to the arm. If the radius be a little more prominent than usual, the blade, when brought down into its place, tilts the spring to one or other side. I have, I think, contrived a method which gets rid of this difficulty. For the main feature of the plan I am indebted to a gentleman well known among mechanical engineers, Mr. Edwin Hill, from whom also I gained several hints while devising this little apparatus. He showed me that the part for fixing the instrument to the arm should be adjusted before the spring is brought down to its exact position. I have consequently tried various plans of this kind, which have resulted in the following:—I discard the two blades or wings altogether, and replace them by four small rounded pieces of ivory, which bear on the arm without painful pressure. For the pad I have a stiff board eight inches long and three and a half wide, padded thickly at one end, and covered with leather. This and the alterations to the instrument were made for me by Mr. Coxeter, of Grafton-street. The arm is laid supine on the pad; the wrist is bent back over the thick end, and kept so by carrying across the fingers an elastic band attached to the board. The artery is thus thrown into relief, and on it I lay the spring of the sphygmograph, which is braced to the arm by two elastic straps carried over the bars. These fasten to the board by hooks on each side, and can be caught or released in a moment. They hold down the instrument on the arm firmly enough, but allow the spring to be shifted about till it is exactly placed. This plan is much more ready than that of Marey, and much easier for novices like myself to practise. Perhaps I should mention that I have seen no other plan of adjustment, so it is possible enough that mine has already occurred to other experimenters. The chief advantages of this method are two:—1st. The stiff pad prevents the hands from compressing the limb, and thereby causing venous congestion. 2nd. The arm is put in the most favourable position for experiment.

I trust that the desire to save others the trouble I had when first using the sphygmograph will be my apology for encroaching on your space.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Weymouth-street, July 7th, 1866. BERKELEY HILL.

THE GRIFFIN TESTIMONIAL AND POOR-LAW MEDICAL REFORM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Allow me space to offer my warmest thanks to the subscribers of the testimonial presented to me on the 5th inst. To have 400 gentlemen scattered over the length and breadth of the land thus coming forward is an honour which I highly prize, as it proves to me that the course I have hitherto pursued is one that is approved of by a large body of my medical brethren. To those gentlemen who are not Poor-law Medical Officers I am especially indebted; to those that are, my thanks will be best proved by my devotion to the cause of Poor-law Medical Reform, the accomplishment of which will, I feel confident, be not only beneficial to them, but to the nation at large. To Dr. Fowler, the hon. treasurer and secretary to the Testimonial Fund, I know not how sufficiently to express my thanks for all the trouble he has taken in the affair; I can only say I thank him very sincerely. To the medical press my acknowledgments must ever be due, for without their aid I could never have been placed in a position to merit the testimonial I have received. The subject of the testimonial (the Good Samaritan) is one which must ever make me feel it to be a religious duty to relieve suffering humanity. As a work of art the testimonial is nearly perfect, the expression of the countenances of the figures cannot be better. The album of photographs of my medical friends I greatly prize, and yet hope the few gaps in the volume will be speedily filled. To all and everyone my thanks are due.

I shall feel obliged by your insertion of the annexed letter to the President of the Poor-law Board.—I am, &c.,

RICHARD GRIFFIN.

The following gentlemen have forwarded their subscriptions to the funds of the Association:—J. M. Greensill, Martley, 5s.; R. N. Robson, Durham, 10s.; Jas. Hughes, Northwich, 10s.; T. T. Jones, Chesterfield, 5s.; H. M. Simmond, Newington St. Mary, 10s.; E. G. Verenne, Witham, 10s.; Arthur Pearce, Hartismere, 5s.; T. L. Price, Wigan, 5s.; T. A. Freeman, Hartley Wintney, 10s. 6d.; W. A. Peacock, Halifax, 10s.; John Robinson, Halifax, 10s.; T. L. P. Pugh, Halifax, 10s.

12, Royal-terrace, Weymouth, July 9th, 1866.

SIR,—I have the honour to inform you I have in my possession a petition from a meeting of Poor-law Medical Officers held at the Freemasons' Tavern on July 5th, which I shall be glad to present to you, as President of the Poor-law Board, whenever it will be convenient for you to receive it; it is signed by the chairman only, on behalf of the meeting, but if you desire other signatures I will quickly procure them. In order that you may at once know its contents I send you a printed copy. I beg to forward you a summary of the proceedings of the Poor-law Medical Reform Association, of which I have the honour to be chairman, in order that you may know what has occurred during the last eleven years, and thus enable you at a glance to understand the question. I also send you a copy of a pamphlet which has been delivered to the Poor-law Board, but which has not been, as yet, forwarded to the individual members of the House of Commons, owing to the Reform Bill obstructing almost all other business. At page 12 of the pamphlet you will perceive a proposed Bill, which I sincerely trust the Poor-law Board will bring into Parliament; it is not a Bill for a class, although urged upon the country by medical men—it is a Bill that will benefit the entire nation. The Right Hon. T. Sotherton Estcourt, when President of the Poor-law Board, said, "I freely and at once admit that I am of opinion that the system of medical relief throughout the country requires alteration."

The papers have of late teemed with the abuses of the present system. I respectfully urge upon you to lose no time in taking this subject into your serious consideration. I believe a Poor-law Board Continuance Bill must be brought into the House this session. I pray you to take powers in that Bill to carry out the necessary reforms. I will attend any day you may name, either alone, with three or four other medical men, or a large deputation, but in the latter case I shall require ten days' notice to inform my medical brethren of it. At any rate, I trust you will allow me to ask some members of Parliament to accompany me.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,
The Right Hon. Gathorne Hardy, M.P., RICHARD GRIFFIN.
President of the Poor-law Board.

CLITORIDECTOMY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Mr. Gage Moore states it as his "*impression* that we have scarcely more right to remove a woman's clitoris than to deprive a man of his penis." Is Mr. Moore really serious? If so, he has no hesitation in opposing his *impressions* to the facts which have already been recorded by Mr. Baker Brown in his recent work (see Cases 3, 9, 11, 19, and 48). The justification of any operation is the result; and seeing that it has been indisputably proved that *sterility* has been cured by *this* operation, surely I need not argue the question of "right."

But I ask Mr. Moore whether he means to imply that the excision of the clitoris is equivalent to amputation of the penis? If he does I shall not argue against the physiological error implied in such supposed analogy, but beg to refer him to his text books.

Mr. Moore further states that it is his "*firm belief*" that "the application of caustics is much more desirable." It is enough to say in reply that even extirpation is not sufficient in some cases; that in these caustics are as worthless as water; and that, however *firm* Mr. Moore's *belief* may be, it cannot for a moment hold its ground against the *facts* which experience has brought forth.

So long as Mr. Moore will argue from *impressions* and *beliefs*, and will refuse to test the matter and distrust the good faith of other workers, so long may fruitless discussion be kept up.

With regard to the letter of Mr. Harris, I have to remark in the first place that the case referred to was one of hysterical mania, and not of epilepsy; and in the second, that however Mr. Harris may sneer at the statistics of the London Surgical Home, I have no hesitation in saying that, as to accuracy, they will compare very favourably with those of any institution in the kingdom, through the care exercised in keeping an eye on the patients after their discharge.

Trusting I have not trespassed too much on your valuable space,

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
GEO. GRANVILLE BANTOCK.

Cornwall-road, Westbourne-park, June 25th, 1866.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—During a short stay in London early in March last, I

availed myself of the opportunity of being present at the Surgical Home to witness some of the operations (for which that establishment has a reputation) performed by Mr. Baker Brown. Amongst others were one or two for the removal of the clitoris as a means of cure for certain kinds of epilepsy. Although very dexterously performed, I confess the operation appeared to me at the time something very unusual, inasmuch as there was no positive local disease, but a healthy organ made the subject of an unnatural use, and thereby, according to Mr. Brown's view, a cause of disordered nervous action. And this impression was not much affected by Mr. Brown's statement, "that although the wound produced by the operation appeared large, yet its healing was so beautifully accomplished as almost to defy detection." But when, in addition, he stated that he had the approval of Dr. Brown-Séquard and other eminent men for this mode of treating such epileptic attacks; and, further, that any or all of the gentlemen then assembled (numbering, I should say, forty or fifty middle-aged practitioners) were quite at liberty to watch his cases and inquire for themselves, I came to the conclusion that this operation must have some curative power. I particularly observed the fossa on the side of the perineum, which Mr. Brown describes as so characteristic of this kind of masturbation, and caused by the pressure of one of the fingers.

I do not take upon myself to say whether or not the operation is a justifiable one, but I am certain, from Mr. Brown's invitation to the medical men present to examine for themselves, and his own pursuit of the practice, that he has strong reasons for believing the operation to be satisfactory. The case of complete failure as regards a cure, or alleviation even, given in your journal of June 9th, and commented upon by the resident surgeon of the Home in the following number, will only, of course, be received *quantum valeat*, as I am acquainted with few operations that are invariably successful; but I must confess surprise at the reticence of the London practitioners, if, after the invitations given to them by Mr. Brown to witness his operations and the results, they have done so, and not expressed their opinions, and more especially so if those opinions have been unfavourable to the operation. I, as a distant practitioner, regard the absence of controversy on their part in our journals as a tacit approval of the operation. As a stranger to Mr. Baker Brown, I was very much pleased with his kindness and courtesy of manner, his frankness and candour in replying to any questions raised, and—last, though not least—with his coolness and dexterity as an operator. In conclusion, I take the liberty of stating, from personal experience, that Mr. Brown and the resident medical officer afford every facility to medical men for investigating these cases.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Blackpool, June 21st, 1866. JOHN PICKOP, M.R.C.S.E.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I am quite aware that my individual opinion cannot have much weight, yet the mention of my name in THE LANCET of June 30th compels me, in justice to myself, to state that I have no faith in the curative power of this operation, that I have not yet seen a permanent cure following it, and that I think the proposal of Mr. Moore for a report of every case that may have been *long* watched by any of the members of our profession, both *before* and *after* operation, very desirable to enable us to arrive at the real solution of the question.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,
Moore-place, July, 1866. J. WADHAM ROBINSON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Please allow me space for the insertion of these few lines; I should have sent them last week, but thought Mr. Harris would have written.

Concerning the case about which the clitoridectomy discussion has been carried on, Mr. Brown says there is no doubt about the cause. I can only, in answer to that, inform the profession that the fits commenced when the lady was quite a child, and the worst she ever had was at the age of seven.

Mr. Brown does not look upon the case as one of epilepsy. I must say that I do. It is true that lately a good deal of hysteria has been superadded; and the operation has not even relieved that.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,
Ipswich, July 11th, 1866. HARRY GAGE MOORE.

THE STRAND UNION INQUIRY.

The *Pall-mall Gazette* says on this subject:—

"It is not easy to understand why Mr. Cane should introduce into his report topics of excuse for the guardians which they themselves might have brought forward had they thought it judicious; but he could hardly have volunteered on their behalf a more damaging suggestion than this. The guardians, he says, might have alleged (although they did not) that, 'although their medical officer had made no report to them against carpet-beating, they had, out of consideration to the sick, abandoned the work.' They were not so rash; and they will not thank Mr. Cane for reminding the public that for years the guardians stunned and choked the sick people in the wards with the noise and dust of a most extensive carpet-beating business, carried on in the yard under the infirmary windows; that they persisted in it in spite of the protests of their medical officer and of Mr. Wakley, the late coroner for Middlesex, in spite of the public exposure by THE LANCET Commission a year since, and of the condemnation of all London repeated in half the organs of the press; that during this year they scornfully rejected Mr. Storr's motion to abolish it, and refused to hear their medical officer on the subject because they knew his opinions already; and that, finally, it was abolished just before this inquiry commenced, when public pressure had become irresistible, upon the motion of a newly-elected guardian, backed by a letter from the medical officer. It is not only in this instance that Mr. Cane is cruelly kind to the guardians, and severely unjust to the medical officer. He states in his report that the medical officer had made no representation to the guardians as to the nursing. Nevertheless, in the evidence, it appears that upon the dismissal of Belsham, who stole the stimulants of a dying patient by the ingenious device of making an unnecessary mustard plaster for him, and so getting an excuse of raising him from his pillow, and clapping the plaster on his shoulders with one hand and stealing the bottle from under the pillow with the other, Dr. Rogers did apply to the visiting guardians for a paid nurse; but that, notwithstanding the atrocity of the circumstances—Mr. Cane altogether omits them, although they were reported as part of the evidence in every newspaper—the guardians refused, and appointed the potboy recommended by Mr. Betts, who, together with a consumptive patient, brought the ward into a state of thorough confusion and disorder. The report has two great merits. The depositions are annexed to it, so that those who will take the trouble can form their own opinion of the facts, and in a moment of ungrammatical warmth Mr. Cane has candidly admitted that the infirmary has neither space, accommodation, nursing, nor efficient attendance, and that, besides these, there are other wants which he does not describe."

The *Daily News*, the *Standard*, and the *Daily Telegraph* have also passed severe censures upon the palpable unfairness of this report.

Parliamentary Intelligence.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

JULY 9TH.

SOME time was occupied in discussing the Finchley-road Estate Bill, the second reading of which was ultimately rejected by 72 to 65.

Mr. HUNT, in moving an adjournment until Monday next, stated that the estimates for the Inland Revenue and Packet Service would be the first business taken, and after these the Industrial Schools and Reformatories Bill, the Public Health, the Vaccination, and the Artisans' Dwelling-houses Bills, and the motion was agreed to.

Sir R. PEEL gave notice that he would take an early opportunity of calling attention to the circumstances under which the supplemental charter had been granted to the Queen's University, and would ask Mr. Gladstone whether he deemed what had been done to be in accordance with the pledge he had given to him and Mr. Lowe at an early period of the Session.

After some unavailing opposition from Mr. Ayrton, the House went into committee on the Thames Navigation Bill, and agreed to the first five clauses.