

living in an unhealthy climate occasionally exhibited the effects of such residence after a considerable time had elapsed. He remembered the case of a child who, six weeks after her return from Lincolnshire, was attacked with ague, the disease having been no doubt induced by her residence in that county. In like manner persons residing in the malarious districts of Italy frequently gave no indications of disease till some time afterwards. As to the residence of the troops in Bulgaria, it was a military and political movement, and ought not to be regarded only in a sanitary point of view. He had heard it stated that the whole mortality of British troops in the Crimea, from all causes, was less than 20,000 out of 102,000 men—a considerably less proportion than was consistent with the author's statements.

Dr. FRASER was one of the medical officers at Scutari, and he did not agree with the author in thinking the hospital an ill chosen one. The Smyrna Hospital he considered badly selected. He had remarked the small number of cases of phthisis admitted—a proof, he thought, of the good selection of the recruits originally.

## Editor's Letter Box.

### POPULAR INSTRUCTION IN PHYSIOLOGY.

LETTER FROM J. I. IKIN, ESQ.

SIR,—In a leading article of the number of the JOURNAL for July 4th, you quote a remark of a member of the Society of Arts, Mr. F. Curzon, which, I think, requires some notice from the provincial lecturers on physiology and anatomy. As one of this class of lecturers, I do not feel disposed to allow Mr. Curzon's opinion to pass unnoticed, either in these pages or at the meeting of the Society about to be held; though you have given an importance and publicity to the remark, which it probably does not merit.

To quote the passage itself: "*There was no one within fifty miles of Huddersfield qualified to give instruction in physiology.*" He believed, if a competent person would state what salary would induce him to take up his residence in the North, by an union of the institutions of the large towns like Halifax and Wakefield for that purpose, a qualified lecturer on that science might be fully employed."

As regards the first division of the paragraph, Mr. Curzon\* has certainly a most contemptible opinion of us poor West Riding provincials; and he does not hesitate to state it to the world. Allow me to thank him for such an honest expression of opinion! Doubtless this opinion has been formed from a practical knowledge of the sort of lecturers the great towns of the North possess, and is confirmed by the fact, that few if any candidates for honours in physiology present themselves at the examinations of the Society of Arts: hence it follows as a *legitimate* consequence, and justifies the very *modest* and complimentary expression of opinion, that "there is no one within fifty miles of Huddersfield qualified to give instruction in physiology". If this opinion is a correct one, our provincial schools of medicine ought to have been abolished long ago, and the labours of such men as the Heys, Thackeray, Williamson, Teale, Smith, Garlick, Nunneley, etc. (speaking now of the Leeds School only), have been fruitless, and they have not left a student, much less a teacher of physiology, worth naming. Are my colleagues at the Medical Schools in York and Sheffield, or my brethren in Halifax, Bradford, and Huddersfield, such a set of humdrums, and so indifferently qualified in physiological and anatomical science, that, though they may have succeeded in becoming M.D.'s at a University, or in qualifying at the College of Surgeons and Apothecaries' Hall, they yet are not fit to teach the principles of physiology to a class of mechanics, or amuse and edify the more fashionable audience of some so called (in our provincial vanity) Philosophical Society? If Mr. Curzon speaks the truth, the sooner we abolish the title of our learned societies, the better; for, if the country towns cannot find a teacher—a popular teacher—of physiology, I am sure the learned professions cannot assume to themselves the title of learned. No, the lovers of wisdom, and the students of nature and its wonderful workings, as manifested in the varied functions of man and animals, live not in the barbaric localities of the pro-

vincial towns (though Priestley, Hey, and Thackeray, did happen to live in Leeds, and were natives, not exotics), but are confined to the sublime regions of the metropolis, and to the list of lecturers recommended by the Society of Arts.

But, joking apart, I am quite willing to admit, in common with the rest of the community interested in these matters, that the *most eminent* teachers and lecturers *do* belong to the great universities and to the metropolis; but I cannot admit, or allow to pass unnoticed, either in the JOURNAL or in other quarters, the sweeping assertion that "there was no one within fifty miles of Huddersfield qualified to give instruction in physiology". This opinion, if true, proves that our professional education has been an utter failure, and renders us unworthy to join any scientific body, much less to attempt to instruct others: or, if it is not true, and not warranted by facts themselves, I am justified in calling it a libellous and impertinent remark, which Mr. Curzon ought to be made publicly to withdraw. My brethren in Huddersfield should insist on an explanation and apology at the meeting on the 29th; and I hope that Mr. Knaggs (whose name you have cited as well able to instruct in popular physiology), or some of my old friends in that rising town, will not allow the opportunity to be lost. I am sure my late lamented friend, Professor Taylor, would have vindicated the profession from such a disparaging assertion, had he been spared to meet Mr. Curzon in his native town.

Now for facts. For years past my brethren in the different large towns and country villages in the West Riding have been amongst the most constant supporters of, and lecturers to, the mechanics' institutions, and philosophical and other societies. They do not, it is true, profess or volunteer to teach the various branches of physiology of man and animals to a popular audience in a few popular lectures: such an idea is too preposterous to be entertained, as they know, and know from experience, that a systematic and lengthened course, extending over weeks if not months, can alone do this; and they naturally feel disposed to question whether hard worked mechanics, industrious clerks, and long confined shopboys, have the time at their disposal to become students in physiology, and to acquire a sufficient amount of physiological knowledge as would warrant them subjecting themselves to an examination and to public competition. They know very well that the study of chemistry, the art of drawing, and a practical knowledge of mechanics and the various branches of natural philosophy, are more likely to be really useful and profitable in the struggle for their bread, than even an intimate knowledge of the action of the heart and arteries, the functions of the lungs and skin, or the process of digestion. A few clear short lectures, well illustrated, on the principles of physiology, the natural modes of preserving health and enjoying it, and on the luxury of personal cleanliness, will always be useful and appreciated, and have for years past been delivered at times to the various public institutions; but to discuss details in physiology before a popular audience—*e. g.*, on secretion, excretion, development of the embryo, and the physiology of generation, etc.—neither can nor ever will be done by any man of eminence or real scientific attainments, though Mr. Curzon may be pleased to think that the young men and women of the West Riding require instruction in these matters! The Society of Arts can and may stimulate the rising talent of the age to compete in other branches of knowledge; but the *study* of physiology as a *science* is somewhat beyond the reach of our labouring population, though a knowledge of it is essential to the medical man and to the cultivator of high art. To aid mechanics' institutions, and instruct and interest the members of our philosophical societies, gentlemen in all stations and professions have come forward to lecture and read papers; and the provincial members of the medical profession have not been the least active supporters of these bodies, and have even been thought by their neighbours qualified to be so. I fear, as far as physiology is concerned (and this general term we may consider here to include natural history), we must now, under Mr. Curzon's sweeping denunciation, be content to hide our diminished heads, and give place to some learned metropolitan, or to some Professor A. or Dr. B. (out of a situation), who will condescend to enlighten our benighted understandings in the rudiments of physiology, pocket a good fee, astonish a lot of young lads and lasses by dwelling "on the wonders of their frame", and return to town with a good share of the funds of an institution perhaps supported with difficulty. Paid popular lecturers do more to beggar mechanics' and philosophical societies than any other cause. The system of popular lecturing for fees is one of the humbugs of the day;

\* I am not aware who Mr. Curzon is; whether he is a metropolitan or provincial. At least, he considers he has a right to set up as a *public censor*.

and, when a man cannot succeed any other way, he turns public lecturer, or goes about displaying an anatomical Venus! We have plenty of provincial talent to support our own institutions, if it could only be brought out; and if we would only determine to rely more upon ourselves than on paid talent from London, the country would be a gainer. I hope the institutions in the West Riding will never give their money to a paid lecturer on physiology: if they want sound suitable lectures on this subject, let the societies apply to their professional members, who can give them the information they require, without calling for help from London; and the societies will save the outlay as well. In Leeds and our other towns, our most eminent professional men have aided the societies in this way from their very onset, and have given lectures on such branches of physiology and natural history as could with propriety be brought before a general audience. I have no doubt they will continue to do so, and even extend their assistance to the Society of Arts, if requisite, and properly applied to, notwithstanding the uncalled for and contemptuous opinion expressed by Mr. Curzon.

As a friend and supporter of the mechanics' institutions of the Riding for the last twenty years, I could not allow such a paragraph as I have quoted at the commencement of these remarks to remain unnoticed; and, none of my brethren having as yet taken any notice of it, I feared the matter might be overlooked, and the statement go unchallenged to the world. Having given popular lectures on the principles of physiology, and on public hygiene, to most of our institutions in Leeds and the West Riding, and those lectures having been well attended, I can only, in conclusion, recommend my younger and more accomplished professional friends to try their hand and use their pencil in a way that will prove to every one that there are parties even "within fifty miles of Huddersfield" who are qualified to give instruction in physiology.

I am, etc.,

J. INGHAM IKIN, F.R.C.S.,

Lecturer on Anatomy and Physiology.

Leeds, July 13th, 1857.

P.S. What our mechanics really require teaching is the comfort and necessity to health of personal cleanliness; how to use their stomach, and not *abuse* it; how (dangerous doctrine as, to a teetotaller, it may seem) they *may* take a *little* wine for its sake, without injury to their bodies or peril to their souls; why an impure and tainted atmosphere poisons their blood and diseases their lungs; why pigging together in bed shortens life and destroys health; why over exertion and excitement have the same effect; how their brains and mental faculties are made to be used and cultivated; and how the *disuse* of them reduces them in the scale of creation, and renders them unfit to benefit themselves or glorify their Creator!

J. I. I.

#### MR. A. PRICHARD ON AMYLENE.

LETTER FROM JOHN SNOW, M.D.

SIR,—There are some paragraphs respecting amylene in the address of the President of the Bath and Bristol Branch of the Association, published in the JOURNAL of to-day, which seem to call for some remarks from me; and I shall therefore be obliged if you will allow me a little space for them.

Mr. Prichard appears to me to be entirely misinformed with respect to every statement which he makes regarding amylene. He commences by saying, "Some months ago we were startled by the announcement that a new anæsthetic had been discovered, equal to chloroform in every respect, and superior to it in this one most important particular, that it was devoid of the amount of danger to life which all reasonable persons admitted to be connected with the use of chloroform." I did not make the announcement of the use of amylene in a way to startle any one, but, on the contrary, tried to explain why a greater number of volatile narcotics had not been already introduced, and expressed an expectation that others would be discovered. What is of more importance, it was not announced that amylene was equal to chloroform in every respect, or that it was superior to it in this one most important particular, etc. I gave an account of certain advantages which amylene has over chloroform, and of one or two disadvantages which it has in comparison with that agent; but I did not place its probable freedom from danger either in one scale or the other. I spoke separately of the probable freedom of amylene from danger, and I said no more in its favour than I had frequently said of chloroform. My words were as follows: "While I cannot venture to predict for it the absolute safety which seems to attend sulphuric ether under all circumstances, I confidently trust that it

will be perfectly safe with careful management." (*Medical Times and Gazette*, January 1857, p. 84.) Although these hopes have not been literally fulfilled, I believe that, in course of time, they will prove not to be without reasonable foundation. There are some circumstances connected with the accident which has occurred, which indicate how a similar result may be most probably avoided.

Mr. Prichard is in error in saying that amylene proved fatal much sooner than chloroform had. He is not speaking of the relative extent to which the two agents were probably used, either in this country or elsewhere; for sooner is an adverb of time. Now, chloroform was first used in its undiluted state by Dr. Simpson, in the early part of November 1847; and the first death from it occurred near Newcastle, on January 28th, 1848, or between two and three months afterwards; and it was soon followed by others. Amylene was first employed on November 10th, 1856; and the accident which happened from it occurred on April 7th, nearly five months afterwards. I have not heard of any other casualty from its use, although I believe that it is still used largely in many of the hospitals in France. I have administered it in 94 cases, many of them capital operations, since the accident above alluded to, making in all 238 cases. I compare its effects with those of chloroform, which I exhibit to a much greater extent; and I see no reason to alter the opinions which I gave in a paper, an abstract of which appeared in the JOURNAL of January 17th. I may remark, in correction of one statement of Mr. Prichard, respecting practical experience, that I did not publish any opinion respecting amylene till I had administered it in some capital operations, as well as several minor ones.

Mr. Prichard is so entirely mistaken on every point respecting amylene, that I cannot feel personally concerned with the tone of his remarks; but, supposing he had been correct regarding the circumstances, and that amylene had been introduced in a sanguine manner, and with great praise, and that it had been already abandoned, I doubt whether the style of sarcastic reprimand, if not exultation, which he has employed, would be calculated to encourage other laborious attempts to advance the science and practice of medicine.

I am, etc.,

JOHN SNOW.

Sackville Street, July 25th, 1857.

#### MORPHIATED LOZENGES.

LETTER FROM WALTER GARSTANG, M.D.

SIR,—I cannot too strongly animadvert against the sneering tone in which "Another Member" has taken upon himself the trouble to reply, in your last, to the letter of the Barnsley correspondent on the question of morphiated lozenges. His *nihil ad rem* epistle appears to me to be in the most liberal sense uncalled for; and, moreover, he might have refrained from attempting to hide his shame under the guise of a *scriptor ignotus*, had he couched his sentiments on the subject in such terms as the question naturally implies, and as befit gentlemen of an honourable profession to use in their intercourse with each other on matters regarding science or art. Seriously, it is incredible that "Another Member" has ever been led away, by "parody" or by experience, to prescribe an *ointment* to be taken for the relief of a "troublesome tickling cough".

That morphiated lozenges are a useful, agreeable, and truly efficacious form of medicine, is a statement which cannot admit of a single doubt in the mind of any conscientious practitioner, and even in that of "Another Member". Can it be that our Sussex friend denies that, in the treatment of a "troublesome tickling cough" in a child (young lady) or adult, whether due to phthisis, bronchitis, pneumonitis, or to that commonest of all ordinary causes, pharyngeal irritation, lozenges containing morphia, allowed to dissolve gradually in the mouth, have a less important remedial agency, or are less pleasant, than his own cough mixtures, drops, pills, or powders? Or can it be that he has forgotten the physiological anatomy of the nervous supply of the mucous membrane of the tongue, pharynx, etc.; the connections of the œsophageal and tonsillitic plexuses with the branches of the pneumogastric nerves; or, in short, the abundant supply of absorbents of the tongue itself, by which so very soluble a salt as that of the hydrochlorate of morphia may at once be taken up, and be directly discharged into the venous system, without undergoing the very circuitous route of the lacteal vessels? I surely need not write thus on anatomy and the *rationale* of therapeutics, to refresh the mind of "Another Member"; but I do need to inform him that he has not offered a substitute for the troch. morph. et ipecac.