not included in the therapeutics of this condition; and the bloodletting recommended appears to us to be a rather doubtful remedy, unless the "flushes" are coincident with evidence of other temporary local congestions of a grave character. Neither can we give our assent to the distinction drawn between syncope and fainting. The cases of sudden death quoted from Sir Gilbert Blane, and adduced from the experience of the writer as occurring after pernicious fever and delivery, would appear to us to be quite explicable by reference to the damage inflicted upon the heart by any serious cause of debilitation. The explanation given by Dr. Tilt of the manner in which a violent blow on the epigastrium produces death, does not appear incontrovertible; for the intimate connexion of the semilunar ganglia with the vagus nerve, and of the vagus with the heart, would appear to make it quite as likely that death, under the influence of a violent blow in this region, may be the result of a veritable syncope, as of the somewhat obscure "leipothymia."

The condition of women during the "dodging time" is often very complex, and includes a great number of morbid states. We have seen cases in which the hysterical diathesis of this period has been combined with epilepsy, hypochondriasis, pseudo-narcotism, and oxaluria. Such cases derive benefit from the use of mineral acids and strychnia. There is a familiar category of cases met with in hospital and dispensary practice, to which the name "charwoman's disease" might be applied; they occur about the climacteric period, but are the result of a long course of gin, and they benefit by morphia and other narcotics, which are not generally well borne by women at the critical period.

There is, however, a fund of practical matter in Dr. Tilt's book, and no small share of theory also, which is very clearly enunciated. As the best work on the subject of which it treats, we can cordially recommend it to the profession.

New Inventions

IN AID OF THE

PRACTICE OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY.

ARNOTT'S SMOKE-CONSUMING GRATE.

In an age when the progress of sanitary science is being marked by many valuable sanitary inventions, we know of none that more justly deserves universal adoption than the ingenious and effective "Smokeless Grate" of Dr. Arnott. We have no alternative, at least at present, than to trust to coals for our supply of artificial warmth. An Englishman's fire-side is one of the most cherished of his Lares and Penates. He loves to see the cheering blaze as well as to feel its warmth. The dreary, ugly, stuffy, close stove of the German and Russian might parch his body, but would never give a glow to his heart. He clings to the open fire-place around which he has so often seen his friends and children gather; it is to him the focus of his social and domestic enjoyments, and serves for a companion when alone. Every Englishman will therefore appreciate an invention which tends to perpetuate the open fire-place, by removing those objections which undoubtedly attach to the forms in common use.

If a bright fire be so intimately connected with our ideas of domestic happiness, an expressive proverb has also linked in unpleasant association a smoky fire with connubial discord. But smoke, although a visible, tangible, dirty and destructive nuisance, is not the only evil result of burning coal in fire-places unscientifically constructed. Every kind of coal in common use is largely impregnated with sulphur; this, under the influence of heat is thrown off into our rooms in various offensive and noxious compounds. By the use of Dr. Arnott's stove all these inconveniences are avoided, an immense economy attending. From observations of our own we are fully persuaded of the truth of the estimate put forward by Dr. Arnott and Messrs.

Edwards, who have carried out his views in the construction of his stove, that a saving of at least thirty per cent. in coals is effected. If we reflect for a moment upon the aggregate results of diminishing the expenditure of coal in this metropolis by one-third, we shall form some idea of the great importance of this invention, if the question, "Will this stove be generally used?" so pertinently put by the manufacturer, be answered in the affirmative. It means, beyond cavil, the burning, by one-third at least, of that thick, palpable cloud of smoke which contaminates the London atmosphere. But it means far more than that. At present a large proportion of smoke in domestic grates escapes into the air unburnt—that is, as smoke. But in this stove *all* the smoke is burnt; it is converted into heat; and the gases which escape up the chimney are of a nature to mingle instantly with the general mass of the atmosphere. Already the atmosphere of London is sensibly improved by the operation of the Smoke Act, which has compelled the proprietors of factories to consume their own smoke. But this amelioration is as nothing compared with the beneficial results that would follow the general adoption of Dr. Arnott's stove. Every man who substitutes one of these admirable stoves for the rude and unscientific grates now in use will not only benefit himself directly in health and purse, but will contribute in an important measure to the general health and economy. We believe that the stove, as manufactured by Messrs. Edwards, of Poland-street, fully comes up to the designs of the accomplished inventor. Many of the forms of designs are exceedingly elegant. The prime cost necessarily somewhat exceeds that of the common stove; but we see no reason why a plain stove should not be made on this principle at such a cost as would render it accessible to every-one.

THE RECTANGULAR CATHETER STAFF FOR LITHOTOMY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Will you allow me to correct an important typical error which occurred in your report of my paper at the Medico-Chirurgical Society (THE LANCET, Feb. 28th)? In the explanatory note to the woodcut it is stated, that the groove, as shown, "is sufficiently large," whilst it should have been "is not sufficiently large." In the instrument itself the groove comes back quite to the angle, and is there widened out so as to become posterior as well as lateral. This is of importance, in order that it may be easily found by the knife. Another, but more trivial misprint occurs in the same note, the concluding word of which should have been "found" not "formed."

Whilst on this subject, permit me also to reply to some inquiries which have been made respecting the instrument. With one in which the foot is of good length, (much longer than in the one I have been shown as Dr. Buchanan's,) it is difficult, unless the bladder be very capacious, to push it so far that the angle is in the viscus, and for this reason, as well as the limited mobility which its shape permits of, it is awkward as a sound. As to the objection made by Mr. Wells, that the angle is liable to slip into the bladder, and that the surgeon may be induced to cut upon it through, instead of anterior to, the prostate, it will be apparent to all that such could only happen with a rectangular instrument, when its stem was brought low down towards the patient's thighs. Held in the usual way, its shape makes it absolutely impossible that its angle can be anywhere else than tolerably superficial in the perinæum. I can easily imagine that the accident might happen to any one attempting to imitate Dr. Buchanan's practice—i. e., pressing the staff down upon the rectum, and endeavouring to bring the prostate as near the surface as possible. It is very desirable that the merits of the rectangular staff should be discussed as quite distinct from Dr. Buchanan's peculiar method of lithotomy. Of the advantages of the staff when used in the usual way I am very certain, and cannot doubt that it will soon come into general employment. It is important that its details as to length of foot, width, groove, &c., should be attended to correctly by the instrument-maker. Fergusson, of Giltspur-street, will, I believe, shortly have on hand some, made after the model of my own, and I shall be most happy to allow any one an opportunity of having it copied who may wish to do so.

I am, Sir, &c.,

Finsbury-circus, March, 1857.

JONATHAN HUTCHINSON.