

## OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

*Medico-Chirurgical Transactions, published by the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London.* Vol. LI. London: Longmans. 1868.—This annual volume is not equal to its gigantic predecessor in size, containing but 300 pages, and consisting of thirteen papers, against twenty-four last year. Thirty-two papers were presented to the Society last session, and the selection which has been made cannot fail to be unsatisfactory to some persons; but, on the whole, more substantial justice has been done than on recent occasions. The volume includes papers "On Cholera," by Mr. Sedgwick; "Excess of Urea," by Dr. Fuller; "Bright's Disease," by George Johnson; "The Treatment of Cleft Palate in Children," by Mr. Thomas Smith; and others by Dr. Allbutt, Messrs. Callender, Birkett, and Bryant, &c. The referees of the Society seem to set their faces steadily against the admission of single cases, except in rare instances. Thus they have admitted a case of double axillary aneurism successfully treated by Mr. Furner, but have excluded the most interesting, if not unique, case of acute progressive paralysis by Dr. George Harley and Mr. Lockhart Clarke, to which we consequently gave admission in THE LANCET of the 3rd of October last. If single records of cases are not suitable for publication, we fail to see the reason for the insertion of Dr. George Johnson's seven cases of removal of a morbid growth from the vocal cords, which present no special novelty.

*On the Results of Operations for Cicatrices after Burns.* By J. H. JAMES, F.R.C.S., &c. 8vo, pp. 30. London: Churchill and Sons. 1868.—In this pamphlet the venerable author, notwithstanding age and blindness, enters an energetic and well-founded protest against the condemnation, in "Holmes's System of Surgery," of operations on cicatrices left by burns. Those who remember the early volumes of the Transactions, of what was then called the Provincial Medical Association, will also remember with what brilliant success Mr. James has operated on cases of this class—a success no less due to his great dexterity than to his care, skill, ingenuity, and infinite patience in after-treatment. We hail with much pleasure the work of a veteran who thus "shoulders his crutch and shows how fields are won;" and we think that the republication, in an accessible form, of Mr. James's methods, and of the evidences of his success, may justly encourage younger men to attempt the relief of those who suffer from the distressing condition of which he treats.

*Clinical Lectures on Diseases of the Urinary Organs.* Delivered at University College Hospital, by Sir HENRY THOMPSON, Surgeon-Extraordinary to H.M. the King of the Belgians, Professor of Clinical Surgery, and Surgeon to University College Hospital. London: John Churchill and Sons. 1868.—This little volume contains Sir Henry Thompson's lectures which lately appeared in our columns, somewhat amplified and revised in form. The author has, wisely, we think, preserved the easy colloquial style of the classroom as the most appropriate for practical purposes and clinical teaching. He says he has published them at the suggestion of numerous correspondents, known and unknown to him; and that they contain some of the fruit of a long and careful study. The author has undoubtedly enjoyed considerable experience in the treatment of diseases of the urinary organs; and these lectures, being clear and eminently practical in character, will no doubt be widely read.

*The Climatic Treatment of Consumption and Chronic Lung Diseases.* By JOHN C. THOROWGOOD, M.D. Lond., M.R.C.P., Assistant-Physician to the City of London Hospital for Diseases of the Chest, Victoria Park, &c. Third edition. London: H. K. Lewis. 1868.—We do not know that there

is anything very new in this little treatise, which contains a well-executed attempt to distinguish between the forms and stages of pulmonary phthisis and other lung diseases that are likely to be benefited by residence in a bracing air, and those in which the palliative effects of a sedative climate are advisable. The error which is sometimes perpetrated in selecting warm and relaxing climates is attributable to two causes—namely, the mistake of treating pulmonary disease without reference to the great differences which exist between its different forms and the constitutional diversities of patients on the one hand, and the custom of following in the wake of an old and false fashion on the other. We are convinced that an out-door life, remote from towns, in regions of considerable altitude, with a certain amount of what may be called "roughing it," exert a markedly curative influence in many cases; but the exercise of skill and judgment is required in making the selection. The book contains many sensible and practical remarks on the diet and regimen—in a word, the hygiene—of pulmonic invalids.

## ON THE USE OF CARBOLIC ACID IN COMPOUND FRACTURES, WOUNDS, BURNS, AND GUNSHOT WOUNDS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Having used carbolic acid in numerous cases since its introduction by Professor Lister, F.R.S., I do not hesitate to say that I look upon it as one of the most useful of modern therapeutic agents in surgical practice, and worthy of that distinguished, original, and philosophical surgeon. By its use conservative surgery has been rendered still more conservative, and a vast amount of misery, discomfort, and mutilation avoided. Since its introduction our operations have been less numerous, although accidents from machinery and other causes have been on the increase, and of almost daily occurrence. I observe that the reports from some of the London hospitals have not been quite favourable, and I think it the duty of those connected with public institutions to give it a fair trial, and report accordingly.

In recent wounds our honorary surgeons generally use lint soaked in a liniment of one part of carbolic acid to five of linseed oil. This seems to possess healing, antiseptic, anti-purulent, and even anæsthetic properties in a remarkable degree.

In burns, as Professor Pirrie remarks, "It seems to accelerate the subsidence of local symptoms, to procure rapid and perfect relief from pain, and to promote healing without suppuration."\*

We have at present under treatment two cases of gunshot wounds—one of the leg, with comminuted fracture of tibia and wound of posterior tibial artery, and the other of the hand, with severe laceration and destruction of soft parts. Both cases are recovering, carbolic acid having acted admirably. I may add that we have tried the carbolic lac plaster as prepared in Glasgow according to the recipe of Mr. Lister, and have found it very useful.

In short, I beg leave to confirm in the strongest manner all that Professors Lister, Syme, and Pirrie have said of this most valuable discovery.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Kidderminster Infirmary, Jan. 9th, 1869.

JOHN ROSE, M.D.

\* See a valuable paper, THE LANCET for 1867, vol. ii., page 575.

THE works for the improvement of the river Cam have been commenced in good earnest. The *Atlas* remarks that the Improvement Commissioners of the University and town of Cambridge should put their shoulders to the wheel and devise an efficient mode of taking their sewage out of the river. It is satisfactory to believe that, sooner or later, they will be compelled to do so, and they will therefore be wise to make a virtue of necessity.