

gestive hypertrophy, he reflected on its pathology, and came to the conclusion that "first nearly all the pain and a great deal of the discomfort in cases of hepatic congestion is directly due to the pressure to which the recently inflamed and still congested hepatic tissues are subjected, from their being confined within a strong inelastic fibrous capsule; and secondly, from knowing that immediate relief follows upon the puncturing of other equally unyielding fibrous coverings (when their contents are in a state of acute or subacute inflammation)," it occurred to him "that cases of congestive hepatic hypertrophy might be equally advantageously treated by puncturing the capsule of Glisson; as cases of orchitis are treated by puncturing the tunica albuginea; or acute sciatica by puncturing the distended sheath of the nerve; or a painful whitlow by puncturing the tense unyielding fascia over the inflamed part of the finger" (JOURNAL, November 13th, 1886, p. 900). Surely at least two out of the three "puncturings" referred to in this quotation would be ordinarily called acupuncture. I am unable to agree with Dr. Harley "that the mere fact of acupuncture being performed (by the Chinese?) with gold or silver needles in painful affections," and his operation "being performed with trocars and cannulae in a diseased state of the organ, which is anything but painful (?) leads necessarily to the conclusion that "the two forms of operative procedure are entirely distinct." The respective methods of Dr. Harley and the Chinese are no doubt different, but it by no means follows that "they have nothing whatever in common, either as regards nature or design." I fancy most people will be apt to think they have a good deal in common. Neither can I agree that there is a remarkable absence of pain in the condition which Dr. Harley describes as chronic congestive hypertrophy. Indeed he himself in his first article gives as one of its symptoms "a dull pain all over the hypochondriac region;" and in one of the cases in which he employed puncture of Glisson's capsule, he says: "The tenderness on pressure, of which the patient had previously complained, had disappeared after the operation." Allusion is also made to the pain in the words which I have italicised at the beginning of the quotation from his first article. My experience is, that the condition in question is often attended by very considerable pain and tenderness, though not perhaps of an acute kind.

In making the foregoing remarks, I have not the slightest wish to deprive Dr. Harley of the merit of having discovered independently (as I have no doubt he did), and brought prominently before the profession, therapeutic measures which are doubtless destined to prove of great use in dealing with certain affections of the liver, but from the facts within my knowledge it is impossible to admit his claim to originality.

**SURGEON-MAJOR QUILL, M.D.**, writes: In his paper on Hepatic Phlebotomy, which appeared in the JOURNAL of January 15th, Dr. Harley has mentioned my name among those who ventured to criticise a former paper of his on the same subject; I beg therefore for a little space for a brief reply.

If Dr. Harley will refer to my letter which appeared in the JOURNAL of December 4th, he will find these words: "For years past Professor Maclean has, by precept and practice, impressed upon us the benefit frequently to be derived from direct depletion of the liver." Now I shall be glad to learn from Dr. Harley what the difference is between hepatic phlebotomy and direct depletion of the liver? In the absence of any difference (and so much I think I may assume), it is plain that the charge which Dr. Harley brings against me of "inconceivably confounding two distinctly different forms of hepatic surgery" utterly crumbles away.

When Dr. Harley has more experience of hepatic surgery (outside the physiological laboratory), he will find that, much as he may desire it, he will not be able to abstract any quantity of blood he pleases from a diseased liver. He will find the possibility of abstracting twenty ounces of blood from a liver in a state of acute inflammation to be quite exceptional; five or six ounces is the most he will, as a rule, be able to obtain, and very frequently not even one ounce: yet let him not be disheartened, for much benefit will accrue to his patient, though he has been unsuccessful in depriving him of a considerable quantity of blood.

#### ETIOLOGY OF GOITRE: A CORRECTION.

**DR. JOSIAH WILLIAMS** writes: In the report of the Sheffield Medico-Chirurgical Society in the JOURNAL of January 29th, is an abstract of my paper on "Etiology of Goitre" which requires a slight correction. The report says: "In South Wales, where both these conditions prevailed, goitre was extremely rare. In Novi Bazar, where Dr. Williams was in 1876, nearly half the population was affected, and yet neither of these conditions was present." What I said was that, "In Novi Bazar we had a diminished atmospheric pressure, it was true, but that the practice of carrying weights on the head was not anything like so common in Novi Bazar as in Wales. On reaching a still higher altitude—Seinitza, on the Servian frontier—few cases were present, probably not more than 2 per cent."

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#### BOOKS, ETC., RECEIVED.

- On Aphasia. By James Ross, M.D., LL.D. London: J. and A. Churchill. 1887.
- The Croonian Lectures on some Points in the Pathology of Rheumatism, Gout, and Diabetes. By P. W. Latham, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P. Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, and Co. London: G. Bell and Sons. 1887.
- Notes on the Physical Diagnosis of Lung-Disease. By J. Magee Finny, M.D. London: H. K. Lewis. 1887.
- Thirteenth Annual Report of the Secretary of the State Board of Health of the State of Michigan for the Fiscal Year ending September 30th, 1885. Lansing, Michigan: Thorp and Godfrey. 1886. Two Copies.
- Year-Book of Treatment for 1886. London, etc.: Cassell and Co., Limited. 1887.
- Outline of the Pathology and Treatment of Syphilis and Allied Venereal Diseases. By the Drs. Zeissl. Authorised edition. Translated by H. Raphael, M.D. London: H. K. Lewis. 1887.
- A Text-Book of Medicine for Students and Practitioners. By Dr. Adolf Strümpell. Translated by Drs. Vickery and Knapp, with editorial notes by F. C. Shattuck, M.D. London: H. K. Lewis. 1887.
- The Science and Art of Obstetrics. By Theophilus Parvin, M.D., LL.D. Edinburgh: Young J. Pentland. 1887.
- Year-Book of Pharmacy and Transactions of the British Pharmaceutical Conference. 1886. London: J. and A. Churchill. 1887.

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