portion of it an inch long. After the division of the nerve, the neuralgia immediately ceased, and the ring and little finger of that hand were deprived of sensation. In order to prevent the reunion of the ends of the nerve, the wound was dressed to the bottom, and healed by suppuration. After three months, the wound was cicatrized, and there was no return of neuralgia; but gradually sensation returned in the fourth and fifth fingers, and after six months had elapsed she again suffered severe pain in the ring finger, which, however, did not become so violent as before the operation.—*London Medical Gazette*.

NITRATE OF SILVER.

On the Use of the Nitrate of Silver, as an Application in Burns and Scalds. By J. C. Cox, Surgeon, F.L.S. &c.

I TOOK occasion, some time since, to call the attention of the profession to the use of the nitrate of silver in certain cutaneous affections, especially herpes zoster, for which I expressed the opinion that it was almost a specific; and the employment of that remedy in many severe cases subsequently, has fully confirmed that opinion.

I now desire to recommend the use of the same remedy in burns and scalds, as one more fitted than any other with which I am acquainted, to relieve the present suffering and obviate the future mischief. Where the burn is deep, and has destroyed the vitality of the cutis, of course no superficial application can do more than hasten the separation of the slough, and the spirits of turpentine is still probably the best application; but where there is extensive superficial lesion, either producing intense redness and pain, or vesication, the nitrate of silver is certainly unrivaled. I have employed it both in very strong solution, and also in the solid form; but, on the whole, I think the latter by far the best mode of application. The parts being moistened with cold water, the stick of caustic is passed over the whole surface, which may be afterwards covered with cotton wadding and bandaged, where that can be conveniently done. The application does not increase the suffering—all uneasiness quickly subsides, and, in a day or two, the only traces of injury will be the desquamation of the blackened cuticle. Where the process of vesication has commenced, it is immediately arrested; but if the vesications have been extensive, and the cuticle torn off, or adherent to the dress, there is no application which forms so effectual and complete a protection from the external atmosphere as the lunar caustic. In the latter case, it should be rolled tightly and rapidly over the surface. It appears to combine chemically with the albumen, and to form a covering most beneficial and efficient. Where extensive sloughs have formed, and there is a large granulating surface, the nitrate of silver, in the form of strong solution, applied with a camel's-hair brush, diminishes the irritability of the surface, prevents, to a great degree, the distressing itching, and hastens cicatrization. I would here state that much mischief is frequently done by the use of astringents—as the oxide of zinc, &c.—which cause the cicatrix to contract quickly, and thus to form seams and bri-

dles, which produce frequently great deformity. A young lady, a patient of mine, in dressing for a party, set fire to her pelerine, and severely burned the neck, back, and shoulder. On the shoulder, a large patch was completely disorganized; to this I applied the spirits of turpentine. The other parts were either vesicated or severely scorched, extending over the back and neck; to these I applied the lunar caustic all over the surface, and wrapped the whole up in cotton wadding. In half an hour she became quite easy, went to sleep, and omitted to take the anodyne which was prepared for her. The shoulder was the only part which required any protracted attention.

Master C——, while casting bullets, scalded his hand with the melted lead. He was in great pain, which was only temporarily relieved by cold. I applied the lunar caustic to the surface; the pain was immediately relieved, and the next day there was no soreness or inconvenience.

A boy's face was severely burnt by the explosion of gunpowder. The application of the nitrate of silver completely obviated the ill effects which would otherwise probably have arisen from the accident. The face certainly appeared grotesquely tattooed for a few days, by the application, but all traces were quickly removed.

The above are sufficient exemplifications of a mode of treatment, which will, I am convinced, on trial, be found very beneficial.—*Ibid.*

BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, OCTOBER 24, 1832.

LIVES OF EMINENT PHYSICIANS.

WE have before us a little book called the *Lives of Eminent Physicians*, in which are contained many singular traits of the characters of the most distinguished individuals who have practised medicine in Great Britain. From these we propose to make a few extracts, for the benefit of such of our readers as may not happen to have met with the work.

Harvey, though so eminent as a naturalist and anatomist, was by no means remarkable for his success in practice. His prescriptions were so complicated, that it was difficult to discover what object he had in view. He himself complained that after the publication of his work on the *Circulation*, his practice declined; a circumstance which he attributed to the envy of rival physicians. Harvey was severely afflicted with the gout; the attacks he used to treat by placing his legs in cold water, or exposing them to the open air in the coldest weather, as long as it could be borne, and then bring them to the fire. Dr. Good mentions having adopted a similar mode of treatment in his own case, with the happiest effects. The treatise by Harvey, on the *Circulation*, which gained