

even suggest the idea of suicide is by no means compatible with the discipline and the management of a public institution of unrestricted benevolence. There was very little probability of any such accusation possessing a shadow of coherence, so far as relates to the connexion of cause and effect. But it is well to find that not the shade of a fact existed upon which to found a charge of ill-treatment or unkindness. The unhappy man was apparently of unsound mind, and committed suicide in a moment of unsuspected aberration. Such incidents have occasionally occurred at other hospitals. They are always sources of painful regret, which must be greatly increased when they are coupled with charges so grave and so wholly destitute of serious foundation.

### POISONOUS COSMETICS.

THE cutaneous torture which Dejanira inflicted on the contemptuous Hercules, modern dames of fashion prepare for themselves. The pearl powders, the bloom of roses, the blanc de Venus, de Cytherè, rouge de Pompadour, and the like, are, as they have been often told, but will never properly believe, compounds of bismuth, of fluorine, of the hydrated silicate of magnesia, of talc, carmine, and the mineral powders. There is no cosmetic which can ever rival the application of pure water, with the addition of oatmeal for tender skins, or delicately alkaline soap. These powders and pastes are at the best impalpable powders of flint, magnesia, bismuth, or carmine, which stop the pores and obstruct the perspiration, for which nature has made the most marvellously minute and elaborate provision; and can, when least hurtful, only limit their action to concealing, at the same time that they exaggerate, the defects which they are intended to remove. Mineral applications can only be suitable to diseased skins, and then under most skilful and intelligent direction. The lady who uses such powders or pastes cannot hope to escape a gradual and continuous deterioration of the skin and the complexion. For healthy skins their use is suicidal; and for those which require amelioration their employment is more than injudicious. The editor of the *Chemical News* has lately examined anew a number of these powders, and confirms all the harm that has been said of them.

### Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

### VIVISECTIONAL CRUELITIES.

(LETTER FROM SIR JOHN SCOTT LILLIE.)

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The inhuman practice of dissecting animals while still living has recently attracted a greater degree of public attention in France and England than at any former period, with a view to its abolition, or at all events the diminution of its abuses. From the inquiries made on the subject by the London and Paris Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, it appears that the supposed advantages of this practice in a physiological point of view are not so great as members of your profession formerly imagined. Mr. Perry, for instance, in a letter which appeared in THE LANCET of the 24th November, states "that he witnessed operations of this nature at the veterinary schools of Paris from nine A.M. till five P.M. for the instruction of pupils in practical surgery, not for the elucidation of physiological phenomena, but merely as an exercise or drill to render them expert in the use of operating instruments." That he remonstrated with the professors on the cruelty of such a practice, but in vain, although they admitted its inutility for any other purpose than that of accustoming pupils to scenes of blood and the shrinking of the flesh from the cruelties of the knife.

If such cruelties are necessary for such purposes, one would imagine that the knowledge thus acquired would be as easily obtained at the slaughter-houses of butchers or knackers' yards.

These professors at Paris might as well have replied to the remonstrances of Mr. Perry in the same manner as the cook did when accused of unnecessary cruelty in frying eels while still alive: that he thought so himself when he first commenced, but that now they had become accustomed to it they did not appear to mind it. Against such logic the friends of humanity should enter their protest.

The Paris Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, being actuated by a praiseworthy desire to provide a remedy for such revolting practices, have had a Report made on the subject by some of their most scientific and learned men, a copy of which has been sent to the London Society, which is equally anxious to co-operate for that purpose. As a member of the Committee of this Society, my object in troubling you on the present occasion is in the hope of eliciting some observations from your numerous professional readers as to whether or not such cruel practices are indispensable for the acquirement of physiological knowledge? as when doctors differ on such points, little can be expected from the unlearned members of that Committee, with a limited knowledge and an unlimited amount of ignorance as to the mysteries of the Æsculapian art. I ventured to remind certain members of that art, on a recent visit to Paris of a deputation from the London Society, that

"Ce que nous connoissons est peu de chose;  
Ce que nous ignorons est immense."

That this observation might apply to researches for important discoveries in the bowels of the earth, with its unlimited boundaries; but how it could apply to researches in the bowels, flesh, and fibres of living animals on the surface of the earth, the boundaries of whose bodies are so limited, is incomprehensible to the uninitiated in the mysteries of that art, more particularly when they find some of its leading professors protesting against its utility, and giving the preference to experiments on dead bodies. The names of some of these eminent men are, nevertheless, quoted in this Report as *favourable* to that practice.

To the experiments of Sir Charles Bell, for instance, it stated that they considered themselves indebted for physiological acquirements so fruitful in therapeutical application, and they also gave the names as favourable to these views, of Magendie, Müller, Valentin, Longet, &c. This Report we referred, amongst others, to Mr. Macilwain, F.R.C.S., &c., who has directed his attention for a series of years to this subject, and published various observations on its inutility, and who was, moreover, a contemporary of Sir Charles Bell. Mr. Macilwain quoted the authority of Sir Charles himself, to the effect "that the object in view could be better attained after life was extinct, as he found that on having the animal put to death, he was better able to conduct the operation, not from consideration of the sufferings of the animal, but because its sensations under such sufferings interfered with the attainment of that object, and obscured his reasonings on the experiments."

Mr. Macilwain also quotes Longet, another eminent authority referred to in that Report, as approving of Sir Chas. Bell's views in favour of vivisection; whereas Longet's written opinions were, "That experiments on animals of different species, so far from leading to useful results as regarded human beings, had a tendency to mislead, and consequently that it was necessary to have recourse to pathological facts founded on experiments on human beings." Longet further observed with regard to Magendie, who was more celebrated than any other man for that practice, "that the great importance attached by him to experiments on the scarified bodies of living animals was an importance that only existed in his own imagination;" or, in other words, that vivisection was regarded by him more as a trade for his personal advantage than as a science for professional acquirements.

This Report was also referred to Prof. Owen, one of our first physiological authorities of the present day, who observed, with reference to the allegations as to the repetition of such practices being necessary for the instruction of pupils, "That no teacher of physiology is justified in repeating any vivisectional experiments merely to show its known results to his class or to others. It is the practice of vivisection, in place of physiological induction, pursued for the same end, against which *humanity, Christianity, and civilization* should alike protest."

When we have the evidence of this eminent authority, as regards the abuses of that inhuman practice, in support of the opinions of Sir Chas. Bell and Longet, quoted in that Report as favourable to it, you will, by affording your professional readers an opportunity of giving their opinions on this subject, be rendering a service to the cause of humanity, and to those

dumb animals so useful to man, for whose services such ungrateful returns are so frequently made, more particularly in the case of horses, as will appear by the following extract from a work just published by Sir Francis Head, "The Horse and his Rider":—

"What a disgrace it is to France, and especially to her brave army, that while every cavalry soldier who distinguishes himself in action, covered with medals and *glory*, may proudly end his days in the Hôtel des Invalides, the horse that carried him in all his brilliant charges, &c., when he is worn out and unfit for service, is liable to be led into an arena in the heart of 'the empire,' to be before the public, not honoured nor rewarded, but inch by inch, and bit by bit, to be dissected alive, until by the last sigh from his lungs, and by the last pulsation from his heart, he ends his account with his inconsiderate, ungenerous, and ungrateful country!"

As the author of this work is, I believe, a personal friend of the Emperor of the French, these observations will, no doubt, make an impression that will have a tendency to mitigate such sufferings, if not abolish such practices, in France. Trusting, also, that by the aid of THE LANCET, unnecessary bleedings may, in like cases, be abolished in both countries,

I remain, Sir, your very obedient servant,

Pall-mall, Jan. 1861.

JOHN SCOTT LILLIE.

### QUARANTINE.

(LETTER FROM DR. GAVIN MILROY.)

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—AS THE LANCET has always manifested much interest in the proceedings of the Quarantine Committee of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, I will thank you to give me an opportunity of making known to the profession, abroad as well as at home, what has already been done by the Committee, and what remains to be done before their labours come to a close.

I will, in the first place, briefly recapitulate the circumstances which led to the inquiry, and the steps taken to set the inquiry on foot. The reappearance of the plague at one part of the African coast in the summer of 1858, after a complete cessation of the disease, not only in Barbary, but throughout the whole of the Ottoman empire, for many years, gave occasion to the re-establishment in most European ports, more especially in the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, &c., of all the extravagant and senseless measures of restriction on intercommunication with many places and countries where not the slightest reasonable suspicion of the sickness ever existed, as well as in the limited district of Bengazi on the Barbary coast, where the fever had broken out amongst a starving and squalid Arab population months before these measures were had recourse to. The case showed clearly that, whatever relaxation in the stringency of quarantine might be allowed or winked at in times of general good health, no sooner was alarm from any cause of supposed danger once excited, than all the *old*—it was to have been expected, the *obsolete*—machinery of worthless precautions was set agoing, to the scandal of common sense not less than of medical opinion. In ordinary times, and when no dreadful or pestilential disease exists in any part of Europe or of the adjacent countries, the angry disputes, complaints, and remonstrances that are continually recurring in the ports of Spain, Portugal, and in most of those of the Mediterranean, in consequence of unjust quarantine impositions, and the amount of diplomatic correspondence between different governments consequent thereon, would hardly be credited by anyone who has not had personal cognizance of what takes place.

Various attempts have been made within the last twenty years by different nations, chiefly France and England, to bring about a more rational state of procedure upon a subject of universal interest and importance, and the experience and knowledge of physicians, consular agents, and other public servants, have been repeatedly called into requisition by their respective governments to aid with their advice. Missions have occasionally been sent to different regions for the purpose of examining on the spot the true nature and properties of the diseases against which quarantine is chiefly directed, and official commissions and committees have been at various times appointed in this as well as in other countries of Europe to sift and weigh evidence from all sources, and to suggest desirable reforms. The last of these commissions was the International Conference at Paris in 1851, composed of medical and

consular delegates from almost all the states of Europe, and whose sittings were continued for more than six months. What amount of good has been the result of their labour, it is not easy to say. Certainly the course pursued in most of the ports of southern Europe in 1858, and still more recent proceedings at Lisbon, Vigo, and Malaga, not to mention many other places, do not warrant much hope of any substantial amendment. Unhappily, discord and even contrariety of opinion prevailed on many points amongst the twenty-four gentlemen of the Conference, more particularly amongst the medical members, and the result was that a compromise had to be come to on some of the principal conclusions finally agreed upon. That such disagreements should continually be occurring amongst medical opinion is deeply to be regretted, alike for the credit of the profession and the welfare of society. Is it really from the intrinsic difficulties and intricacies of the subject that these endless disputes arise?—or is it that the subject is regarded through the misleading medium of prejudice, imperfect knowledge, or illogical reasoning, if not at times of self-interest and fear of pecuniary loss? At present it is enough to say that the mind of the public will, we may be assured, take its bent very generally on such matters from that of the profession, and that however apt a community may be during a period of alarm to resort to itself to various preposterous precautions against the invasion of a dreaded visitant, they might always be soon brought to calm reason, and the adoption of the right measures for their protection, if only the doctors were agreed amongst themselves as to the advice to be given to their fellow-citizens.

How is such agreement to be brought about? and how is the public to be at the same time enlightened, so as to be able to appreciate the soundness of the advice proffered by the profession? Simply, but surely, by having from henceforth the evidence of duly-ascertained and faithfully-recorded facts and results relating to the question in hand published systematically, from time to time, for their consideration. What lengthened diplomatic correspondence and costly official commissions have failed to effect will, I doubt not, be ere long accomplished by the simple process of periodic truthful records.

It is upon this idea that the Committee appointed by the National Association, at the Liverpool meeting in 1858, and presided over by the Earl of Shaftesbury, have acted in carrying out their inquiries—first, to obtain authentic and reliable information as to the practice and the results of quarantine hitherto in different countries, and then to frame a report, based on such evidence, for the consideration of the Legislature and general public, as well as of the medical profession.

The first part of this work has been done, and appears in the two Parliamentary papers ordered by the House of Commons, last August, to be printed, on the motion of the Right Hon. W. Cowper, who was President of the Public Health Section of the National Association, at Bradford, in 1859. These papers, entitled "Abstracts of Regulations in force in Foreign Countries respecting Quarantine," and "Abstracts of Returns of Information on the Practice of Quarantine," contain the sum and substance of nearly 200 official replies from H.M. consuls and the governors of British colonies, and also from many military and naval medical officers, to the queries drawn up by the Committee, and which, on the application of the Earl of Shaftesbury, had been transmitted by the Foreign and the Colonial Offices, and by the Directors General of the Medical Departments of the Army and Navy.

The mass of information thus obtained is very large and comprehensive, extending as it does to the principal ports of the different Baltic States, Holland, Belgium, France, Portugal and Spain, Sardinia and Naples, Greece, Turkey and Egypt, the United States, Mexico, Brazil, &c., and to every British colony, from Canada and the West Indies to Australia and Hong-Kong. To appreciate the value of the documents, they must be examined for themselves; no mere abstract of their contents would be of much use; and as their expense but little exceeds a shilling, they are within the reach of all. Besides the direct information they convey on the immediate subject of quarantine, there is much in them to interest the epidemiological inquirer, many of the replies—as those from Lisbon, Alexandria, several of the West India islands, the Mauritius, Sydney, Melbourne, &c.—containing highly instructive details respecting recent epidemics in various parts of the world.

The Committee are now engaged in framing their report from the evidence which has been thus submitted to them. As a large and highly influential commission of professional and other men in the leading States of the American Union are also at work just now in a like inquiry, (our transatlantic brethren had, indeed, the start of us on this as on some other branches of kindred research,) it may be reasonably hoped that