

been performed upon her. He was in continual dread of an attack of the disease, in consequence of his face having been covered with mucus and false membrane, expectorated by the patient during the operation. Throughout the duration of the disease Dr. Gendron appears to have suffered greatly. Pure hydrochloric acid was applied to a diphtheritic patch which appeared in one of his amygdalæ and caused excessive pain, and in the same evening nitrate of silver solution. Tartar emetic was administered, and caused vomiting and much purging. Great œdema of the pharynx and laryngeal croup ensued, and he was rapidly carried off in the course of a few days. One cannot help remarking upon the nature of the treatment in this case; and from the results can certainly find nothing which would recommend its repetition. Here is a disease which is peculiarly marked, as is well known, by excessive prostration of the vital powers, and yet even in the last attack of it in this case tartrate of antimony and ipecacuanha were administered. The main point of all—the sustaining of the powers of life whilst struggling against the disease—seems to be quite overlooked by our French brethren. Then, again, is it rational, the application of pure hydrochloric acid to the throat? Is it not certain that it must inevitably produce some of the ordinary results of inflammation, congestion and swelling for instance, which should, above all things, be avoided in cases of this nature. The patient died in extreme agony, and was manifestly suffocated by the œdema and false membranes. The idea of tracheotomy does not seem to have been entertained in this case.

THE London College of Physicians is rapidly proceeding towards a consummation of its present enlarged intentions—the collecting under its wings of the medical practitioners of the country, or, in other words, the granting of a licence which shall replace the licence of Apothecaries' Hall. The bye-laws under which the College will act in this matter are already published, and have been noticed in our pages—the nature of the examination, and qualifications required from candidates. On Thursday last the College advanced one step further in this direction. It met together to elect examiners, and to make final arrangements for the examination proposed. Consequently, the profession may expect, at an early moment, to hear that the medical portals of Pall Mall College are open to every aspirant to a medical qualification in this country. The College now is bold enough to disdain the old wit, *Nulla vestigia retrorsum*, and takes up the position it lost in 1815. But will the Worshipful Company of Apothecaries rest quiet under this new position taken up by the College? Time must show. They have, it is true, threatened, and, we hear, are resolved, to have their rights put legally square by the

people at Westminster Hall. If so, the first accepted licentiate of the new medical honours referred to will be the *cheval de bataille* through whom the question will be judged. The College of Physicians is, we hear, confident of its position—that it is a correct and readily definable one.

THE following Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians have been elected examiners under the new bye-laws of the College:—In *Preliminary Education*, Drs. W. A. Guy, P. Black, and Henry Thompson; in *Physiology and Anatomy*, Drs. Handfield Jones and W. Brinton; in *Materia Medica, Chemistry, and Pharmacy*, Drs. Frederick J. Farre and G. Owen Rees; in *Principles and Practice of Medicine*, Drs. W. A. Page, T. A. Barker, and W. H. Walshe; in *Midwifery*, Drs. A. Farre and C. West.

Association Intelligence.

BRANCH MEETINGS TO BE HELD.

NAME OF BRANCH.	PLACE OF MEETING.	DATE.
SHROPSHIRE SCIENTIFIC. Annual General.	Lion Hotel, Shrewsbury.	Friday, Jan. 20, 2.30 P.M.
METROPOL. COUNTIES. General.	37, Soho Square.	Wed., Jan. 30, 4 P.M.

SUBSCRIPTIONS PAID FOR 1860.

MEMBERS who have paid for 1860, accidentally omitted from last list:—

Beadles, H., Esq., Broadway, Worcester.
Clarke, J. L., Esq., Saltash, Cornwall.
Gillett, W. E., L.R.C.P.E., Taunton.
Minshull, J. L., Esq., Liverpool.
Paterson, G., M.D., Tiverton, Devon.
Sewell, R. R., M.D., Bridgwater.

SHROPSHIRE ETHICAL BRANCH.

THE Council of the Shropshire Branch beg to remind the members that their subscriptions to the British Medical Association and Medical Benevolent Fund for the current year became due on the 1st instant; and they will feel obliged if the members will remit the amount of the same by post-office order to Dr. Jukes Styrap, Hon. Sec.; punctuality in payment being most essential to the successful progress of the parent society.

WEST SOMERSET BRANCH.

THIS Branch has been re-established, and is again in active operation. *President*: J. Prankerd, Esq. (Langport). *Council*: H. Alford, Esq. (Taunton); W. M. Kelly, M.D. (Taunton); G. Kidgell, Esq. (Wellington); R. Marchant, Esq. (North Curry); H. W. Randolph, Esq. (Wiveliscombe); W. Reynolds, Esq. (Wellington). *Honorary Secretary*: W. E. Gillett, M.D. (Taunton).

PARISIAN HOSPITAL STATISTICS. There are in Paris at the present time in hospitals and infirmaries of the hospices 7,877 beds appropriated to the treatment of diseases. The beds of the hospitals are divided as follows:—For medical cases, 3,250; surgical cases, 1,706; accouchements, 677; skin diseases, 933; venereal diseases, 612; making a total of 7,178. In 1859, 96,082 patients were treated in the hospitals and hospices—90,996 in hospitals, and 5,086 in hospices.

The third view is the only feasible mode of conceiving poisoning with opium in such a case as this. But death could not arise in that way, without traces of the manner of exposure to the influence of the poison being discovered; and no such evidence was found, and indeed none seems to have been sought for on this occasion.

In the absence of positive or even presumptive proof of a manner in which the laudanum could have acted, the question of natural death falls to be considered. But here the inquiry is altogether at fault. Infants will die suddenly or rapidly, in a very obscure way, from natural causes. Such cases may imitate poisoning; they require great care in the investigation; and sometimes, with every possible care, the truth cannot be satisfactorily discovered. But a skilful inspection of the dead body is the most likely of all means for making the discovery; and, nevertheless, this measure was wholly neglected. Such neglect vitiates, in my opinion, every conclusion which can be drawn from the other evidence. And hence, were there a court of review in England, as on the continent, for checking erroneous verdicts, I have no doubt this verdict would be quashed.

You inform me the coroner claims for his jury that they decided the case by the rules of common sense. But common sense, in such a question as this, must judge according to established medical fact and doctrine. If common sense do not judge in that way, it is certain to result in some very uncommon nonsense.

I rather imagine the coroner meant that his jury judged by intuition; for many people make the mistake of confounding the two guides. But intuition can no more enable an ignorant coroner's jury than a profound medical philosopher to solve an intricate and novel medical question either of fact or theory.

As for the imputation thrown upon the medical attendant by the verdict of the inquest, such a result is simply ridiculous, in the circumstances as put before me.

I am yours truly, R. CHRISTISON.

Dr. G. B. C. Watson.

Copy.

At a meeting of the Chester Medical and Ethical Society, held in the Library of the Infirmary, December 24th, 1860, Mr. Harrison in the chair, the following resolution was proposed, seconded, and carried unanimously:—

"That this meeting, having heard read the depositions taken before the coroner in the case of Fanny Bruce Sutcliffe, an infant, and having heard Dr. Watson's explanations of the case, is of opinion that Dr. Watson is not to blame in his treatment and management of the case, and that he has shown every caution necessary. The meeting is also of opinion that, in consequence of there not having been any medical witness produced before the coroner, the jury gave their verdict without sufficient evidence; the mother, and an old woman who acted as nurse, being the only witnesses examined.

(Signed)

"JOHN HARRISON, *Chairman.*

"THOS. BRITAIN, *Secretary.*"

A MATTER OF FACT VIEW OF THE USE OF MERCURY IN DISEASE.

LETTER FROM THOMAS POPE, ESQ.

SIR,—If you deem this of sufficient importance to merit a place in the JOURNAL, be it so.

We will suppose a case of very frequent occurrence with the following symptoms; viz., a darkened skin of a yellowish cast; the same appearance of the sclerotic; a highly furred tongue; no secretion of saliva, but instead thereof an abundant faucal secretion of mucus, flatulence more or less, a disagreeable fetor of the breath, with a most unpleasant taste, particularly on first awak-

ing in the morning; all the symptoms of anorexia more or less; dyspepsia; enlargement of the liver indicated by palpitation, pain in the right chest and as high as the shoulder, with uneasiness on deep inspiration; frequent inability of left lateral decubitus, and only easier when on the right side; faeces blackish or clay-coloured, very offensive; urine high-coloured, and often depositing a lateritious sediment; depression of spirits, sometimes amounting to hypochondriasis; the pulse sometimes unaffected.

Now, I would ask any but a Don Quixote,—how he could dispense with mercury in the reduction of the liver, and cure of such a patient? We know that without saliva there can be no perfect digestion; and, till that be established, the secretion of mucus continues, and no amendment takes place. But when we administer pilula hydrargyri, soda, conium, hyoscyamus, taraxacum, with strict attention to the state of the bowels, and a proper mild nutritive diet, till the restoration of the salivary secretion, how the skin and sclerotic resume their natural colour, as well as the faeces and urine, the spirits their usual buoyancy, the stomach and lungs their healthy state, the liver its accustomed size, recumbency as easy on either side, and, in short, a perfect restoration to health.

Let us see what would be the result, in all probability, were mercury discarded? A functional affection of the liver would be converted to an organic one, and the consequence would be a miserable existence for the remainder of the short life of the patient.

All orthodox medical men know that mercury, like all other powerful articles of the materia medica, must be cautiously used, and that it is liable to the general rule, but that it is most indispensable and invaluable. So far mercury; one word on myalgia. Are we to infer, that muscle, abstractedly, is capable of motion or sensation? Neurology says no. I am, etc.,

THOMAS POPE.

Clebury Mortimer, Dec. 8th, 1860.

Medical News.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS. The following members of the College, having been elected Fellows at previous meetings of the Council, were admitted as such on January 10th:—

Edwards, David Owen, Brompton, Middlesex; diploma of membership dated September 19th, 1828

Goodall, Abraham, Her Majesty's Indian Army; Dec. 28, 1827

APOTHECARIES' HALL. On Thursday, January 10th, the following licentiates were admitted:—

Butten, William S., Shaftesbury

Mead, Henry T. H., Canterbury

Wollaston, Thomas G., King's College Hospital

APPOINTMENTS.

ROYAL ARMY. The following appointment has been made:—

Wood, T., M.D., Staff-Assistant-Surgeon, to be Assistant-Surgeon 54th Foot, *vice* Youell, appointed to the Staff.

ROYAL NAVY. The following appointments have been made:—

BAIRD, Wm. J., M.D., Surgeon (additional), to the *Victory*.

CLARK, George, Esq., Acting Assistant-Surgeon, to the *Chesapeake*.

DUBUC, Emilius W., Esq., Acting Assistant-Surgeon, to the *London*.

O'TOOLE, W. H., Esq., Acting Assistant-Surgeon, to the *Chesapeake*.

PARR, James F., Esq., Acting Assistant-Surgeon, to the *Chesapeake*.

SLOSS, Joseph, M.D., Surgeon, to the *Intrepid*.

VOLUNTEER CORPS. The following appointments have been made (A.V.—Artillery Volunteers; R.V.—Rifle Volunteers):—

BARKER, W. R. H., Esq., to be Assistant-Surgeon 9th Berks R.V.

BLACKIE, R., Esq., to be Assistant-Surgeon 15th Shropshire R.V.

BURKITT, T. W., Esq., to be Assist.-Surgeon 38th West Riding R.V.

COCHRAN, A., M.D., to be Assist.-Surgeon 15th Perthshire R.V.
 CHAINE, R. E., Esq., to be Assist.-Surgeon 3rd Isle of Man R.V.
 FULLER, T., Esq., to be Assist.-Surgeon 4th Sussex A.V.
 GILL, H. K., Esq., to be Assist.-Surgeon 22nd Lancashire Artillery.
 HOPKINS, G. H., Esq., to be Assist.-Surgeon 40th Company Staff
 fordshire R.V.
 JONES, W. V., Esq., to be Assist.-Surgeon 3rd Merionethshire R.V.
 NUNN, R., Esq., to be Assist.-Surgeon 7th Oxfordshire R.V.
 UNDERWOOD, T., M.D., to be Assist.-Surgeon 1st Isle of Man R.V.
 WEIR, A., Esq., to be Surgeon 2nd Administrative Battalion Wor-
 cestershire R.V.
 WOODMAN, W. R., M.D., to be Assist.-Surgeon 4th Middlesex R.V.

BIRTH.

Of a son, the wife of—

*BROWN, George D., Henley-on-Thames, on January 11.

DEATHS.

BROADFOOT. On January 12th, at 8, Talbot Square, aged 74, Esther,
 widow of the late Alexander Broadfoot, M.D.
 COLBORNE. On January 14, at Chippenharn, aged 25, Frances
 Rachel, youngest daughter of *William Colborne, Esq.
 CONOLLY, William, M.D., at Bath, on January 10.
 GOODCHILD. On January 11, at St. John's Wood, aged 68, Rebekah,
 widow of the late John Goodchild, Esq., Surgeon.
 HOULTON, Joseph, Esq., Surgeon, at 12, Blomfield Street, W., aged
 72, on January 14.
 HUNT. On January 11, at 23, Alfred Place, Bedford Square, aged
 53, Martha Mary, wife of *Thomas Hunt, Esq.
 JACKSON, George, Esq., Surgeon, Church Street, Spitalfields, aged
 68, on January 15.
 *KAY, William, M.D., at Clifton, aged 54, on January 12.
 LESTRANGE, Francis R., Esq., Surgeon, aged 72, on January 14.
 NORTON, Francis H., M.D., Ecclestone, aged 69, on January 11th.
 PAINTER. On January 15, at Bridges Street, W.C., Marianne, wife of
 Richard B. Painter, M.D.
 *FLOMLEY, Francis, M.D., Physician to the West Kent Infirmary, at
 Maidstone, aged 55, on January 9.
 PRIOR. On January 11, at Bedford, Henry Morrice, second son of
 C. E. Prior, M.D.
 TAYLOR, A., Esq., Surgeon, 4, Spur Street, Leicester Square, aged 72,
 on January 13.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS. Dr. A. Smith was
 elected a member of the College on the 17th instant.

UNIVERSALITY OF SCROFULA. Dr. Gregory of Edin-
 burgh has asserted as his belief that not a single family
 in Great Britain was exempt from scrofulous taint.

HYDROPHOBIA. From the annual report issued by the
 General Hospital of Vienna, it appears that of 115 indi-
 viduals who were bitten by rabid animals only 25 died
 from hydrophobia.

LONDON HOSPITAL. During the year 1860, 11,944
 accidents have been brought to the London Hospital;
 of these 2143 were treated as in- and 9806 as out-
 patients. The number of accidents brought to the Hos-
 pital during the last nineteen years amounts to 174,694.

ACADEMY OF SCIENCES. Dr. Thomas Inman has
 forwarded a memoir on Myalgia to the Academy of
 Sciences, and desires the opinion of the Academy upon
 it. M. J. Cloquet was requested to examine the memoir,
 and if he thought well, to make it the subject of a verbal
 report. (*Gaz. des Hôpît.*)

BENEFICENCE. The late Mr. Thomas Thornton, of
 Brunswick Square, Brighton, has bequeathed £4000 to
 various charities, not forgetting the medical institutions.
 having left £400 to each of the following, namely, King's
 College Hospital, the Sussex County Hospital, the
 Brighton Infirmary, and the Asylum for Idiots.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS. The lectures at the London
 College of Physicians are to be delivered as follows
 during the present year. The Lumleian Lectures by Dr.
 Barker, Croonian Lectures by Dr. Guy, and the Gul-
 stonian Lectures by Dr. Brown-Séquard. Short courses
 of lectures will also be given by Dr. Garrod and Dr.
 Lionel Beale.

SICK SOLDIERS FROM CHINA. The first detachment of
 sick troops from China have reached the hospital, Chat-
 ham. The *Epsom* brings home nearly 100 sick and

wounded. Six insane soldiers, who arrived at Fort Pitt
 with the invalids, were admitted into the lunatic hospital
 at that establishment. During the passage home one
 man of the 67th Regiment, and one orderly of the Medi-
 cal Staff Corps, died on board.

ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL. On Friday week a ballot took
 place at the Board-room of St. George's Hospital for
 the election of a gentleman to fill the vacant office of
 secretary to that institution. The only two candidates
 who offered themselves were Mr. Holmes and Major
 Lyon, the former of whom was elected by a majority of
 19; the relative numbers of votes polled being 88 to 69,
 out of a constituency of upwards of 700.

BARNUM'S COUNTRY. The *New York Tribune* states
 that it is to receive over thirty-one thousand dollars for
 one year's insertion of a quack advertisement in its daily,
 semi-weekly, and weekly issues. It states that this will
 prove a provitable investment to the advertiser, in which
 case this enormous sum of money will, of course, be
 drawn from the readers of that paper, and be paid back
 to the quack, for his worthless preparation. The uni-
 versal panacea now put forward is called the "Cephalic
 Pills".

WEIGHT OF MEN. It is stated that 4369 men had
 been weighed at the Mechanics' Fair in Boston, and that
 their average weight was 146 lbs. 13 ounces. The mean
 weight of men in Belgium (Brussels and its environs),
 is 140.49 pounds. In France (Paris and the neighbour-
 hood), the mean weight is 136.89 pounds. In England
 (taken at Cambridge, between the ages of 18 and 28),
 the mean weight was found to be 150.98 pounds. It
 would be a good idea, founded on something more than
 mere curiosity, to have a good set of scales used at fairs
 in all parts of the country.

SURGERY AMONG THE MORMONS. The Mormon theo-
 logy contemplates the cure of diseases by miraculous in-
 terposition; hence the disciples of the healing art are not
 held in much estimation. The church authorities are
 exceedingly jealous at any attempt to cure by ordinary
 therapeutics, and denounce from the pulpit any invasion
 of their special province. Though they claim for the
 "laying on of hands" (cheirapsia) wonderful efficacy,
 the number of deformities, the result of malpractice, to
 be seen in any of the populous towns, rather indicates a
 necessity for the use of carnal means. The art of surgery
 is at a low ebb. (*American Med. Times.*)

THE ARMY HOSPITAL CORPS. A committee has been
 appointed by the Secretary of State for War to consider
 and report on the organisation of the Army Hospital
 Corps, and to draw up a scheme for the establishment
 of general hospitals. It will be constituted as follows:
 Colonel Clark Kennedy, C.B., Commandant of Military
 Train; Dr. Mapleton, Deputy Inspector General; Dr.
 Sutherland, Sanitary Commissioner; Dr. Fyffe, Surgeon
 5th Dragoon Guards; J. Scott Robertson, Purveyor-in-
 Chief. The committee hold their meetings at 6, White-
 hall-yard, but they will move from time to time to the
 various stations to examine the general hospitals. (*Army
 and Navy Gazette.*)

WATERING-PLACE IN FRANCE. The town of Croisee,
 in France, is a very desirable watering-place, if we may
 trust its admirers:—"The inhabitants breathe a very
 pure air charged with saline particles; they have ex-
 cellent food; their houses, built of granite, are large
 and excellently ventilated; the town is built along the
 harbour. No unhealthy manufactory is established
 there. It results from these advantages, that diseases
 are, comparatively speaking, very rare at Croisee, and
 life longer there than elsewhere. Octogenarians and
 nonagenarians are numerous there. There is, indeed,
 an old proverb, that at Croisee the men can never make
 up their minds to die, and as for the women, you must
 destroy them if you wish to be rid of them."

HOSPITAL CHARITY. The Rev. Dr. Miller made the following sensible remarks at the last annual meeting of the Birmingham Hospital, *apropos* of special hospitals:—"The greater his experience as a clergyman among the poor, the more he was convinced that few things are so difficult as the wise administration of charity. In addition to a large heart and an open hand, it was desirable to have a very wise head; for when relief was indiscriminately distributed, they not only lost their money, which was the least part of the mischief, but they induced a very great social evil. Therefore, he thought it the duty of public men to impress on those possessing the will as well as the means to do good, the necessity of choosing proper channels for their bounty."

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE HOSPITAL. On the recommendation of the Medical Committee of the Hospital, it was resolved to institute an office of assistant-surgeon for the Eye Infirmary of the hospital; and the intention was ordered to be advertised. On the application of students with a view to the degrees of B.A. and B.Sc. of the University of London, and on the recommendation of the Senate of the College, it was resolved to institute evening courses of instruction in animal physiology and zoology. Mr. John Marshall, surgeon to the hospital, author of the work and diagrams lately published under the title of *The Human Body, its Structure and Functions*, was appointed lecturer for the course on physiology, and Dr. Grant, Professor of Comparative Anatomy and Zoology in the college, was requested to undertake to give the lectures on zoology.

WHAT IS A FACT? There is an old saying, unanswerable as a fact; but it is an erroneous saying. On the contrary, nothing is more elastic, more convenient, and manageable, than a fact. The absurdest of doctrines are made to rest on facts. The reputation obtained by a pretended curer for cancer was founded on a fact. Thousands of facts are daily made use of to serve the purposes of the vilest quackeries. And, even amongst honest minded men, what errors are elicited from the observation of facts! As M. Velpeau lately said, at the opening of the clinique, "We judge of facts by the lamp of our intelligence; and this lamp is sometimes too small, sometimes too great, and is always fitted with glasses which modify the objects more or less; and then, as facts have many faces, we often see only that face of them which pleases us." Difficult indeed is the interpretation of facts! (*Journal de Médecine.*)

A GOOD EXAMPLE. Twelve months since a few of the workmen employed at Messrs. Truman, Hanbury, and Buxton's brewery, conceived the idea of promoting a weekly penny subscription throughout that establishment in support of the Victoria Park Hospital. A meeting convened on the 10th of December, 1859, resolved to put the suggestion into practice, and appointed a committee for that purpose. The result of twelve months exertion is pre-eminently satisfactory. The committee has handed over to the hospital the sum of £63, and commences the new year with £6 in hand. It reflects the highest credit on the intelligence and benevolence of these men, that they have done this voluntarily without suggestion or inducement from those in authority over them; and it offers a noble example to the workmen in other employments which we shall be glad to see them follow. (*Standard.*)

DETECTION OF CASTOR-OIL IN VOLATILE OILS. Mr. H. N. Draper recommends the following means of detecting the presence of castor-oil in the volatile-oils:—"Twenty drops of the suspected oil are placed in a small porcelain capsule, and heated on a sand-bath until the odour of the oil is no longer perceived. To the residue—if there be any—add five or six drops of nitric acid, and as soon as the action has subsided dilute with a solution

of carbonate of soda. If castor-oil be present, the odour of the cœnanthyllic acid will now be at once perceived, and once smelled is not likely to be mistaken for any other. As, however, it can hardly be compared to any other familiar odour, any one who has occasion to use this test will do well to make the experiment with castor-oil alone, and to acquaint himself with the peculiar smell. In this way Mr. Draper has been able to detect the admixture of five per cent. of castor-oil in volatile oils, and has no doubt even a much smaller proportion could be recognised." (*Dublin Med. Press.*)

A PROFESSIONAL SKETCH IN DETROIT. Dr. Brodie, who details a case of hydrophobia in the *American Medical Times*, winds up his tale as follows:—"The case was one of great interest to the community, and, much to the discomfort of the patient, everybody wanted to see him, and would see him, both professional and layman. Everybody had a cure, and did not hesitate, in my absence, not only to urge the friends to administer, but even do themselves so. Two physicians, ignoring all professional ethics, taking advantage of my absence, declared the case one of delirium tremens, and administered remedies for the same. I cannot, therefore, let the opportunity pass by of calling the attention of medical educators to many of their graduates, who, although able to pass an examination, have not the first qualification to associate with gentlemen, whose principles will violate all courtesy, whose ignorance prevents them from either reading or comprehending the common rudiments of the English language, and whose prescriptions are a burlesque. It is high time a united effort were made to place our profession where it has stood in the past, and ought to stand in the present."

DEATHS IN LONDON. The returns of deaths for the thirteen weeks that ended December 29th show that London was comparatively healthy during that period. "Fineness of the weather", in the popular sense of the phrase, will hardly be admitted to have been the cause of the decrease of mortality. The weather was generally cold, frequently wet or dull, and before the year closed singularly severe. In the tables of the *Causes of Death*, the most satisfactory feature that presents itself is the reduction of the mortality from zymotic diseases. The decrease was found under small-pox, which was fatal last quarter in 74 cases, or about six weekly; under typhus and scarlatina, but principally the last. Measles exhibit an increase; so also do whooping-cough and croup, taken together. The deaths from diarrhoea were rather more numerous. Alcoholism counted 36 victims, instead of 48 and 70 in the two previous corresponding periods. Abstinence from intoxicating liquors, or, as it has lately been termed, *nephalism*, may have found in the dearthness of provisions an ally whose support even the warmest advocates of temperance would probably not invite. There was apparently no undue tendency in the quarter to the fatal development of pulmonary diseases. Women who died after child bearing were 103; the average is 118. Twenty-eight deaths, nearly all those of children, were by homicide, chiefly murder; 63 were by suicide; 415 by accident or negligence.

POISONING BY FUNGI. On the 25th October, 1859, some fungi were served up at the breakfast of the lieutenants and ensigns in garrison at Corte, which one of them had collected the previous evening in a wood of chestnut trees. Before preparing them for table, the steward had expressed his suspicions upon these fungi, but the officer insisted upon their being served up. Six officers ate of these fungi, which had preserved their natural colour, and all remarked that they were *very salt*. Towards eight o'clock in the evening, ten hours after their consumption, the six officers were seized with vomiting. All believed this was due to indigestion, and they did not think of the fungi till two hours afterwards. In a short time the vomiting was accompanied by colic.

A medical practitioner prescribed for each of the patients an emetic draught and purgative injections. The invalids had a bad night; the vomiting and colic continued, and they experienced cramp and a burning heat at the epigastrium. Five of the officers had then recourse to various empiric remedies, which were extolled in the country. One of them, better advised, followed a rational treatment. This officer alone survived the horrible catastrophe. Four of the invalids went into the hospital three days after the poisoning. The treatment adopted especially consisted in infusions of coffee, varied frictions, mustard poultices, and purgative injections. Three sunk at the end of three days. These invalids exhibited alternations of cerebral excitement and coma. M. Chevrei has published four interesting notices on this case of poisoning, which he attributes to the spurious Orange Agaric (*Agaricus muscarius* of Linnæus; *Amanita muscaria* of Greville). The Army Board of Health, in consequence of this unfortunate accident, have drawn up instructions relative to edible and poisonous fungi, which we think might be profitably consulted by pharmacologists. (*Journal de Pharm.*)

ERGOTED GRAIN. Ergot is an affection of the seeds of many species of grass, including those which are cultivated under the common name of corn, by which they are converted into a hard, dark, spur-shaped body, generally much larger and longer than the seed, though sometimes, as in wheat, not differing very materially in size. Externally it is slightly rough, varying in tint from black or brown to purplish, with frequently a white mealy wash in parts, and at first, if not permanently, tipped with a little irregular scale-like process. When examined under the microscope it exhibits, on a section of this upper portion or the parts adjacent, little spore-like bodies seated on the tips of short straight threads vertical to the surface of the mass, which are supposed to have the office of impregnation, while within it consists of a white cellular mass rich in oil globules. Such is the condition of the plant the season in which it is produced, or till it has remained for some time on the ground, or is lightly covered with soil after the lapse of some months in a common garden-pot. A very curious change then takes place. A little pin-shaped purplish fungus sprouts in greater or less quantity from the sides, the head of which is studded with little receptacles containing linear transparent sacs filled with thread-like sporidia. The ergot, then, as generally known, is merely a transitional form, or rather the first stage in the existence of the fungus, ending with the production of minute bodies, which are either reproductive, or, as is more probable, serve for the impregnation of the perfect fungus. The grains of a large variety of grasses are subject to become ergoted, and ergoted grains have also been observed in the genus *Eleocharis*, which belongs to the order *Cyperaceæ*. Amongst the grasses, besides the cereals, rye, wheat, and barley, may be mentioned couch-grass, darnel, rye-grass, cock's-foot, foxtail, and reed. The ergot of the reed, and blue melic (*Molinia carulea*) so common in moors, does not produce the same fungus as that of the other grasses just mentioned, and that again which springs from the ergot of the *Eleocharis* is specifically distinct. The seeds of the common reed are peculiarly subject to ergot, and the heads of flowers when blown off by the wind lie upon the damp soil for some months before the ergot is properly developed. The fungus of this ergot may be raised artificially by placing the head upon damp sand covered with moss, or if they are placed with the stalks constantly immersed in water the ergot will in time produce its fungus. If any of our readers wish to see the ergot of rye, barley, or wheat developed, they have only to cover them slightly with soil about the month of April, keeping it moderately moist with rain-water, and they will be pretty sure to have a crop. And they will raise exactly

the same fungus from the ergot of rye-grass, except that in proportion to the size of the ergoted grain, the resulting fungus will vary in size and number. (*Gardeners' Chronicle*.)

OPERATION DAYS AT THE HOSPITALS.

MONDAY.....Royal Free, 2 P.M.—Metropolitan Free, 2 P.M.
TUESDAY....Guy's, 1½ P.M.—Westminster, 2 P.M.
WEDNESDAY...St. Mary's, 1 P.M.—Middlesex, 1 P.M.—University College, 2 P.M.—Royal Orthopedic, 2 P.M.
THURSDAY....St. George's, 1 P.M.—Central London Ophthalmic, 1 P.M.—London, 1:30 P.M.—Great Northern, 2 P.M.
FRIDAY.....Westminster Ophthalmic, 1:30 P.M.
SATURDAY....St. Thomas's, 1 P.M.—St. Bartholomew's, 1:30 P.M.—King's College, 1:30 P.M.—Charing Cross, 2 P.M.

MEETINGS OF SOCIETIES DURING THE NEXT WEEK.

MONDAY. Medical, 8:30 P.M. Mr. H. Smith, "On the Nature and Treatment of the more Severe Forms of Stricture of the Urethra, especially where Incision has been previously resorted to."
TUESDAY. Royal Medical and Chirurgical, 8:30; Zoological.
WEDNESDAY. Society of Arts; Geological; Royal Society of Literature.
THURSDAY. Royal; Antiquarian.
FRIDAY. Royal Institution.
SATURDAY. Royal Botanical.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**** All letters and communications for the JOURNAL, to be addressed to the EDITOR, 37, Great Queen St., Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C.**

S. P.—We beg to say, in answer to our correspondent, that we fully agree with him in his reasonable objections. We at the same time are pleased to assure him, that we shall shortly be able to remove the cause of his objections. He must recollect that the present Editor had only a few days grace in making his arrangements for starting a new series of the JOURNAL; and, under such circumstances, it may be readily understood that all was not attained that was intended and desired. As we have already said, however, we can promise our correspondent that he will in a short time find nothing wanting, either in the matter of type, paper, or size of the JOURNAL. The natural motto of all progress is change. And we trust that we may be continually passing through a series of progressive changes, adapting ourselves to the increasing wants of this advanced age.

RELIEF TO THE POOR.—SIR: I have been much surprised to note that amidst the various schemes which have been proposed for the managing of the distribution of relief to the poor, during the late inclement weather, none have included the services of our medical brethren. I should have imagined that there could have been no class of men in London more capable of rendering effective service in this respect. Sickness and poverty and want, as we only too well know, run hand in hand; and, moreover, a very large proportion of the ills which the medical officers of our dispensaries and the out-door departments of our hospitals have to combat, are derived from want of proper food. In such cases, food is much more requisite than medicine. Our medical brethren who attend these classes of people possess, as far as the sick poor are concerned, the necessary information for giving relief to the most proper recipients. There is no shamming disease with them. They know, from having frequently visited the abodes of misery, just where the abodes of real misery are. They see the family starving through the illness of the head of it. I hope you will call attention to this point.

Yours, etc., A DISPENSARY PHYSICIAN.

THE ELECTION OF SECRETARY TO ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL.—SIR: I trust you will not fail to mark with your disapprobation the conduct of the *Times*, in reference to the election of Secretary to St. George's Hospital. With regard to the merits or demerits of the gentleman elected, I know nothing, nor do I wish to touch on this point. But I believe every right thinking person will, with me, deem it scandalous, that a powerful organ of public opinion, like the *Times*, should allow an individual, merely because he has

notoriously the ear of the *Times*, to bring broad accusations of jobbery and partiality against a large body of gentlemen, equally honourable, and as little fond of jobbery as himself. The Board of Governors of St. George's Hospital is an open Board, where every Governor may, on all occasions, boldly express his sentiments. Yet this is not sufficient for some minds. And thus, here is an individual who cannot lead the Board by the nose, uses his private influence to set the screw of the public *Times* to work upon the general body of Governors, to interfere with the election of an officer; and, on the very day of election, gets a letter put in the journal, to drive the men up to the poll. As I have said before, I know nothing of the merits of the case; but I rejoice to see that this scandalous use of a great immoral force has for once failed in its object—the election having been carried in the teeth of the *Times* and its private correspondent.

I am, etc., A GOVERNOR OF ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL.

[We, of course, like everybody else, have read the correspondence in the *Times* alluded to by a Governor. We thought when we read it, and we think now, very much as our correspondent thinks in reference to the behaviour of the *Times*. We trust, and in fact know, that our great medical charities are too well and too openly conducted to require the interference of that journal in their private arrangements. Certainly, when an institution is managed by an open Board of Governors, notoriously all men of the highest honour, the one-sided impugnment of their conduct by a single individual, used as an instrument to vitiate an election, by a public print, is without excuse.—EDITOR.]

THE DR. KEILL.—SIR: James Keill, M.D., of Northampton, whose epitaph is given in your number for January 5th, was one of two distinguished brothers, and was born at Edinburgh 27th March, 1673. He received his general education in his native city, under the direction of the celebrated David Gregory, afterwards Savilian professor of astronomy at Oxford, from whom he would seem to have acquired that deep knowledge and taste for mathematics for which he became so greatly distinguished.

But little is known of his medical education. It is said, and I believe truly, to have been had abroad, and probably at Leyden. Wheresoever acquired, it was certainly of the best character. His first appearance in this country in a public capacity was as a lecturer on anatomy, in which science he was a proficient. Lectures on this subject he delivered with the highest applause, both at Oxford and Cambridge, and in 1698 his *Anatomy of the Human Body Abridged*, 12mo., issued from the London press. This became one of the most popular works of the time, and ran to numerous editions, the last (I believe) of which, the fifteenth, appeared in 1771, more than fifty years after its author's death. About the year 1700, Dr. Keill settled at Northampton, and in 1705 was created doctor of medicine by the University of Cambridge. He continued at Northampton, practising with marked success and a steadily increasing reputation, until his death from cancer of the mouth, in July 1719.

Dr. Keill's attainments as a mathematician and anatomist, and the mode in which he applied these sciences to the elucidation of medicine, are abundantly evidenced in all his writings. They are so correctly and happily expressed in his epitaph, that I can add nothing thereto. Dr. Keill's published views concerning the force of the heart's action, led to a controversy with Dr. Jurin, a profound mathematician and distinguished London physician, who died 22nd March, 1750, being then president of the College of Physicians. In this discussion, both parties did themselves great credit; and the "sermonum honos et vivax gratia," so much to be desired in all scientific contests, was admirably displayed. Besides the work on Anatomy, above mentioned, we have from Dr. Keill's pen:

"An Account of Animal Secretion, the Quantity of Blood in the Human Body, and Muscular Motion. 8vo. Lond. 1708"—a Latin edition of which, improved and enlarged, appeared in 1718 with the title: "Tentamina Medico-physica ad quædam Questiones quæ Economiam Animalium spectant. Accessit Medicina Statia Britannica. 8vo. Lond."

"Essays on Several Parts of the Animal Economy. 2nd ed. Lond. 8vo. 1717."

John Keill, the elder brother of the preceding, who erected the monument in St. Giles' church, Northampton, although a doctor of medicine of Oxford (9th July, 1713), has no claim to notice as a physician. He is not known to have practised medicine, but was a most distinguished mathematician and astronomer. He was a

voluminous writer, and a warm defender of Newton; and is said, in a course of private lectures which he delivered at Balliol College, Oxford, of which house he was a Fellow, to have illustrated, for the first time in this country, the doctrines of the *Principia*, by the experiments on which they are founded. In 1710, he was appointed to the chair at Oxford, which his friend and teacher, Dr. David Gregory, had filled—that of Savilian professor of astronomy. Dr. John Keill did not long survive his brother. He died of fever in September 1721, before he had completed his fiftieth year.

W. MUNK, M.D.

January 15th, 1861.

BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

Any qualified medical practitioner, not disqualified by any by-law, who shall be recommended as eligible by any three members of the Association, shall be admitted a member at any time by the Committee of Council, or by the Council of any branch. The subscription is One Guinea annually, due on January 1st; and each member, on paying his subscription, shall be entitled to receive the publications of the Association for the current year.

Gentlemen wishing to join the Association are recommended to communicate with the General Secretary, DR. WILLIAMS, Worcester; or with either of the following officers of the District Branches: *Bath and Bristol Branch*—President, John Soden, Esq., Bath; Hon. Secs., R. S. Fowler, Esq., Bath; H. Ormerod, Esq., Bristol; *Birmingham and Midland Counties*—Pres., E. Moore, Esq., Halesowen; Hon. Sec., O. Pemberton, Esq., Birmingham; *Cambridge and Huntingdon*—Pres., Dr. G. E. Paget, Cambridge; Hon. Sec., Dr. Humphry, F.R.S., Cambridge; *East Anglian* (Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex)—Pres., R. Faircloth, Esq., Newmarket; Hon. Secs., Dr. Chevallier, Ipswich; Dr. Pitt, Norwich; *East York and North Lincoln*—Pres., W. H. Eddie, Esq., Barton-on-Humber; Hon. Sec., Dr. H. Munroe, Hull; *Lancashire and Cheshire*—Pres., Dr. M. A. E. Wilkinson, Manchester; Hon. Secs., Dr. Waters, Hope Street, Liverpool; Dr. Gilbertson, Preston; J. M. Robinson, Esq., Bolton; J. Sharp, Esq., Warrington; Dr. J. Thorburn, Manchester; *Metropolitan Counties*—Pres., J. Birkett, Esq., 59, Green Street, Grosvenor Square; Hon. Secs., Dr. Stewart, 74, Grosvenor Street; Dr. Henry, 15, George Street, Portman Square; *Midland*—Pres., G. E. Stanger, Esq., Nottingham; Hon. Secs., Dr. Goode, Derby; H. Lankester, Esq., Leicester; Dr. Mitchinson, Lincoln; Joseph White, Esq., Nottingham; *North Wales*—Pres., Dr. Turnour, Denbigh; Hon. Sec., D. K. Jones, Esq., Beaumaris; *Reading*—Pres., Dr. Woodhouse, Reading; Hon. Sec., G. May, jun., Esq., Reading; *Shropshire (Ethical)*—Pres., H. Fenton, Esq., Shrewsbury; Hon. Sec., Dr. Sympar, Shrewsbury; *Shropshire (Scientific)*—Pres., Dr. H. Johnson, Shrewsbury; Hon. Sec., S. Wood, Esq., Shrewsbury; *South-Eastern* (Kent, Surrey, and Sussex)—Pres., F. Fry, Esq., Maidstone; Hon. Sec., P. Martin, Esq., Reigate; *Hon. Sec. Rochester, etc., district*, Dr. Dulvey, Brompton, Chatham; *South-Midland* (Beds, Northampton, and Bucks)—Pres., Dr. Barker, Bedford; Hon. Secs., Dr. Bryan, Northampton; R. C. Hurst, Esq., Bedford; *South-Western* (Devon and Cornwall)—Pres., Dr. Hall, Torquay; Hon. Sec., C. H. Roper, Esq., Exeter; *Hon. Secs. Cornwall district*, Dr. Littleton, Saltash, Plymouth; R. Q. Couch, Esq., Penzance; *West Somerset*—Pres., John Pranker, Esq., Langport; Hon. Sec., Dr. W. E. Gillett, Taunton; *Yorkshire*—Pres., W. Favell, Esq., Sheffield; Hon. Sec., G. Hornby, Esq., York.

COMMUNICATIONS have been received from:—Dr. G. C. WATSON; Mr. Z. LAURENCE; Dr. L. BEALE; Dr. SIEVEKING; Mr. HUTCHINSON; Dr. KIDD; Mr. A. B. STEELE; Professor VIRCHOW; Dr. E. SMITH; Mr. PRICHARD; Dr. P. H. WILLIAMS; Mr. S. WOOD; Dr. BRYAN; Dr. MUNK; Mr. P. MARTIN; Dr. LEET; Mr. H. E. F. SHAW; Mr. F. W. DIX; Mr. H. COTES; Dr. J. B. PITT; Mr. J. WEAVER; Mr. C. EDKINS; Mr. KENWORTHY; Mr. G. D. BROWN; and Mr. T. M. STONE.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

1. Nature in the Cure of Disease. A Lecture. By J. Strachan, M.D.
2. On the Origin of Species. By H. Freke, M.D.
3. On Diseases and Deformities of the Spine, Chest, and Limbs. By *Richd. Hughes, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
4. Foundation for a New Theory and Practice of Medicine. By *Thomas Inman, M.D. 2nd edition. London: Churchill. 1861.
5. On the Signs and Diseases of Pregnancy. By Thomas Hawkes Tanner, M.D., F.R.S. London: Henry Renshaw. 1860.
6. A Glossary of Scientific Terms for General Use. By *Alexander Henry, M.D. London: Walton and Maberly. 1861.
7. Diagnosis of the Nerves of the Human Body. By W. H. Flower. London: Churchill. 1861.
8. On the Theory of the Ophthalmoscope. By George Rainy, M.D. London: Churchill. 1860.
9. A Treatise on Diseases of the Joints. By Richard Barwell, F.R.C.S. London: Churchill. 1861.
10. Clinical Surgery. The Surgical Diseases and Injuries of the Nose, Larynx, Thorax with its Contents, and of the Organs of Circulation. By Thomas Bryant, F.R.C.S. Part II. London: Churchill. 1860.
11. The Scale of Medicines with which Merchant Vessels are to be furnished. By T. Spencer Wells, F.R.C.S. Second edition. London: Churchill. 1861.