing little more than skimming the surface of the evil. Besides, as we well know, the worst of all cases—the hopeless cases of consumption—are not admitted even into consumption hospitals. It is manifestly the proper office of the commonwealth to provide for the sufferers from these Divine afflictions, because private benevolence cannot effectually reach them. And it is equally clear, that the very principles upon which the Poor-law system is founded are opposed to the exhibition of that kindly charity and benevolence, to which no class of persons are more justly entitled than the 40,000 of the working classes who yearly die in this country from cancer, dropsy, and consumption.

At the Hospital of St. Joseph in Lisbon, it has hitherto been the custom for the chief surgeons of the institution to receive a salary inferior to that of the physicians. A change has, however, taken place; and, by a decree dated November 9th, the Government has abolished the invidious distinction, and has raised the pay of the surgeons to that which the physicians have been in the habit of receiving. The *Gazeta Médica de Lisboa*, in noticing the fact, observes that, admitting the diverse aptitudes of men for practising the various branches of the healing art, it is difficult to understand how the priesthood of the one should be less noble than that of the other, or should be worthy of a less recompense. Our Portuguese brethren are justly exultant at this abolition of an absurd and unjust distinction; but what would they say of the hospitals in England, where, for the most part, the physicians and surgeons are so far from being unequally paid, that they get no salary at all?

THE LATE EDWARD RIGBY, M.D.

WE regret to have to announce the death, at the comparative early age of 56, of Dr. Edward Rigby, who, as we need hardly inform our readers, had for many years enjoyed an extensive reputation and lucrative practice as a physician-accoucheur, and whose name has been long before the profession as an authority in midwifery.

Dr. Rigby was born at Norwich. His father, also named Edward Rigby, was a man highly distinguished by his literary and general acquirements, and enjoyed with Levret the merit of having first properly distinguished the true nature of those hæmorrhages which precede the delivery of the fœtus at term. The Dr. Edward Rigby, whose death the profession have now to deplore, studied at the University of Edinburgh; and, after receiving his diploma, resided for some considerable time in Germany—at Berlin and Heidelberg: at both of which places he availed himself of every possible opportunity for acquiring a knowledge of mid-

wifery, the department of the profession to which he had early determined to devote his attention.

His first public appointment, which he obtained soon after settling in London, was that of Lecturer on Midwifery at St. Thomas's Hospital; and he became successively Physician to the Westminster Lying-in Hospital, Lecturer on Midwifery at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and Examiner in Midwifery in the University of London. The latter appointment he held until within a few months of his death. Of his writings, the work most widely known is the *System of Midwifery*, published as a part of the *Library of Medicine*—a work which has been long regarded as one of the best expositions of the theory and practice of midwifery of modern times. Dr. Rigby's other works are, his translation of Naegele's essay *On the Mechanism of Labour*, his earliest literary effort; *On Dysmenorrhœa and other Uterine Affections in Connexion with Derangement of the Assimilating Functions*; a second edition of William Hunter's *Description of the Gravid Uterus*; and lastly, a work published as recently as the year 1857, *On the Constitutional Origin of Female Diseases*.

Dr. Rigby was a frequent contributor to the *Medical Times and Gazette*, in which he published a series of cases illustrative of his peculiar views on the pathology and treatment of female diseases. During the last two years of his life he was president of the Obstetrical Society of London, and did all in his power to further the welfare of that society, in whose objects he felt the deepest interest.

His public and private character stood equally high. He was scrupulously exact in all his dealings, possessed of a high sense of honour, warm, zealous and immovable in the defence of what he conceived to be the truth. His habits were somewhat retired; he lived quietly, unostentatiously; and his devotion to his professional duties was incessant.

At the end of the summer of the year 1860, his health was observed to be failing, and he resolved to leave London for some weeks. On his return, at the end of September, it was found that he had not derived the anticipated benefit from the change. During the month of December, a change for the worse took place; but he still persevered in his professional duties, and continued to see patients at his own house until within a few days of his decease. At the autopsy, performed by Messrs. Skey and Callender, in the presence of Dr. Graily Hewitt, Dr. Priestley, and Mr. Henry Thompson, it was found that the primary disease was situated in the walls of the bladder, which were infiltrated with scirrhus. Death appeared to have taken place from acute congestive pneumonia, which, together with complete suppression of urine, set in four days previously to his decease. Cut off when in the zenith of his reputation and while enjoying the fruits of his industry, his loss will be long lamented by a large circle of professional and other friends. He died at his residence, 36, Berkeley Square, on the morning of December 27th, and his remains were interred at Kensal Green Cemetery on Wednesday last,—by a strange fatality, on the very day in which he was to have been elected President of the Obstetrical Society for another year.

DR. FARADAY'S LECTURES

AT
THE ROYAL INSTITUTION.

ON A CANDLE.

A SHORT report of Dr. Faraday's lectures (from the pen of one who is himself a well known chemical lecturer) will, we are sure, be very acceptable to our readers. Not only is Dr. Faraday's matter always of the best, but his style and delivery are so superior as to rank him as the first lecturer, as indeed he is the first philosopher of Great Britain. It is a pleasant thing to find so great a man addressing himself year after year to the young and the young, as his subject of this year may be termed, the interest taken in it by grown up children, manifested by the large number of adults who crowd to hear the master. All who listened with admiration to the "Chemical History of a Candle", could not but hope that the lecturer's life might long be spared, and that he might long continue to lecture on his favourite science of chemistry.

The first lecture, "On a Candle: the Flame—its Sources—Structure—Mobility—Brightness", was delivered on the 27th ultimo.

After claiming his right to address the juveniles, he commenced by drawing attention to the simplest and oldest candles, viz., bits of timber from bogs. The diminutive candles were exhibited—forty or fifty to the pound—which were formerly used in coal-mines, from a belief that a *small* flame would not so easily fire an explosive mixture. Then came the turn of stearine and paraffine candles, of wax, and of other varieties. Even luxuries in candles were touched upon, not, however, for much in the way of praise. Especially were condemned the grooved candles; the Professor conveying the moral that it is not the best-looking, but the best-acting thing which should be admired. The perfection in a candle rested in the entireness of the "cup" which held the melted wax, etc., and which was violated by the numerous grooves.

Capillary attraction raised the fluid in the wick, thus preventing its being burnt down to the level of the candle. Experiments verified the fact. Not only was a pillar of salt saturated with moisture, although only its base was placed in a dark coloured solution, but a towel left in the washhand basin, and hanging down the side, afforded an apt illustration, by bringing the contents to the ground. That a vapour rises from the heated wick was proved by rekindling it after it had been blown out; but that the vapour was of a different kind in different parts of the flame, was indicated. The dark nucleus containing the unburnt material; the light-giving portion, containing the unburnt carbon; and the surrounding mantle of flame, in which the carbon is in full combustion, together with the play of the air through the whole, next came to be mentioned.

The *shadow of the flame* from a candle, shown in the voltaic light, and reflected upon a white surface, was an experiment to be remembered; it was seen to consist, it were, of tongues of fire, in which the unburnt carbon was distinctly visible in wavy lines of singular aspect. These tongues of fire were further, and in conclusion, illustrated by the familiar exhibition of the snap-dragon, in which the brandy furnished the fuel, and the raising of the wicks.

The second lecture was delivered on Saturday. It consisted chiefly of an analysis of Flame. The vaporose character of the dark nucleus surrounding the wick was thus illustrated:—A burning candle was placed under the short limb of a glass syphon, so that the nucleus was just brought into it; then the white vapour was collected in a flask from the long limb, and inflamed by the application of a light. Similarly, and by an equal