TABLE OF MIDWIFERY CASES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I send you an account of two thousand two hundred and fifty midwifery cases, and the most remarkable circumstances connected therewith, because it is from such documents alone that correct conclusions can be derived, and the profession furnished with sound data for calculating the probable average departure from a state of nature and safety. This report may be made much more interesting and complete, and when I can find time I will try to make it so, by adding the diseases that are consequent upon delivery, the treatment and results, with the causes which in some instances produced premature labour, and those which rendered instrumental assistance necessary, with such further observations as may seem useful and important. I remain, Sir, your most obedient servant,

GEORGE YEATES HUNTER, M.R.C.S.

Margate, Nov. 17, 1842.

Number of cases	2250
Males	1180
Females	1019
Number of natural cases.....	1838
Premature cases	63
Abortions	99
Of which the sex was developed in 19.	
Cases of turning	17
Delivered with forceps	25
Case of craniotomy.....	1
Still-born children, at full period	23
Of which two were first children, four had been dead some time, five were breech presentations, and one was a case of hæmorrhage.	
Ditto, premature	22
Of which two were breech presentations; the others dead some time.	
Cases in which the funis was round the neck of the child.....	223
Children born with cawls	43
Deformed cases	15
Of which three had six fingers on each hand, one acephalous, in two the spine was exposed, one spina bifida, two club-feet, two had hare-lip and open palate, and one had the toes united. One imperforate anus, one had rudimentary fingers on the left hand, and in one the abdominal viscera were mostly contained in the expanded umbilical cord.	
Presentation of funis	3
Ditto, of feet	6
Ditto, of breech.....	53
Ditto, of arm, &c.....	7
Ditto, of face.....	7
Ditto, of face to ossa pubis	82
Many of these were revolved, and thus made natural presentations.	

Twin cases	24
Of which eight were girl and boy, four were both boys, twelve were both girls, and five were first children.	
Convulsions	5
All ended favourably.	
Flooding cases	11
Of which nine were successfully treated.	
Placenta attached over os uteri	8
In these cases I turned and delivered eight, and they all terminated well.	
Placenta removed	38
Hour-glass contraction	10
Mania	3

ON THE NATURE AND CURE OF
BLINDNESS PRODUCED BY OIL
OF VITRIOL.

By ROBERT D. THOMSON, M.D., Conductor of the Laboratory, and of the Classes of Practical Chemistry, in the University of Glasgow.

At the meeting of the British Association which assembled at Glasgow in 1840, the author proposed an operation by which he considered that blindness, or opacity of the cornea, produced by the action of sulphuric acid, might be remedied. This view was grounded on the following considerations:—The basis of animal matter, according to the most recent researches of chemists, appears to be a substance termed protein, consisting of $C_{40}H_{31}N_5O_{12}$, which can be readily prepared from albumen, fibrin, &c., by solution in caustic alkali, and precipitation by acetic acid. This substance appears to be a base, and combines with acids. When sulphuric acid is brought in contact with it a fine white substance is formed, which may be obtained in the state of a white powder by careful washing and drying. It may be conveniently produced by triturating the crystalline lens of the eye in a mortar, along with sulphuric acid. This acid is termed *sulpho-proteic*, and its formula is $Pr + SO_3$.

The conjunctiva, the membrane which covers the cornea, or transparent part of the eye, contains as its basis *protein*. If we, therefore, bring sulphuric acid in contact with this membrane, *sulpho-proteic* acid is formed, and opacity of the transparent cornea takes place. This is the result when by accident, or intention, sulphuric acid falls, or is thrown, upon the person. It was a case where this corrosive liquid was thrown, criminally, at the head of a man, that attracted the author's attention to the subject. He found, by making a series of experiments upon the eyes of dead animals, that when sulphuric acid is applied to the cornea a layer of sulpho-proteic acid was produced,

which may be removed by means of a sharp-edged knife; and that, even after dissecting off the first layer, a second application of the acid will produce a new layer of sulpho-proteid, which may be excised or torn off in a similar manner; and in this way that the whole of the cornea may be successively divided into a series of layers corresponding in some degree with the natural structure of that membrane. This method presents, in short, an excellent mode of demonstrating anatomically the layers of the cornea. Having found that the opacity was completely removed by the excision of the layer of sulpho-proteid acid, on the dead animal, it was conceived that the idea of performing the operation upon a living animal was justifiable. Accordingly, a dog was selected as the subject of experiment. It was properly secured on a table, and a muzzle was applied, so as to prevent it from using its teeth. It was considered also that it should be kept as steady as possible, in order to give a fair chance to the experiment. The end of a glass rod, dipped in oil of vitriol, was rubbed over the transparent part of the eye. White opacity was produced in a few seconds. The action was allowed to continue for two minutes, the eyelids being carefully kept aside. In order to prevent the acid from extending to the mucous membrane of the eyelids, a piece of lint, dipped in a solution of carbonate of soda was then applied to the eye, and the animal left at rest for five minutes. On removing the lint the cornea presented a white appearance, and was obviously quite opaque. Having secured the eyelids, the conjunctiva was removed by means of a pair of scissors, assisted by a scalpel and forceps, and the denuded cornea was then scraped by means of the scalpel, until it appeared to be deprived of its white opacity. A slight degree of dulness remained, which appears to have proceeded from the exudation on the surface of the cornea, for in a day or two the perfect transparency of that membrane was restored, and the animal lived for many weeks with complete vision of the eye. Dr. Krauss, of Keppel-street, London, who assisted the author in the experiment, and to whom the dog belonged, satisfied himself that the eye which had been operated on retained as perfect vision as that of the other eye, until the accidental death of the animal.

The author has been induced to give publicity to this successful experiment, because he considers that he has seen eyes which might have been probably restored to vision, if the operation had been performed *immediately after the receipt* of the injury. The animal did not appear to suffer pain, except when fluid came in contact with the lid.

* * We have found this curious and interesting suggestion in the "Proceedings of the Philosophical Society of Glasgow," No. 3, 1842.

CASES IN WHICH THE VAPOUR OF PRUSSIC ACID WAS EMPLOYED FOR THE CURE OF OPHTHALMIC DISEASE,

By DONALD J. MACLEAN, M.D., Lic. Roy.
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I have been induced, for my own satisfaction (in consequence of some observations made by Sir George Sinclair, who had witnessed its effects on patients under Dr. Turnbull's care), to give a very extended trial to the prussic acid in cases of ophthalmic disease which might be considered suitable for its application, and desire that the results of some of the cases should be submitted to the consideration of those of our profession who may take an interest in the subject. I have, therefore, made out a report of the following cases. In our present state of knowledge it is impossible to explain the *modus operandi* of the prussic acid; it will be sufficient, meantime, to observe accurately, and merely give the results of treatment. In what kind of cases it will be found most suitable can only be determined by further inquiry and experience. If however, the results prove permanent, the prussic acid must occupy a very high place amongst our remedial agents; and, possessing stimulant properties of a peculiar character, it may prove useful under many circumstances where diseases of the eye are not readily amenable to ordinary treatment.

CASE 1.—J. Mackay, Reay, aged 11 years. Diffused opacity of the cornea, the result of a protracted attack of scrofulous ophthalmia. The vapour of strong prussic acid was applied, daily, for thirteen days, by exposure of the eye to it, during which period the cornea gradually got transparent. On the fourteenth day no remains of former opacity existed, and the vision of that eye was perfectly restored.

CASE 2.—Margaret Mackay, Thurso, aged 12 years. Severe rheumatic ophthalmia of three weeks' duration. She complains of deep-seated aching pain in the eyeball, greatly aggravated in the evening and through the night; no apparent disorder of the general health. The ordinary remedies were used, viz., leeching, blisters, calomel, and colchicum: they appeared to give no relief. The prussic acid was applied, daily, for about ten days; the relief following each application was extraordinary; the pain was trifling for the rest of the day. At the expiration of twelve days the intolerance of light, the injected state of the vessels on the sclerotica, and the other symptoms, entirely disappeared; and since September the little patient has continued quite free from any symptom of her former ailment.

CASE 3.—A girl named Munro, from Mount Pleasant. Albugo of corneæ in both eyes, the result of an attack of acute con-