

to the position advanced by Liebig that the same chemical elements, and combined in the same proportions, may produce a number of different compounds. Were this position proved to demonstration, the author does not conceive it would contribute materially to the explanation of any changes that are going forward in the living body. We may rest assured, he says, that no action, either vital or chemical, can absolutely create or annihilate chemical elements; the body can only be composed of the elements which it receives *ab extra*, and it can only part with those elements by some process of secretion or excretion.

*Case of Ulceration of the Pulmonary Artery into an Abscess of the Lungs.* By W. CROWFOOT, Esq., Beccles. [Transmitted by J. Dalrymple, Esq.]

The patient, a medical gentleman, thirty-six years of age, having been long subject to pulmonary complaints, showed evident symptoms of phthisis in the winter of 1841. He was attacked in the following November with hæmorrhage from the lungs. The quantity of blood coughed up varied from half a pound to two pounds at a time, and the hæmorrhage occurred almost daily. After death, besides other signs of phthisis, the upper part of the left lung was found occupied by a large cavity, containing about half a pound of grumous and coagulated blood; and, after a careful examination, the left branch of the pulmonary artery was seen to communicate with the abscess at the distance of two inches from the bifurcation. The opening was from the artery, in a funnel-like shape, terminating in a small aperture, through which a crow-quill could pass. The trunk of the artery was dilated. The communications between the abscess and the bronchial tubes were numerous though not large.

*Suppuration of some Enlarged Glands lying betwixt the Gullet and Aorta, with Perforation of the Gullet; and, finally, Ulceration and Perforation of the Aorta close to the giving off of the Subclavian Artery. Sudden Death took place from the Effusion of Blood into the Gullet and Stomach.*

The case is detailed by the donor of the preparation, CHARLES CHEYNE, Esq., as follows:—

H. R., aged six years, at the time the aorta gave way, was laboring under chronic peritonitis. About two years before he had a fever, with pulmonary symptoms, of five weeks' duration, and had afterwards tolerable health till four weeks before his death. At this time fever of a remittent form commenced without precursory indisposition. No region or organ seemed remarkably affected till the end of the first week, when the belly became rather suddenly tympanitic; there was now great pain on pressing it, but none on any other occasion. The remissions of fever became more distinct, the pulse in the middle of the day being nearly of its natural frequency. The stomach was irritable. Fever in the night persisted with moderate sweats, and there was progressive emaciation. During the last week a dry and rather severe cough attended. At the end of the fourth week, about noon, he vomited a large quantity of blood, rallied a little, but in an hour after, upon vomiting a little more blood, he sunk quickly. On dissection the peritoneum lining the muscles was found greatly thickened. The omentum also much thickened, having in color and consistence the appearance of boiled cow's udder; it adhered

closely to the contiguous parts. The intestinal canal was found considerable inflated, having large portions covered by a membrane of recent formation, by which they adhered to each other; other portions sprinkled with distinct papule, apparently of the same matter. Low in the belly were adhesions between the intestines and parietes, by bands and transparent membranes, forming cells, which contained a clear yellow serum. High in the belly there was a more puriform fluid. The mesentery, in general, was much thickened. The liver, also, was covered by a deposition of new matter, and adhering to all the contiguous parts. Nothing remarkable was found in the internal structure of the solid viscera, nor in the mucous coat of the intestinal canal. In the stomach about a pound of clotted blood was found. In the highest part of the aorta descendens there was a small ragged opening, without loss of substance, leading to a cavity that might contain a nutmeg. This cavity, which contained coagulated blood, communicated also with the œsophagus by an orifice that might admit the point of the little finger; it was situated in the midst of the bronchial glands, which were more or less changed into a texture of a cheesy appearance. The lungs adhered pretty generally to the thorax by bands of old formation. In their substance there was a yellow tubercle, of the size of a marble, and a few smaller ones in the vicinity.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS.

April 25, 1843.

### MEDICAL REFORM.

Mr. Macaulay wished to put a question to the right hon. baronet, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, respecting a very important subject—he meant the subject of reform in the medical profession. He wished to know whether those negotiations, which he had been told were in progress some time ago on this subject, had been brought to such a termination as to enable the introduction of a bill into Parliament on the subject? He wished to know, secondly, whether there was any reasonable expectation of such an act being passed into a law this session? And thirdly, if the right hon. baronet felt that they could not expect to pass a general measure on the subject this session, whether he would have any objection to introduce into the Poor-law Act a clause to remedy the most pressing and crying grievances under which the medical profession now labored, from the construction of the present law in the exclusion of Scotch and Irish medical men from practising in the workhouses?

Sir J. Graham said he had no hesitation in saying that the negotiations to which the right hon. gentleman referred had been so far successful as to leave no doubt on his mind that in a very short period he should be able to ask the leave of the house to introduce a measure with respect to the medical profession. As to the second question of the right hon. gentleman, whether there was any hope of passing such a measure this year, that of course must depend on the reception given to it. He was disposed to think that the measure was worthy the attention of the house, and he should bring it forward in the expectation that it would pass this session. At the present

time he felt certain he should be able, in the course of the present session, to bring forward a measure on the subject, and it was his confident belief that it would pass into a law this session. He should only advert briefly to the third point. He felt that the practitioners of Scotland and Ireland were subjected to great hardship by the interpretation put on the act with reference to English practitioners, and that some legislative measure was called for on that particular point.

#### IRISH MEDICAL CHARITIES.

On the motion of Mr. French, Mr. French, Lord Eliot, Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, Mr. George Hamilton, Viscount Jocelyn, Lord Courtenay, Mr. Young, Colonel Acton, Mr. Villiers Stuart, Mr. Gregory, Mr. William S. O'Brien, Dr. Boyd, Captain Archdall, Captain Taylor, and Sir William Somerville, were appointed a select committee to inquire into the state of the medical charities in Ireland, and to report what alterations appear necessary for the purpose of improving the system under which they are conducted, and for extending their advantages more generally amongst the people.—*Times*.

### ALLEGED NEGLECT ON THE PART OF THE BEDMINSTER UNION GUARDIANS.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—A case having recently occurred in this neighbourhood, of alleged neglect on the part of the Board of Guardians of the Bedminster Union, of a family who were suffering from want and sickness, I submit to your notice the following details of the affair:—

In the parish of Tickenham, in the above union, dwelt a man of the name of John Durbin, by trade a sawyer, not a very strong man, and earning upon an average about twelve shillings per week; moreover, his wife had for years been a weakly woman, and subject to frequent alarming attacks of asthma. In January last, a daughter (Charlotte Durbin) was taken ill in fever, when the man applied to me to attend her, and she was attended unremittingly by my assistant, Mr. George Adams, from that time until she became convalescent in March; her attack was of a very dangerous nature, and accompanied with symptoms of extreme prostration; the father frequently sat up with her by night, which of course incapacitated him from his usual daily labor, and he expended what little money he had in purchasing wine and other necessaries for the poor girl. By his nightly watchings and constant anxieties his strength became reduced, and by the expences incidental to his daughter's illness his resources were exhausted, when in the month of March, before the recovery of Charlotte was completed, his own health became impaired; he was soon confined to his bed, and symptoms of urgent prostration set in. About the same time two younger children fell ill, with whom also symptoms of rapid prostration manifested themselves. In this state of things it seemed desirable that parochial relief should be obtained, for although the man was in a club which paid him seven shillings per week, and found him in medical attendance rendered by myself, yet the three sick children re-

quired constant medical care, whilst both the children and the father needed stimulating and nutritious diet, which could only be obtained by putting them under the care of the medical officer of the district; their residence being out of my district, my assistant advised the mother, about Saturday, the 18th of March, to apply to the relieving officer of the district for subsistence and an order for medical relief. He was applied to on the Monday following, and visited them the same day, but was afraid to enter the house lest he should convey contagion home to his own family; he, however, ascertained all important particulars, and reported them accurately to the board the next day, Tuesday, March 21. They were to this effect—"John Durbin, ill in fever (average earnings, twelve shillings per week); wife sickly; three children ill in fever; man entitled to seven shillings per week and medical attendance from club; subsistence wanted for wife and children; medical relief wanted for three children; ordered by the board two and sixpence and three loaves of bread by way of loan; *medical relief refused*." Within a day or two of this board meeting I met the relieving officer, and asked him how it was that this family were allowed to die for want of the necessaries which their situation required; his answer was, "I cannot go beyond my instructions from the board—namely, to lend them two and sixpence and three loaves of bread." I said, "Bread is of no use to them, for they cannot eat it; they want wine, &c." I added, as I drove on, "It is poor economy; the end will be that the poor fellow will die, and the parish will have to maintain his widow and family." Before the week was over, one child and the father died, and soon after the other child. On the Monday following, March 27, an order for medical relief was given to the medical officer of the district, who attended, and the necessary dietary was ordered; but a third child has since sickened and died, and another child is now very ill.

The affair excited attention from some of the neighbouring gentry, and animadversion was made upon the case. Discussions occurred at the board, when the chairman declared that the whole blame rested on my shoulders, that I ought to have memorialised the board in favor of this family, that I had done so in other instances, and that I was aware I might have done so successfully in this, or words to this effect. Upon this a gentlemen rose and said, that so grave a charge being made against me in my absence, it seemed to him desirable that a request be forwarded to the commissioners to send down an assistant commissioner to investigate the case; this was seconded by another county magistrate, and acquiesced in generally. Thursday, April 20, was fixed for the investigation before the assistant commissioner, who, arriving the day before, was invited to the chairman's house, dined with him, slept at his house, breakfasted with him in the morning, and was his companion in his carriage and pair from his residence to the union house. Far be it from me to insinuate that there was anything out of place in this arrangement, but I am not the only person who smiled at witnessing this *ruse* of the worthy chairman. I should, however, hope that the chairman was too honorable a man to take any advantage of this opportunity for making an *ex parte* statement to the assistant commissioner, whilst I

### NEW REGULATIONS AT THE WESTMINSTER HOSPITAL.

"The physicians and surgeons of the Westminster Hospital, believing that great advantages may result by making the situations of house surgeon and physicians' clinical assistant rewards for great merit, zeal in the pursuit of knowledge, and professional attainments, have resolved—

That they will hold examinations half-yearly or yearly of the students of the hospital and school, whom the lecturers of the school may recommend to them as candidates for the offices above mentioned, and if they find two of them duly qualified, they will recommend them to the weekly committee for the appointments of house surgeon and physicians' clinical clerk.

That if the physicians and surgeons should not find two of these gentlemen sufficiently qualified in every respect for these appointments, they reserve to themselves the right of recommending students who may apply from other quarters.

That the students of the school shall, if appointed, have these offices free of expense; but if students are appointed from other sources they must pay the usual fee of eighty pounds.

That for the purpose of encouraging the students to increased diligence, as well as of training them for their offices under the superintendence of more experienced persons, they will appoint half-yearly assistant or junior house surgeons and physicians' clinical assistants."

April 11, 1843.

### SOMNAMBULIC DOGS.

One of the most interesting and (as we are gravely informed) convincing proofs of the truth of Mesmerism has recently been crushed in the bud by the ignorance and perverse activity of the French police.

Driven from the scientific societies, and finding that public credulity was becoming rather slack, the Mesmerists hit on a novel expedient, which at least had the merit of silencing all accusations of trickery and collusion. They hired a small theatre, and brought out a company of somnambulist dogs. But the wickedness of man respects nothing, and the brightest plans are often blasted by the most ignoble of persecutors. Scarcely had the actors placed their four paws on the stage when the *sergens de ville* rushed in, and consigned both beasts and Christians to the safe keeping of the station-house.

### A HINT TO MAGNETISERS.

M. Richard, professor of magnetism, and Mlle. Virginie Plain, somnambulist, have been condemned to six months' imprisonment by the police magistrates at Nîort (France), under an accusation of "swindling."

### NUTRITIOUS FARINA.

We have received from Mr. Bright specimens of his "sanative breakfast beverage" and "nutritious farina," with a request that we would favor him with our opinion thereon. We have consumed the "cocoa," and found it an agreeable beverage. To determine the nutritious properties of any article of diet would require a long and careful series of experiments, which we have neither time nor inclination to make; but if the "farina" merit one half the praises bestowed upon it in innumerable medical certificates appended to the packet, it is a wonderful production indeed.

### OBITUARY.

On the 20th inst., at Bradwall-hall, Cheshire, in his eighty-second year, John Latham, M.D., formerly president of the College of Physicians.

### ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS IN LONDON.

Members admitted Friday, April 21, 1843.

C. E. Hatherly, F. Manning, G. P. H. Milsom, A. W. Gabb, S. Curtis, R. H. Bradley, J. Williams, T. Pollard, E. Dewes, W. Pollard, W. Millington, C. Scaife, T. Slater.

### APOTHECARIES' HALL.

Licentiates admitted Thursday, April 27, 1843.

William Peskett, Petersfield; William Simpson, Wyken-hall, Suffolk; John Jeffes Sparham, Blakeney, Norfolk; John Butter Ashford, Plymouth; John Thompson, Whitehaven; Charles Richard Francis, Bengal; John Spencer, Suffolk; Thomas Taylor, Witney.

### BOOKS RECEIVED.

Traité pratique sur les maladies des organes génito-urinaires. Par le Docteur Civiale. Première partie: maladies de l'urètre avec trois planches. Deuxième édition. Paris: Fortui, 1843. 8vo. pp. 588.

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### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The letters of Mr. D. Barker and Mr. W. Bodington have been received and answered.

Mr. T. D. will perceive that the correction has been made.

We thank our correspondent for the *Dorchester Chronicle*, and shall avail ourselves of its contents when an opportunity offers.

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