enabled to be up and about their business in one-third of the time which is of necessity consumed after the ordinary operation by the ligature. A reference to the cases detailed at length proves this, for it will be observed that in nearly all the instances given in my lectures the patients were moving about in four or five days. In one or more cases, it is true, the convalescence was protracted for a period of a fortnight or three weeks; but these are quite the exception, and the comparatively long period which elapsed before the patients could move about was due to the circumstance of their being exhausted by hæmorrhage of long standing.

A reference to my notes of several other cases operated upon by me since these lectures were delivered tells the same tale as regards the short period of convalescence in every instance save one. Another was in the case of a gentleman upon whom I operated at the request of Dr. George Johnson. Here, however, there was a complication of malignant stricture of the large intestine, which did not develop itself until some period after the hæmorrhoids were removed, although doubtless it existed at the time. Here the patient did not move out until two weeks after the operation.

I think, therefore, that if the number of cases on which I have operated—now close upon fifty—are not sufficient to enable us to institute a comparison between the safety of the one and the other mode of treatment, their results, as I have detailed, entitle me to draw a fair comparison as regards the period required for a successful issue after each proceeding; and although I firmly believe all the elements of danger are entirely removed from the surgical treatment of hæmorrhoids and prolapse by adopting the method recommended in my lectures, and therefore on this ground alone is far superior to the operation by the ligature, I strongly advocate the use of the clamp for the additional and weighty reason that so much time is saved by its employment. As an illustration of this truth, it will not be out of place to refer to the very latest case I have had, in the person of a gentleman engaged most actively in important business, and who was sent to me by Dr. Reginald Read. I removed in this instance a prolapsus of the whole circumference of the rectum of twenty years' standing. The patient kept quietly in bed until the evening of the fourth day of the operation, the bowels having been acted upon by castor oil; and on the fifth day he returned to his business. Now this gentleman would have had an operation performed upon him several years since, but he was unable to afford the time requisite for the treatment by the ligature.

I am, Sir, yours &c.,

Caroline-street, Bedford-square, Aug. 1865.

HENRY SMITH.

COMPENSATION FOR RAILWAY INJURIES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As I am sure your aim must be to learn and state facts, and from them to form a judgment, I venture to trouble you with a few lines, that you may have the truth with regard to my case.

Nearly everything quoted by Mr. Skey, as my statement, lacks that clearness and literalness of delineation necessary to convey to the reader a correct conception of my case. Sometimes the style of statement is so vague, incorrect, and opposite to my own, that at first reading I thought Mr. Skey was purposely altering it; but I should not say so now, as I find Mr. Skey makes mistakes as evident in details but slightly material to his argument. For instance: I told him that I am thirty-five years of age, and not forty-three, as he says. I told him that I am seventeen stone and a half, instead of "twelve or thirteen." He saw me within a few days of twelve months after the accident, and not "ten months." Then he has forgotten to state that I have lost a Government appointment of £400 a year for 180 days' work in the year, besides all the advantages of such an appointment as professional connexion to me as an artist, and the certain opportunities I should have had for placing my children out in life. All this, and more, was considered, and influenced the verdict which Mr. Skey considers so preposterous. Will he be incredulous when I declare that, compared with the loss of my former great activity of body, the money I have received is to me as nothing?—that ten times the money would not have tempted me to part with my former state for the condition I am now in? Do I over-estimate the value of health, or does Mr. Skey over-estimate the value of money? I was surprised

at Mr. Skey forgetting to name my lameness. Before the accident I was a faster runner than any man of my weight that I ever met with, and I never hesitated to run races with men of lighter or any weight; this I often did, and with almost invariable success. I now creep about slowly and painfully, and at the present moment I sit up with great distress to myself. Since the trial, the sensation of minute points being driven into the brain has been continuous, and often very much aggravated; and writing you this letter makes it worse. You may ask, Why, then, do I do it? I confess that Mr. Skey's version of my case annoys me unspeakably. He says I complained of soreness and throbbing "about" the spine. The fact is, I complained, and do complain, of soreness down the spine, and of acute tenderness at two points—the upper injury being like a severe "burn," having a centre as of a hot needle being inserted into the spine. I complained of throbbing of the spinal cord, which was too distinct and painful to me to admit of my using the slovenly term "about." The horrible sensations "as of a claw grasping my brain, and as of my skull opening and my life leaving me," occurred when about to fall asleep, which Mr. Skey will perhaps remember, now that I remind him of the facts. Mr. Skey makes me say, "I can't shake my head without feeling a liquid in it." Mr. Skey has, perhaps, made all medical England laugh by this, but he certainly has not done it by using my words. I said, "Shaking my head rapidly to indicate a negative is now impossible, because of the pain caused at the base of the skull." And then, upon being pressed to explain the kind of sensation, I said the pain seemed caused by a heavy liquid, like quicksilver, being set in motion. Mr. Skey says I have fluttering and trembling at the base of the brain, while I acknowledge that I had a ravenous appetite. Now, Sir, and Mr. Skey, I complained (I was not forced to acknowledge) that I had had a ravenous appetite. That condition had almost completely passed away when I complained of fluttering and trembling at the base of the brain on awaking out of sleep. I do not know whether this will make any difference to Mr. Skey's argument or not; but if correctness of statement is of any value in medical science, I think what I have here said ought to be considered. I ought to add that I did say that I had frequent distress and aching at the base of the brain, which I found I could relieve by eating, and that this had occurred as recently as a few days before the trial. Mr. Skey must not reply, "A distinction without a difference." I am sure that, as I tell the truth, there must be many men in England who will be able to appreciate the value of the difference, and who will share with me the conviction of the need of exactness of statement and definition in matters so important. I can excuse a man failing in this respect when he is badgered out of his depth by a Q.C.; but I lose my charity when he writes to scientific England and shows that making careless and inaccurate statements is his habit.

But I must not weary you or your readers. If you can insert a non-professional view in your valuable journal you will much oblige, Sir, yours most respectfully,

August, 1865.

£6300.

THE ASHBURTON POISONING CASE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Since the appearance in *The Times* of the 4th inst. of a letter from Dr. Ogle, having reference to the above case, a great deal of undeserved obloquy has been thrown on the medical witnesses for the prosecution.

Dr. Ogle states he has no doubt "that the Chalker family were poisoned by belladonna, and that the poison was contained in the rabbit." There was certainly no doubt of the poison being in the pie. Atropia was found by Professor Herapath, not in the rabbit, but on the surface of the rabbit's leg, and also in a little of the scrapings from the pie-dish. Supposing the hypothesis advanced by Dr. Ogle to be correct—viz., that the rabbit in question had been partaking of the belladonna plant to excess, and had so poisoned its consumers, the analysis would have brought to light the presence of malic acid (with which atropia exists in combination in the plant), and also of pseudotoxin, phyllocolla, gum, wax, chlorophyll, salts, &c. None of these, however, were found; the only substances discovered in the pie not belonging to sound or healthy flesh being common salt and atropia.

It also seems very strange that of the thousands of belladonna-

eating rabbits annually sold and consumed in England, this solitary rabbit should be the only one ever having produced such symptoms. Cases of poisoning after partaking of animal food are by no means rare; and a case is mentioned in THE LANCET of Sept. 13th, 1862, in which ten persons became dangerously ill after partaking of a rabbit pie; but on none of these occasions were there symptoms of poisoning by atropia.

It is also well known that goats use hemlock as an article of food, but in no instance ever published has their flesh, when eaten by man, produced symptoms of poisoning by conia; and many animals used as food by man consume substances of which man could not partake with impunity.

That there was a quantity of the alkaloid atropia put in the pie, or in the substances of which it was composed, no one can doubt. Four lives were placed in great danger, one almost past hope of recovery; and as this was the *third* case of poisoning by atropia occurring in Ashburton during the last four months, I think—and every right-judging person will coincide with me—that had the medical practitioners in attendance not reported the case to the proper authorities they would have been remiss in the duty they owed to the public, and would have justly forfeited all professional confidence had they in any way or from any cause ignored or connived at one instance in which poisoning was suspected.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

Ashburton,
Aug. 7th, 1865.

ANDREW MACGILL, M.D., M.F.P.S.
(One of the Medical Witnesses.)

THE DIETARY OF ST. GEORGE-THE-MARTYR INFIRMARY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your last number I observe the report of a discussion at the Board of Guardians of the parish of St. George-the-Martyr in relation to the statements of THE LANCET Commissioner, during which the medical officer is said to have stated that “their diet was the best in London; there was not another workhouse that gave meat three times a week.” Whilst Messrs. Pratt and Beadle, guardians, both stated that “the diet of the house was *too liberal*.” I wish to point out that these gentlemen are labouring under a misapprehension which in their position might be of importance, and therefore should be corrected, for it might lead them to think of reducing the dietary of their workhouse.

I have before me the dietaries for the able-bodied paupers of twenty-two metropolitan workhouses, and I find that of St. George's is one of the lowest on the list, whilst they *all* give meat three times a week, with the exception of West Ham. Five give eighteen ounces of meat per week; West Ham gives five ounces; the remainder give each fifteen ounces per week; but they *all* exceed St. George's in their allowance of other articles, as bread, potatoes, cheese, &c. Poplar is really the highest in the list, although others approach it very closely; and on comparison I find that, whereas Poplar allows its able-bodied paupers 186 ounces of solid food per week (including eighteen ounces of cooked meat) and a pint of beer daily, St. George's only gives 146 ounces (also including eighteen ounces of meat) and *no* beer. The *daily* excess at Poplar consists of five ounces of bread or potatoes, one ounce of butter or cheese, and a pint of beer. In other words, while the able-bodied inmate of St. George's Workhouse gets *three* meals of about seven ounces each per diem, at Poplar he gets *four* (or at least the quantity of four) such meals.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

August 15th, 1865.

A GUARDIAN.

A NEW ATOMIZER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—May I ask you to insert in THE LANCET the description of an apparatus simplified by me for the production of sea-water spray and others in a medicated form for the relief of laryngeal and bronchial affections, strumous cachexia, &c.?

Atomizers are now occupying the serious attention of the profession. Dr. Morell Mackenzie's atomizer is a complicated and very expensive apparatus, which has to be pumped by hand, when a jet of fluid is so forced against a vibrating

button that spray is produced in the same form as the eau-de-Cologne diffuser now sold by all chemists. I explained to Dr. Mackenzie the mode of action of my atomizer, and, by his desire, I ordered Messrs. Maw, of Aldersgate-street, to make a number, which can be obtained of them at the cost of a few shillings. They are self-acting, and will diffuse a continuous spray while there is fluid in the receptacle, which is forced up by a spring in a hermetically closed case below it. The action is so simple and certain, and the atomizer so cheap, that I feel assured it will be quickly adopted. I have no interest in its production beyond the satisfaction of inventing it, and particularly recommending these atomizers for the production of pure sea spray, the inhalation of which is most exhilarating even from such a minute source as an ounce or two of seawater.

I hold appointments that place some six hundred children from London under my care, who emanate from the most squalid paupers of the metropolis. Scrofula exists amongst them in every form. Many go every summer to the Sea Infirmary; numbers cannot be received who would be much benefited by sea-air and generous diet. Thanks to the liberality of their guardians and the use of the atomizer, they can have both, as sea-air is pure atmospheric air charged with spray; and this I can now produce in any quantity with the most marked and beneficial effect with my little instruments. I can at will charge this sea-water with solutions that do not irritate, for the more desperate cases. The air-passages, if they are prone to receive the different blood-poisons that are at present scourging this country through man and beast, are, I believe, equally ready to receive good impressions.

Should any of your readers consider these remarks worthy of notice, it will afford me great pleasure to give them the different forms for medicating spray.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. R. A. DOUGLAS, M.R.C.S.,
Hounslow, Aug. 1865. Formerly House-Surgeon of Middlesex Hospital.

EDINBURGH.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THE 1st of August (except when that day falls on a Sunday) is always a day of much interest to the medical students of the University. On Tuesday last 67 gentlemen were “capped.” Of these, 46 received the degree of Doctor of Medicine, 4 that of Bachelor of Medicine, and 17 those of Bachelor of Medicine and Master of Surgery. Of the 67 gentlemen, 33 were natives of Scotland, 22 of England, and 2 of Wales; 10 came from abroad—3 from India, 3 from Cape of Good Hope, 1 from Mauritius, 1 from British Guiana, 1 from Prince Edward's Island, and 1 from Smyrna. The theses considered worthy of medals were those of Dr. W. H. Lightbody, “Observations on the Comparative Anatomy of the Cornea of Vertebrates;” Dr. John Wyllie, “Observations on the Physiology of the Larynx;” and Dr. J. B. Clark, “On the Reproduction of Limbs of the Crustacea.” The theses of Drs. J. A. M'Dougall, E. L. Fenn, W. Armistead, and T. Evans were deemed worthy of competing for the dissertation prizes. The following gentlemen were commended for their dissertations:—Drs. J. K. Anderson, G. R. Barnes, T. Blunt, P. J. A. Van Breda, J. Chiene, J. C. Compson, J. Cook, A. J. Duncan, P. S. Fentem, W. Johnston (M.A. Aberdeen), W. M'Donald, R. Mackelvie, S. Richmond, A. Werry, T. P. Fothergill, L. Aitken, W. A. Jamieson, S. Mitchell, and J. M. Moore. Two of the medalists were from Scotland and 1 from Wales. Of those competing for the medals, 1 was from Scotland, 1 from Wales, and 2 from England. Of those commended for their dissertations, 7 were from Scotland, 9 from England, 1 from Cape of Good Hope, 1 from India, and 1 from Smyrna. It follows, therefore, that of the 33 Scotch students, 10 were distinguished; of the 22 English, 11; of the 2 Welsh, both were; and of the 10 from abroad, 3 were. Thus whilst 1 in 3 of the Scotch was distinguished, 1 in 2 of the English students was commended. At the preceding graduation a larger proportion of the English were distinguished than the Scotch competitors.