The exsection of a portion of the body of the inferior maxillary bone, is one of the most terrible operations in surgery. Performed with the utmost skill and address, the several steps must be attended with excruciating pain, the suffering and tediousness of a necessarily protracted cure, and the deformity resulting from the operation. It is possible, a tumor, *bearing a strong resemblance to an osteocele*, might lead the *most distinguished surgeon* to make a false diagnosis, and without incurring the censure of temerity, proceed to its removal. On the supposition, such an instance might occur, the knowledge of every means that has had the effect of preventing the necessity of having recourse to the dernier resort, must be very acceptable to the humane; and should be made public without being deterred by the fear of receiving the reproach of those who are incapable of appreciating its value, or of the prejudiced, and to be pitied, individual, who is in the habit of viewing everything through the medium of a distempered imagination.

WILLIAM INGALLS, M.D.

Sept. 14th, 1846.

[WE think there is room for doubt in regard to the expediency of publishing papers like the following. Their injurious effects on the community, in needlessly impairing confidence in the profession, would seem to be apparent. It is possible, however, that this evil may be more than counterbalanced by an indirect benefit—as a more thorough preparation and greater care may be expected in those just entering the profession, when they are made fully to understand that the results of ignorance or carelessness in the practice of medicine cannot be concealed from the public. We have no doubt Dr. Moore had this or some other good object in view in preparing the article, and we therefore give it an insertion.]

NEW OBSTETRICAL INSTRUMENT AND OPERATION.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

The following account of an operation, or rather piece of butchery, which occurred not a hundred miles from Derry, N. H., is respectfully submitted to the editor of the Medical Journal for insertion, and the merits of the instrument are left to the judgment of the profession, as being rather unique.

Mrs. C., aged 35, slight form and delicate constitution, was taken in labor with her second child, on the morning of the 10th of March, 1845. Nothing occurred up to the thirtieth hour to mar the anticipations of the expectant husband, or interfere with the delectable anxiety of the old ladies to behold the arrival of the young stocking mender—(the child proved to be a female). The mouth of the uterus had been tardy in dilating, and at this period its efforts began to flag. Forty hours had now elapsed, with but little progression of the head. Ladies will talk in a lying-in chamber, and with very little provocation lash themselves into a high state of excitement. It was soon whispered that something must be wrong; side winds were thrown out at the doctor, till the patient became

alarmed and the doctor nervous. All action of the uterus had now ceased. The Dr. being asked "what was the matter," replied that the head was too large, that something must be done, the woman being feeble and not likely to stand it long. A consultation was proposed and agreed to. Will you, Sir, credit the result of that consultation? It was deliberately and coolly proposed, as the only means of saving the mother, that the child should be destroyed, and delivery accomplished by removing the child piecemeal. The question next arose, how should they accomplish this, for instruments neither possessed, and to send for another counsel would be loss of time and repugnant to their judgment. And now, Mr. Editor, what do you think these men of science agreed upon as the best weapon wherewith to destroy the child? "Arcades ambo" — "tell it not in Gath, whisper it not in the streets of Askelon." A "jack-knife" was the tool selected! Yes, and they resorted to the barn and sharpened it on a grindstone, and then proceeded to insert the blade into the cranium of the child. After a few ineffectual efforts, the operator made a sudden plunge, and believing he had penetrated the skull, gave the knife a rotary movement, and withdrew it to think what was next best. While pausing to concentrate their murderous efforts, unexpectedly the uterus contracted steadily and forcibly, and the head of the child came into the world, followed in quick succession by the shoulders and body, to the utter discomfiture of the doctors. But the worst feature of this tragedy was not yet over. In their confusion, to hide their disgrace, they left the child to its fate, who soon eked out its brief existence, from a wound in the right temporal region, the "jack-knife" having glided off the skull without penetrating, and divided a branch of the temporal.

The prominent features of this case are strictly true, and it is left to the Editor to make his own comments. Very respectfully,

Derry, N. H., Sept. 16, 1846.

N. MOORE.

CURATIVE POWERS OF NATURE.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

DEAR SIR,—From an accidental oversight I did not observe, until recently, a communication in the No. of your Journal for the 15th of July, entitled, "Alleged Homœopathic Cures." But from the peculiar drift of the writer's "mature thoughts," I became interested, and was naturally led to inquire, after reading attentively "his views," what his ideas of disease, and of its management, were? Also for the cause that induced him to relinquish practice. Relative to the first, his readers were left in the dark; of the second, he gave a fair but unintentional exposition—as he states in the first place "that he has nearly ceased to practise, only prescribing for *particular friends and acquaintances*, from the fact that he has so little confidence in medicine as a curative agent, as to be disqualified by that, if by nothing else, to practise the healing art with success, according to the present notions of the people." Still he feels himself warranted to administer medicine to his par-