to discover a new planet in the heavens, and so inscribe his own name imperishably on the scroll of astronomic fame.

During the past year, Death has laid his hand on some of our most eminent. Alison, with his Christian goodness, kind heart, fine intellect, philosophic thought, and sober judgment; Blackall, with his patient perseverance and shrewd sagacity; Todd, with his sharp, clear mental vision, indomitable energy, and warm, cordial, impulsive nature; Wilson, with his untiring industry, exceeding love of science, poetic imagination, and ardent eloquence; Addison, with his acute perception and classic mind;—of these we now possess only the works, the memory, and the bright example.

Touching medical politics, many things of interest have taken place within the past year, and will, no doubt, come under your consideration; but, as I do not feel justified in acting as your mouthpiece on these subjects, I pass them by. On another subject, only partially pertaining to medicine, I believe I shall express the opinion of all present when I state, in reference to the bodily phenomena produced at what are called religious revivals,—the screams, convulsive movements, semi-unconsciousness, followed by the agitated, gloomy, or wayward mind and enfeebled body, or by melancholy or even mania,—we have but another example of those nervous epidemics of which the history of medicine in connexion with religion presents so many. The phenomena induced are simply the result of emotional excitement of the brain, whether brought on by bodily sensations, mental feelings, or mere instinctive sympathy, and may be occasioned in any way which sufficiently rouses the nervous system, whether it be by exciting preaching, directed exclusively to the fears and the feelings, and not at all to the intelligence and judgment; by Mesmeric proceedings; by self-inflicted mental agitation; by the sight of others affected; in short, by any of the ordinary causes of hysteria. As a matter of medical experience not connected with religious revivals, we find such phenomena generally presented by the feeble, the frightened, the nervous, and those who are deficient in strength of mind and self control. We do not see them in those who are robust in body and mind, well informed and self-restrained. Whatever may prove to be the case when the exciting cause has been religious preaching—and upon this we offer no opinion—in other instances with which we are all so familiar, we have no reason to think that such emotional manifestations usually improve the moral character, whilst we are certain that they always tend to injure the health. Surely a grave responsibility rests with those who, whatever their goodness of intention, do their utmost to foster and provoke the occurrence of these emotional riots in the minds and bodies of the ignorant and impressible, under the idea that they witness a specially Divine operation in phenomena which are amongst the least elevated of all which the human mind can display. Religion deserves the highest, and not the lowest.

It might be expected that I should say something respecting Torquay in a medical point of view; but I refrain from doing so, because, as my additional experience serves but to confirm my conviction of the benefit derivable from the climate of Torquay in cases suitable for it, such as pulmonary diseases, renal affections, irritative dyspepsia, inflammatory conditions of any of the mucous membranes, and the disorders of advancing life and old age,—I could scarcely do justice to my theme without exposing myself to the suspicion of being, however unintentionally, a partial, and therefore a prejudiced witness. And I have another and a better reason in the circumstance that Dr. Barham has selected for his Medical Address the subject of Climate in relation to Medicine.

Torquay possesses three medical institutions—an Infirmary, a Consumption Hospital, and an Institution for Ladies of reduced means suffering from Affections of the Chest.

The Hospital for Consumption admits fifty in-patients at once, twenty-five of each sex. It is open for eight months in every year, from October 1st to June 1st. It restricts its advantages to such cases as are in an early stage, or afford reasonable prospect of undergoing arrest. Suitable cases can return for as many seasons as may be requisite to complete their restoration. In these and in some other respects, the Torquay Hospital for Consumption is unique.

For the Erith House Institution for reduced Ladies, a new and appropriate building is now in course of erection. When completed, it will accommodate twenty occupants, who will each contribute a guinea per week towards their expenses.

Each of these institutions is supported entirely by voluntary contributions; and no one of them, I regret to say, is as well supported as it deserves.

And now, shall I attempt to describe the natural beauties

of this fair corner of Old England, the South Hams of Devon? Its smiling meadows, rich fallows, and breezy uplands; its blooming orchards, ferny combs, and bosky dells; its soft red rocks and sharp grey limestones? Dartmoor in the background, with its granite tors and heathery downs, its rippling brooks and brawling streams, its Druid relics, Phœnician mines, old British huts, and Roman camps? Shall I attempt to paint the picturesque site of fair Torquay, its craggy rocks and coral strands; the luxuriant glories of its Flora; the clearness of its air; the blue translucence of its bay; the cerulean depth of its Italian sky? Nay, these are subjects on which we would rather listen to your opinions than attempt to express our own. And I will merely add that, as you have done us the honour of selecting for this year's meeting the "Queen of the South", you will not doubt the warmth and sincerity of your welcome when you remember how largely her prosperity depends upon your loyalty.

Original Communications.

THE VARIATION IN SIZE OF COMPLEMENTARY OPTICAL SPECTRA.

By J. ZACHARIAH LAURENCE, F.R.C.S., M.B.Lond., Surgeon to the South London Ophthalmic Hospital.

I HAVE this morning observed some curious facts, which, as far as I am aware, are not generally known. If the eyes be for a little while kept fixed on a petal of a red geranium stuck on to a piece of white paper, and then suddenly transferred to a second blank sheet of white paper, the following phenomena will be observed.

1. If the second piece of paper be regarded at the same distance from the eyes as the first was, a green spectrum of the geranium-petal will be seen, of exactly the same size and form, as of the original petal.

This fact is familiar to every one. The following ones are, I believe, less so.

2. If the second piece of paper be regarded from a greater distance than the first was, the green spectrum will be larger in proportion to distance.

3. If the second piece of paper be held closer to the eye than the first was, the green spectrum will be proportionately less.

4. No distortion or inversion of the spectrum takes place. This fact may be ascertained by cutting out unsymmetrical figures of red geranium petals.

As I am at present engaged in the determination of the exact variations in size of the spectra that correspond to given distances, I shall reserve for a future occasion the explanation of the above interesting observations.

30, Devonshire Street, Portland Place, August 6th, 1860.

HÆMORRHAGE FROM THE NAVEL, SEVENTEEN DAYS AFTER BIRTH.

By THOMAS O'CONNOR, Esq., March., F.R.C.S.

On the 24th of February last, I was called to A. B., an illegitimate child, who had hæmorrhage from the umbilicus. The first impression which I had, of course, was that it was a case of secondary hæmorrhage, caused by some accident to the cord; perhaps that an officious nurse had disturbed the ligature before absorptive separation had been completed. Acting on this idea, I drew out the end of the cord with a common dissecting forceps, and examined it carefully; but finding it perfectly healed, I was satisfied that the blood did not come from it. The hæmorrhage was trifling in amount, and had ceased before my arrival. I felt puzzled considerably, and carefully examined the surface of the child's body, but could detect no appearance to enlighten me. As the child was illegitimate, and had, moreover, a wan, unhealthy, and ill-fed appearance, it occurred to me at last that the blood on the compress might have been placed there to mask some criminal proceeding in some other way; and this suspicion seemed to be warranted by the character of the unfortunate mother, who had the reputation of a violent temper as well as of habitual immorality and unscrupulousness. I was, therefore, determined to watch the case closely. As the mother had a scanty supply of milk, I had some suitable food prepared, of which two or three teaspoonfuls were given to the child. A dry compress was placed on the navel, and secured with plaster and a bandage.