

"sanity of mind" by "the removal of the diseased crystalline bodies," and the consequent recovery of sight. The case, you will perhaps allow me to remark, is not so "exceptional" as it appears, inasmuch as two similar cases have occurred in my own practice—one at Colombo, and another at the Colney Hatch Asylum. However, the question of "coincidence" or "consequence" I prefer to leave open.

On the opening of Colney Hatch Asylum in 1852, there were admitted five or six patients, the subjects of cataract. I operated—i.e., either "couched" or extracted the "lenticular opacities"—in each and all of them. One patient recovered both her sight and reason, and was discharged as cured. A second, in whom extraction was performed, the lens of either eye being removed at one sitting, and within the space of two or three minutes, was very greatly benefited in the state of her mind by the restoration of sight; she has, too, been enabled to employ herself, with profit to the asylum, and with much comfort and advantage to herself, in fancy and other needlework. In a report of this second case, made many years since, I wrote thus:—"She is incurably insane; but the effect of the restoration of sight to her was (and is, most likely) in the highest degree pleasurable and beneficial, in so far as it places her in a position whereby the means of relief, *if not of cure*, are both increased and amplified."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES G. DAVEY, M.R.C.P. Lond.

Northwoods, near Bristol, Nov. 1860.

ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—On reading Dr. Tuke's letter upon "Private Lunatic Asylums" in your journal of the 3rd inst., I observe he states, amongst the statistics of cures, that in St. Luke's Hospital, of all under treatment, they are 23·4 per cent.

I beg to give you the actual number of patients under treatment for each year during the last four years, with the exact per-centage of cures, which you will see to be much higher than is given in Dr. Tuke's statement:—

Year.	No. of Patients under Treatment.	Per-centage of Cures.
1856	165	63
1857	155	61·3
1858	150	54·66
1859	127	65·3

I remain, Sir, yours obediently,

EBENEZER TOLLER, M.R.C.S.,

St. Luke's Hospital, Nov. 1860.

Res. Med. Superintendent.

NEW METHOD OF REDUCING STRANGULATED HERNIA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Under the above title you published, in your journal of the 20th ultimo, a communication from Mr. Jessop, of Cheltenham, which, both from its tenour and heading, would convey the impression, that the method he describes is a recent discovery; and in the two succeeding numbers of your invaluable periodical, the excellence and success of the plan proposed are borne testimony to by Messrs. Watkins and Johnson, as well as by Dr. Oliver. The Doctor seems to think that *his* mode of procedure is worthy of being called "another method," though it proceeds on the same principle—viz., that of placing the parts concerned in such a position that a flaccid body is *drawn* through a confined aperture, instead of being exposed to the difficult and dangerous ordeal of being pushed through the same.

Your correspondents on the present subject seem to have forgotten the fact, that the attention of the profession was drawn to this subject as early as December, 1849; but if the paper of that date has passed into oblivion, we are certainly indebted to Mr. Jessop for resuscitating a method of treatment for strangulated hernia which is destined to relieve alike the patient and surgeon of a painfully critical operation. In the number of THE LANCET for Dec. 8th, 1849, there is a short communication on this subject, by Mr. Hodge, then surgeon at Sidmouth, bearing the same title as that by Mr. Jessop, and from which it will be seen that a case of strangulated hernia, after having resisted the ordinary means of reduction, was brought to a happy termination by what may be called the gravitation principle of treatment.

I remain, Sir, yours obediently,

Acerington, Nov. 1860.

W. S. MILLAR, M.D.

VACCINATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—On the 24th ult. I vaccinated a fine healthy baby, six months old, with fair hair, clear skin, and hazel eyes. On the 31st, there was a speck, about the size of a pin's head; and on the 4th inst., there was a beautifully-developed pock. During twenty-four years' practice I have not met with a parallel case.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Aldersgate-street, Nov. 1860.

CHARLES HOGG, L.R.C.P.E.

PARISIAN MEDICAL INTELLIGENCE.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

At a late meeting of the Academy of Sciences attention was drawn by M. Lallemand to a series of experiments undertaken by MM. Perrin and Duroy, in order to obtain a comparative estimate of the effects of alcohol, carbonic acid, and the various anæsthetics, on the nervous system of animals. Three ounces of alcohol mixed with an equal quantity of water were given in three equal doses, at a quarter of an hour's interval, to a large-sized dog. After the lapse of an hour the animal was in a complete state of intoxication, the muscular system being relaxed, the skin and conjunctivæ perfectly insensible to the touch, the pulse 120, and the respirations 22 per minute. The posterior arches of the last three dorsal vertebræ were now removed, and the spinal marrow laid bare for about two inches of its length. It was then found that the anterior and posterior columns of the cord, and the anterior and posterior roots of the spinal cord, could be pricked, seized with forceps, and pinched or pulled, without eliciting any symptom of sensibility or muscular convulsion. The paralysis of the spinal nervous system was found to be complete. The animal was then let alone for four hours, and at the expiration of that period, the alcoholic lethargy having considerably subsided, the same excitatory manipulations were resumed, and the cord was found to have regained its normal susceptibility, as proved by the appearance of the physiological manifestations usually attendant upon the employment of local stimulation. In order to ascertain the physiological effects of carbonic acid, the following experiment was performed:—The same process of vivisection having been accomplished—namely, the removal of the arches of the last three dorsal vertebræ,—the animal was made to inhale a mixture of carbonic acid gas and watery vapour, and at the end of ten minutes became quite motionless and senseless, the arterial blood having assumed a dark venous hue. It was then found that the posterior columns of the cord and the posterior roots of the spinal nerves could be pricked, pulled, or pinched, without the production of any sign of sensibility on the part of the animal; but that if, on the other hand, an anterior root were pricked, or the anterior column of the cord stimulated, convulsive movements were produced in the dog's hind quarters. Moreover, that if the sciatic nerve were bared by incision and irritated, the muscles to which it is distributed were immediately thrown into a state of spasmodic contraction. In other experiments oxide of carbon was substituted for carbonic acid with the same results. The deductions drawn by these physiologists from their recent course of investigation tend to establish the fact that alcohol, chloroform, and their "kindred spirits," act primarily on the nervous centres by *their actual presence within the nerve-substance*; whereas the carbonic gases act primarily on the blood only, by the conversion of the arterial into venous blood: the difference of their modes of action being that in the first case the anæsthesia is direct and primitive, and due to the immediate action of the toxic agent on the nerve-matter; in the second, it is indirect and consecutive, depending on the action of the modified blood upon the nervous centres.

Some weeks ago I referred in one of my letters to the grave objections which have recently been brought against the use of the *écraseur*, according to the ordinary *modus operandi* of M. Chassaignac, in the extirpation of hæmorrhoidal tumours. The first surgeon in Paris who drew attention to the occasional occurrence of traumatic stricture of the rectum, as a consequence of the use of the *écraseur*, was M. Nélaton, of the