

**CLITORIDOTOMY.**—SIR: So long as letters with reference to me and the operation of clitoridotomy were anonymous, I did not think them worth answering. The letter, however, of Mr. Littleton, in your issue of May 19th, is of a different class; and, in reply to it, I beg leave to make a few remarks.

I have first to thank Mr. Littleton for having answered those who have said that I was the originator of this operation. It was my knowledge of the works of Aëtius and others, that led me to the opposite conclusion.

The operation is mentioned as early as the time of Paulus Aegineta. Aëtius speaks of it at some length. Dionis, the celebrated French surgeon, in 1738, not only minutely describes the mode of performing it, but gives illustrations of the instruments to be used. These instruments were copied and exhibited at the *conferenza* of the Obstetrical Society, held on March 23th, for the exhibition of obstetrical instruments. Finally, in 1827, Nagrodsky, a German, wrote a most elaborate Latin essay, *De Nymphomania et ejusdem Curatione*. Not only is this essay a most complete account of the disease, but it gives a full history of the literature of the subject. It is in the Library of the Royal College of Surgeons; and to it I would refer your reviewer of my work, and all others who believe me to have been the originator of this operation.

I find, by reference to the *Medical Directory*, that Mr. Littleton has taken high honours at the London University in nearly every branch of medical study. I am, therefore, rather surprised that he should have quoted, as believing them, the words of Aëtius, "*Hinc vero saepe sterilitas exoritur*." If Mr. Littleton will do me the honour of reading my book, he will find that this and other fallacious objections to the operation are fully answered by Cases III, IX, XI, XIX, XLVII, etc. I conclude my book with these words: "A careful perusal of the cases related in the foregoing pages, will show that all the theoretical objections mentioned in the introductory chapter, as having been raised against my treatment, have been fully contradicted by facts."

I think I have just reason to complain that my critics have been too ready to reiterate these objections, and have not been so willing to notice the facts which contradict them. I could, if it were necessary, give the names of the medical attendants on all the cases of pregnancies recorded in my book. This, however, I may, for many reasons, be excused from doing publicly. One instance only I would except—that of a lady, brought to me in 1863 by Dr. Willsheire. From long continued injurious excitement, her health was thoroughly broken down, and there was complete retroversion of the uterus. I operated for the latter condition, and also excised the clitoris. She made a good recovery, and three months later became pregnant. She is now the mother of a healthy son, and herself in robust health. So grateful is she, that she has expressed her willingness to see, privately, any gentleman who may doubt this statement. This case I have quoted, not only because Dr. Willsheire's name is one of very high professional standing, but also because the facts can be verified by reference to that gentleman. I have ever courted publicity; and there are thousands of my professional brethren, from all parts of the world, ready to bear testimony to the truth of my cases.

I shall be happy to give any additional information to any gentleman actuated by an honest desire to know the truth; but I do not feel disposed to enter into a wordy warfare with those who, professedly seeking for light, hide themselves under the mantle of an anonymous contribution.

I am, etc.,  
I. BAKER BROWN.

17, Connaught Square, Hyde Park, W., May 19th, 1866.

**CLITORIDOTOMY.**—SIR: In reference to Mr. I. B. Brown's operation—viz., the removal of the clitoris as a remedy for masturbation and its effects, including hysteria, mania, etc.—will you allow me to remark, for the information of those of your readers interested in this matter, that at pages 586 and 586 of Thomas's *Practice of Physic*, article "Nymphomania", are to be found these words:—"As the clitoris is the seat of pleasure during the act of coitus, nymphomania might possibly be cured by extirpating the organ." The following case, recorded by a French writer (Richebraud), is much to the purpose. A young woman was so addicted to masturbation, that she was nearly exhausted by marasmus. Sensible of the danger of her situation, yet not possessed of sufficient fortitude, or else irresistibly impelled by the pleasurable sensations to which she yielded, she could not command herself, and excited profuse emissions. Her parents took her to Professor Dubois, and, upon the authority of Leuret, he thought it advisable to propose amputation of the clitoris, which the patient and her parents agreed to. The organ was removed with one stroke of the bistoury, and the bleeding prevented by an application of the cautery. The operation completely succeeded, and the patient was cured of her fatal habit, quickly recovering her health and strength." I may add, that Thomas treats of the effects of "masturbation" as involving "a high degree of hysteria, or a species of madness".

That the starting point of "habitual onanism" is cerebral, there can be, I think, no doubt. Nevertheless, it may be that the removal of the clitoris, as practised first by Aëtius, and after him by Dubois, then by Brown and "Braun of Vienna", can do much good, and prove of eminent service, in certain and exceptional cases.

I am, etc.,  
JAMES G. DAVEY, M.D., M.R.C.P. London.

Northwoods, Bristol, May 21st, 1866.

We have received a letter from Mr. Clowes, referring to a paragraph in the *JOURNAL* of May 19th, and have no hesitation in saying that we regret admitting the paragraph into the *JOURNAL*. It was undoubtedly written under a misconception of the facts.

**INOCULATION OF INDURATED CHANCRES.**—Mr. James Lane says, that there have been no less than five successful cases of inoculation from indurated sores at the Lock Hospital during the last six months—one by Dr. Boeck, one by Mr. Gascogen, one by himself, and two by Mr. W. J. Coulson.

**TREATMENT OF ASCARIDES.**—A correspondent writes: "I would feel obliged if your correspondent, Dr. J. L. Green, would inform me what dose of the *chloride of potassium* combined with perchloride of iron he administers in the treatment of ascarides. These parasites occasionally resist all treatment for their permanent removal. This is very discouraging, both to the medical man and his patient."

**COMMUNICATIONS** have been received from:—Dr. GEORGE JOHNSON; Mr. A. B. STEELE; THE HONORARY SECRETARY OF THE EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SOCIETY; Mr. G. GREENSLADE; Mr. THOMAS POPE; Dr. BEIGEL; Dr. J. B. PITT; Dr. NOBLE; Dr. BARCLAY; Mr. M'KEAND; Dr. WALTERS; Mr. C. STEELE; SIR HENRY COOPER; Mr. WM. PARKER; Mr. P. N. ROBERTS; Mr. WILLIAM COPNEY; Mr. F. CLOWES; Mr. T. M. STONE; Dr. H. SIMPSON; Dr. DESMOND; Dr. W. DOBIE; Dr. FOSTER; Mr. C. H. MOORE; SIR HENRY COOPER; and Mr. J. F. HOLDEN.

### BOOKS RECEIVED.

1. The Chemistry of Common Things. By Stevenson Macadam, Ph.D. London and Edinburgh: 1866.
2. The Poor-Law Surgeon's Vade Mecum. By N. C. Walsh. London: 1866.
3. On Dropsy. By W. R. Basham, M.D. Third Edition. London: 1866.
4. On the Application of Sulphurous Acid Gas to the Prevention, Limitation, and Cure of Contagious Diseases. By James Dewar, M.D. Edinburgh and London: 1866.

### ADVERTISEMENTS.

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\* See the note of Dr. T. Littleton, in the *JOURNAL* of May 19th.

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