

ducive to the good of the public generally, and to the advancement of medical science; if the general practitioners were incorporated by charter into an independent college, with a governing council, power to frame bye-laws, and provide for the future education of the general practitioner, and placed, as respects the management of their own affairs, in every respect on a footing of equality with the existing Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons.

Your memorialists, therefore, respectfully and earnestly solicit your serious and favourable consideration of the "Suggestions for the Heads of Charter," which have been submitted to your notice.

Signed:—Charles Wright Hyne, Thomas Woolridge, Isaac Hurst, William Bailey, Charles Robinson, G. D. Hedley, Robert Couchman, T. Herbert Barker, Thomas Mitchell, Bedford; Watson Perkes, William Philson, M.D.; Oswald Foster, J. G. Appleton, Hitchin; John Hemming, Kimbolton.

### EXTRACTION OF A TOOTH UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF MESMERISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,

Will you allow me space in your Journal for a brief notice of Mr. Newnham's communication respecting the mesmeric extraction of a tooth?

Two questions would occur to any candid person, who reads the communication with the slightest care.

The first question would be: Can the fact related be accounted for on any suppositions that are in strict accordance with other well-established facts? The answer of many minds would be, "We think it can."

What are they? 1st. We know that many persons can endure more protracted pain than that produced by the extraction of a tooth without evincing the least emotion; and they can do so without having any special object to attain thereby.

2ndly. We know that many persons can endure such pain, without emotion, when they have some special object in view.

If these two statements be granted as established facts, we have a simple explanation of the case in point, viz., that the girl was one of those who can bear pain without emotion, either with or without a special object.

Mr. Newnham says that, "to believe that the girl was acting a part, and carrying out the delusions of others, is the part only of the most childish imbecility or besotted ignorance." If this observation be correct, the "poor girl" is certainly an exception to many girls, by whom the supposed phenomena of mesmerism have been exhibited. The most ingenious experiments have, undoubtedly, been displayed by mesmeric patients for the sake of obtaining money, and, therefore, unless the circumstances of a patient were such as absolutely to nullify the supposition, it appears to be very reasonable to take it into serious consideration; and, in the present instance, no information is given to invalidate the idea.

A very slight acquaintance with human conduct is required to show the impropriety of Mr. Newnham's condemnation, even in cases that appear to be further removed from suspicion than the one in question.

It would be rather difficult for Mr. Newnham to tell

us correctly what deceptions are *not* had recourse to, by persons of particular constitution, even when the motives for such deceptions would be generally considered quite inadequate to produce them.

The second question suggested would be: If we can account, upon known principles, for the fact stated, viz., the extraction of the tooth without expression of pain, why should we try to attribute it to some *unintelligible* agency?

The only answer I can give is this: that there is so strong a tendency in many minds, and many of superior power, to refer effects to miraculous and novel causes, that they constantly overlook, or are prejudiced against, the most obvious and rational explanations. A love of the marvellous is, we know, firmly implanted in the very nature of multitudes, and there are numbers who will not even try to interpret anything simply if they can by possibility interpret it *wonderfully*.

Mr. Newnham has recorded a fact that he himself witnessed, and also his opinion of that fact. My only object in troubling you with this letter is to show that it is possible to draw a *different* conclusion from the same fact.

Yours faithfully,

P. H. W.

Worcester, Feb. 21, 1845.

### SOCIETY OF APOTHECARIES.

Gentlemen admitted Licentiates, February 5th, 1845:—Thomas Palmer, Cahir, Ireland; George Downing; Daniel Carter; Peter Roscow, Halingden; William Henry Holman.

February 13th:—Philip Jolin; Samuel Probyn, Pont-y-Pool; Howel Morgan, Devynnock; Francis Parker, Hoblyn, Falmouth; Richard Clarke, Beccles; Frederick William Marshall, Horsforth, Leeds.

### BOOKS, &c., RECEIVED.

Speech of the Marquis of Normanby in the House of Lords, on Friday, the 26th of July, 1844, in moving an Address to the Crown on the Sanatory Condition of the People. London: Charles Knight and Co. 1845. pp. 24.

Christian Faith not inconsistent with the Pursuits of Science. A Sermon preached at the Consecration of Queen's College Chapel, Birmingham, on Friday, Nov. 15, 1844. By Henry, Lord Bishop of Worcester. London: Rivingtons. 1844. 8vo., pp. 24.

Health of Towns Association. Abstract of the Proceedings of the Public Meeting held at Exeter Hall, Dec. 11, 1844. London: Charles Knight, pp. 36.

The Actual Process of Nutrition and Inflammation in the Living Structure, demonstrated by the Microscope. Part II. (*Third Series of Experimental Researches*.) By William Addison, F.L.S., &c., &c., London: Churchill. 1845. 8vo. pp. 114. Plates.

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications have been received from Mr. W. Clarke; Mr. G. King; Mr. F. Davies; the Birmingham Pathological Society; H.; Dr. Inglis; Dr. Blackmore; the Sheffield Medical Society; Messrs. Dorrington and Franklin; Mr. W. Collens; Dr. R. H. Powell; Incubus.