

remedy there was no indication whatever of that sensation of burning and irritation of the skin which the exciting remedies had so decidedly reproduced; in fact, the reverse was the case. As the strength diminished, and the pulse became gradually weaker, I was prevented by the sensation of faintness, languor, and uneasiness at the stomach, from carrying the aconite beyond a drachm. The herpes was entirely cured by this treatment in the course of two months. But that which I consider as even more worthy of observation than the cure, was, that the aconite decidedly confirmed and increased the advantages derived from the purgatives, nor was there even a spark of that irritation rekindled, which the exciting remedies roused to such mischievous effects.

EXAMINATIONS AT APOTHECARIES' HALL.

WE have received the following communication from Mr. James L. Lowry, a gentleman who was rejected by the Examiners of the Apothecaries' Company, on Thursday last, August 16. The paper is inserted as we received it and furnishes additional proof, if any were wanting, of the absolute necessity of making such examinations public.

The questions proposed to the candidate were:—

Read the three following prescriptions.

What is the decomposition of sulphate of iron?

Give the decomposition of calomel.

What is the property of hydrogen gas?

In what way do hydrogen and oxygen unite to form water?

What is the difference between a sulphate and sulphuret of iron?

What is sodium?

How would you obtain soda?

How would you free carbonate of soda from the carbonic acid?

If lime was added to carbonate of soda, why should the carbonic acid combine with the lime in preference to the soda?

What do you mean by simple elective affinity?

Can you decompose soda by galvanism?

How would you construct a galvanic battery?

What are the sources of electricity?

What is peculiar to heat, light, and electricity?—*Answer.* They are all subtle fluids existing in different proportions in almost every body.

Examiner. That is not what I mean, whether would that candle weigh more if blown out, than if allowed to continue burning?—*A.* It would weigh less if allowed to continue burning, because it would become decomposed.

Ex. You do not understand what you are talking about.—*A.* I do not understand the drift of your question.

Ex. I ask you again, Sir, whether would that candle weigh more if it was blown out than if allowed to burn out?—*A.* I confess that I do not understand what answer you would wish me to give, therefore I must say, that I do not know.

Ex. Then I mean to say that heat and light are imponderable.—*A.* Why, Sir, if you had asked me plainly the properties of heat and light I would have informed you.

What are vegetables composed of?

What is the peculiarity of oxalic acid?

What is animal matter composed of?

How many kinds of fermentations are there?

What takes place in the putrefactive fermentation?

Is there any other kind of fermentation besides the four mentioned?—*A.* Not that I am aware of, gentlemen.

Have you not heard of a mode of obtaining spirits during the process of baking?—*Yes*, but I did not believe it.

Then, Sir, you know nothing of chemistry.

Ex. Enumerate the drugs in this drawer and their properties.

What are the properties of opium?—*A.* It is an anodyne, narcotic, sedative, and stimulant.

What are its active principles?

What do its stimulating properties depend upon?—*A.* Narcotine.

Enumerate the preparations into which it enters?—*A.* Conf. opii, &c., likewise pulvis ipecachuanæ composita.

Ex. There is no such preparation in the Pharmacopœia.

After considering some time, Mr. L. was informed that it was pulvis ipecac. compositus, which he should have said. By this time five of the Examiners had assembled around the table, three of whom spoke at once; one asked how many drops of tr. opii were equal to 3i; the second how narcotine was obtained; the third said that if Mr. L. did not continue with opium that they should reject him; Mr. L. said that they had confused him so much about the termination of p. ipec. comp., that he should feel obliged if they would take him upon some other drug, practice of medicine, anatomy, and after which, if they brought him back to opium, and he was not able to answer all their questions, that he should consider himself justly rejected. He was then informed that he had no business to persist upon having an examination that evening; that it was now late, and that he might consider himself rejected.

Mr. L. said that they must be well aware of the trouble which he had previous to his entering the room for examination; that he had been informed three times previously to his going in, that he would stand every

chance of being rejected. Mr. L. was then desired to leave the room.

The following are the circumstances to which Mr. Lowry alluded:—Mr. L. having received an appointment in India, petitioned the Court to be allowed to come up for his examination on the 16th, which was granted; on the 12th Mr. L. left a note, certifying that he had received his appointment, together with his schedule, &c., and received a card for admission on the day mentioned. Shortly after Mr. L.'s arrival on Thursday he was called out of the anti-room, to inform the secretary of the name of the person attached to the note, it being badly written; this being done, Mr. L. was told that that was all which was required of him, but was almost immediately called out a second time, and informed that his schedule required the signature of one of the physicians. Mr. L. then said that he would go to the hospital and get it filled up, and return by five o'clock; he was then informed by the secretary that he had better not return that evening, but wait until the 23rd. Mr. L. said that he should insist upon being examined that evening, and returned to the Hall at five o'clock, when he was again called out, and informed by the secretary that his friend's note would not be considered as sufficient evidence of his having received his appointment; when Mr. L. said that he would go to his *patron* at once, and return at seven o'clock; the secretary then said that he could not be examined that night, as the examiners were only going to examine *two fives† that evening*, and that if Mr. L., being the eleventh, persisted in going in for examination, he would be almost sure to be rejected. Mr. L. received the note from his patron, and arrived at the Hall at a quarter to seven, when he was called out to see the secretary, and was informed that he ought not to think of going in for examination; that if he did he would be almost sure of being rejected. Mr. L. then said that he had come with a determination of being examined, and that he should insist upon it; he then received a polite answer from Mr. Sayer, who said that he would be examined that evening, but at the same time stated "it will go hard with you."

JAMES LINDSEY LOWRY.

MESMERISM.—REMARKS ON THE LETTER OF MR. LEESON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—Of all the observations that have, from time to time, been made against mesmerism, perhaps none evince a more uncan-

did, unfair, and illiberal spirit; and, at the same time, more completely show the writer's utter ignorance of the subject, than those which appeared in a letter by Mr. Leeson, in THE LANCET of the 18th instant. Mr. Leeson would apparently wish everybody to believe that his only object in writing this letter was his extreme anxiety for the establishment of truth, and that he was actuated by a purely impartial spirit; but it must be obvious to every one that this letter owes its origin to no such generous feeling, but to most unfair prejudice. Mr. Leeson admits that the experiments he saw succeeded, but he attributes this to the most extraordinary cunning of the patient, aided by certain hints or prescribed methods of the mesmeriser. In the first place, in considering the experiments with the water, he says, "a number of glasses containing water which was not mesmerised, were successively taken by the patient, and no effect was produced; she was sent out of the room, and the glasses displaced, and again she returned and took them, with any effect being produced;" these, Mr. Leeson admits, succeeded. She was again sent out of the room, and two of the glasses mesmerised by Dr. Elliotson placing a finger in each; she came in, and took the first that was mesmerised, and no effect was produced. How was this? Mr. Leeson says that the reason of the experiments succeeding was the fact of this "most extraordinarily cunning" girl detecting the difference of temperature between the one which was and the other which was not mesmerised, and that this difference was produced by the insertion of a person's finger for a few seconds in the glass. But here his explanation falls to the ground. Why did not this "extraordinarily cunning" creature find out that this water was warmer than what she had taken before. The next she took, which was of the same temperature, by being mesmerised produced the usual effect, she was "rivetted to the spot." How does Mr. Leeson attempt to explain this? Why, by an insinuation as ungenerous as it is contemptible, viz., that Dr. Elliotson directed her to drink some cold water from the tap before taking the second mesmerised glass, that she might more readily distinguish the warmest, "the difference of temperature being more readily discovered by this method so prescribed to her by the mesmeriser." Now, the fact is this (and Mr. Leeson knew it), that it had been remarked on former occasions that frequently when mesmerised water had been taken in small quantity no effect was produced until it was spread over a larger surface by an additional quantity of water being taken after it. Dr. Elliotson's object, then, was not to give any hint to the girl, as Mr. Leeson would represent it, but to ascertain whether this additional quantity of water would

† Four is the regular number examined at one time.