PROVINCIAL MEDICAL & SURGICAL JOURNAL.

[WITH SUPPLEMENT.]

EDITED BY DR. HENNIS GREEN AND DR. STREETEN.

No. 5. Vol. I.] LONDON, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1840. [PRICE SEVENPENCE. STAMPED EDITION EIGHTPENCE.

| D | CP | 1 | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|---|-----|
| Dr. Symonds' Introductory Lecture | 73 | Letters from the Watering Places of Germany. Marienbad. By an | 101 |
| Dr. Boyd on Still-born Children | 77 | eminent Physician. Letter I | 85 |
| Amputation at the Shoulder-joint | 79 | Letter from Mr. Bree | 87 |
| The Climate of the Isle of Wight | 80 | Statistics of the Dublin Lying-in Hospital | ib. |
| HEALTH OF TOWNS | ib. | Antidote to Arsenic | ib. |
| MEDICAL REFORM | 82 | Report of the Wells Branch of the Provincial Medical and Surgical | |
| REVIEW OF LUCAS ON SQUINTING | 83 | Association | 89 |
| NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE INFIRMARY | 84 | Advertisements | 93 |

AN INTRODUCTORY LECTURE

TO THE COURSE ON THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MEDICINE, DELIVERED AT THE BRISTOL MEDICAL SCHOOL.---(SESSIGN 1840-1.)

BY DR. SYMONDS.

GENTLEMEN,—To practise medicine is to employ the best means for the cure and relief of diseases. We, therefore, apply to this purpose all the knowledge on the subject that has been handed down to us from of old, all that our contemporaries have taught us, and all that we have learnt from our own observation and reflection. This knowledge admits of two great divisions; the first relating to the phenomena, and the production of diseases,—the second to the operation and use of remedies; the former constituting pathology in its widest sense,—the latter, therapeutics. Of these, the one is purely scientific—the other partly scientific and partly practical. The application of remedies is the art—an art which, for its successful exercise, requires an acquaintance with that which is to be wrought upon, and of the instruments to be employed in the work.

The art of healing, like all other arts, has for its object the subjugation of nature to the wishes of man. If it cannot create new powers, it can employ those already in existence for the accomplishment of its purposes. It makes, so to speak, one part of nature to act against, or to neutralize, or to supersede, another; it combines agents so as to obtain their united powers, or complex results endowed with properties foreign to any of the separate components. In no respects do the various arts differ from each other more than in their amount of control over the materials by which their purposes are to be accomplished. In the lowest arts, the mechanic has to deal with matter, in its most inert forms, and requires little more than muscular power or dexterity to obtain his object. In the fine arts there is but little difficulty in the management of the materials; nothing can be more yielding than the plastic clay moulded by the sculptor into the desired forms, and the highest effects in painting may be produced by materials needing scarcely a moment's preparation. The efforts de-manded by these arts are in the mind and the muscles, and the intermediate agents. Such are the accurate conception of form and proportion, the knowledge of the pleasing or painful effect produced on the sight by blended or contiguous colours, by light and shade, or of their suggestive influence on the emotions and the imagination, to which must be added the ready obedience of the muscular motions to the images in the mind. I do not attempt to touch upon the still higher efforts of these arts, involved in the successful embodiment of ideal forms, and scenery. I only

wish you now to observe that the mere operation on the matter is as nothing, compared with the other exertions essential to the fine arts.

In another division of the arts it is no longer inert matter only that is to obey the demands of man, but matter in motion, the subjugation of which requires a knowledge of the forces developed by motion, whether in masses, or in molecules, gravitation, the attraction of cohesion, chemical attraction, and the like. The laws of these forces, their measurement, their adaptation to the ends proposed in the higher mechanical and chemical arts, afford many intricate problems, but the labour and ingenuity of man are daily triumphing over the difficulties.

The remaining arts are the vital; those which, in accomplishing the designs of man, have to work upon living bodies; such are agriculture, horticulture, animal culture, hygiene, medicine, moral and mental education, social government, &c. Here we find the materials still less under our immediate dominion. We cannot, by mechanical processes, impress new forms on these bodies, and chemical agencies can be employed but partially, lest by either of these operations, the integrity of the organism, that is, the due proportion of the parts to the whole, and to each other, should be destroyed. Moreover, living bodies, while they may be likened to pieces of machinery of the utmost delicacy and complexity, differ from them in the remarkable fact that they form, and mould, sustain and repair their own substance. Their actions also depend on properties not found in any form of matter but that which is organic, and which no mechanist or chemist has ever succeeded in imitating. Were the actions of living bodies, however, dependent solely on the properties of their own organisms (including both the solid and fluid parts) our control would be limited indeed. But this is not the case. The influence of certain agents external to them, called vital stimuli, is essential to their very being; and others are known to exert marked changes on their peculiar actions. The management of the former is hygienic art, of the latter, therapeutic.

With reference to the vegetable kingdom, the arts of agriculture and horticulture are mainly employed in regulating and modifying the external agents, for instance, the air, the caloric, the moisture, &c.; in the animal kingdom, whether in our attempts to preserve the health and strength, or to improve the stock of the animals useful to man; or in our endeavours to ward off, to cure, or to alleviate the diseases of ourselves and our fellow-creatures, we act through the same media, and in addition introduce new substances into the living system. The latter kind of interference is not only easier in the case of animals than of vegetables, by reason of their digestive apparatus, but also because acci-