had been the cause of injury (to, I suppose, the retina), it was too late, for every object had the same clouded appearance. Faces seemed to have black, ill-defined, large blotches on them; bright objects, as fire-irons, exhibited a tremulous, undulating light and shade; the large white letters painted on a black ground, on the ends of the streets, became ill-defined, and shaggy on the edges, as if fringed with hoar-frost. Besides the misty undulation, and dark scaly-looking floating specks, a general dimness of vision had evidently been induced, for all my manuscripts and books appeared uncomfortably obscure and faint. As light passing through glass is necessarily partly lost, I laid aside the use of glasses, to which I had been constantly habituated for thirty-eight years, and I had rather more light to read with.

My medical advisers suspected a determination of blood to the head, or some congestion there. I was leeches on the temples, and blistered on the back of the neck; I also took blue pill and chalybeate drinks. These external and internal applications produced no sensible improvement of my vision, though I think they rather relieved a dull pain inward from the temples, to which I am still subject, and which is thought to proceed from the optic nerve.

In the winter I was confined for many weeks to a darkened chamber, through inflammation of the chest; but neither the seclusion from light, nor the low regimen and severe physickings to which, for my inflammation, I was subjected, produced any sensible improvement in my sight.

Recently I have not noticed the coruscations much, but often, when I shut my eyes, I observe a small bright light, which gradually fades away. I should have mentioned that the retina throughout has been unnaturally retentive of impressions caused by faint impulses of light. In a dark room, a bed-chamber, for instance, on turning round from the window, faintly illuminated by a street lamp, I have been sensible to light about my eye, for, I should think, at least a whole second. D'Arcy limits the continuance of the impression of light on the retina to the eighth part of a second.

I sometimes see the appearance of well-defined black Roman capitals in the air, T or X, for instance; and sometimes I have a hasty evanescent glimpse of a whole word, as if printed in Greek small letters. I have not often the cobweb sensation, described as a precursor of amaurosis, but it occurs occasionally.

Some engagements into which I entered of late have made me use my glasses more than I had done in the twelve months preceding; and whether it be that the shortest-sighted eye (which is the right one) has come more into action, or that there is some more decided insensibility in parts of one or both

retinæ, I have become sensible to phenomena nearly new to me. Lines of print occasionally appear curved, and actually undulating: so also do straight objects (especially if they be bright) when moved in a horizontal position. Perpendicular lines have a dent inward from the left hand, which runs, as I follow it with my eye, from the top to the bottom. Perpendicular printed letters, l, f, k, b, &c., appear broken-backed, the dent being towards the right hand. Any small Roman letter in a word often assumes the appearance and position of an italic.

Rings, circles, and all circular or globular objects, often lose their symmetrical appearance. I do not remember that in any instance they assume an elliptical form, but they appear compressed and dimpled in every direction. The universal dimness remains almost uniformly permanent; for though a gleam, like that of sunshine, sometimes illuminates an object, it instantly fades away.

Thinking that the history of a disease of this nature (which few patients would be at the pains to record) may be useful to professional men and physiologists, I have written it at full length. My own impression is, that it is a case of incipient amaurosis; for I have no idea that any of the phenomena arise from disease of any of the phrenological organs—form, size, weight, colour; they seem to proceed either from functional or structural derangement in the organ of vision itself, or that portion of the brain connected with it.

Belfast, 4, N. Thomas-street,
June 22, 1842.

P. S.—Since this account was written I had an electric stroke sent through each eye, in the direction of the optic nerve, but without any sensible benefit: nor am I at this date aware of any material alteration in the state of my vision, at least of any improvement.

Sept. 26, 1842.

CASE OF
GIDDINESS, ATTENDED WITH
FALLING,
IN A CHILD AGED THREE YEARS.
CURED.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The following case, which I send under the above title, is so interesting, that I feel satisfied (though the treatment was homœopathic, and the remedies given were administered in the minute doses, used by homœopathic practitioners) that you will deem it acceptable to the readers of your Journal. Yours, &c.

JOHN EPPS.

London, Oct. 4, 1842.

Charles Walters, three years and four months old, was brought to me Sept. 2, 1842. He complains of giddiness, which is so severe that he falls; or, to use his mother's more expressive phrase, "pitches on his face." He cannot stand without falling, and this from the giddiness, for he is a strong, well-built child. His head is hot; he often complains, "O my head; I am so tired." He asks his mother to *squeeze* his head. The moment he is put into bed he wants to get up, and screams; these being dependent, it would seem, upon the fear that, feeling so dizzy, he should fall out of bed. He is obliged when he does lie to lie with his head supported by many pillows; bowels confined; skin dry. I prescribed *nux vomica*, globules iij, 30*; water, 3ij. Two small spoonfuls, eight, p.m.

Sept. 9. He was much better until yesterday; yesterday he had no medicine, and he was *bad*; he fell two or three times. (The child being too young for imagination, was not the increase of symptoms rightly referred by the mother to the want of the medicine?) Head not nearly so hot. The bowels have acted twice a-day since he began the *nux vomica*. I ordered the *nux vomica* to be continued, but to be taken every other day.

14. He is better; is not so giddy or dizzy; can stand without falling; bowels quite regular; sometimes exclaims, "O my head, I am so tired;" and still when in bed, wants to get up, and screams; perspires now, which his mother states he never did before. I ordered the *nux vomica* to be continued.

19. His giddiness is very much better; his mother is astonished at his improvement; has complained only twice of his head, and then that he was so tired; he does not want to get up so much as he did; he is obliged still to lie with his head high; his bowels are *confined*. (This fact is worthy of attention, because *notwithstanding* this confinement of the bowels he was much better; a fact demonstrating to the homœopathist that the constipation was the effect of the medicine, which, exerting its beneficial influence in relation to other symptoms, mitigated them, even while constipating the bowels: facts similar to these are often observed in homœopathic practice.) He still perspires, principally on the head and the face. I ordered sulphur, globules iij; water, 3ij. A small spoonful twice in the day.

21. He took the doses of sulphur in *table-spoonful* instead of *tea-spoonful*; very bad after being put to bed, after taking the sulphur; felt as if he should fall out of bed, and asked his mother to hold him; complains still of the tired feeling; bowels again regular. I ordered *nux vomica* again.

* The number 30 intimates that the globules used were impregnated with a solution of *nux vomica*, at the decillionth dilution.

27. The giddiness much better; he can lie down without wishing to get up; now tells his mother to remove the pillows from his head. The little fellow, when so requesting, says, "I ain't ill, mother." Ordered him to wait three days, and to take no medicine, and then to bring the child.

30. Giddiness gone. His mother remarked on the, to her, interesting change, "He is not like the same baby." Now no longer complains of his head; sleeps, and with his head low; bowels regular. Dismissed as cured.

WESTMINSTER HOSPITAL.

RETENTION OF URINE FROM AN HYDATID CYST.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As I think the accompanying case is of rare occurrence, I shall feel obliged by your giving it insertion in your Journal. I am, Sir, yours obediently,

REGINALD JAMES, House-Surgeon.
Westminster Hospital, Sept. 28, 1842.

On the 17th of July, Thomas Crane, ætat. 59, was admitted under the care of Mr. White with retention of urine, not having passed any in a stream for thirty-six hours. The bladder appeared greatly distended, reaching quite as high as the navel; skin hot and dry; pulse 108. Was immediately placed in a warm bath, and a catheter passed; some urine flowed, although the catheter was not in the bladder, but it went quite to the neck. Ordered 3j of castor-oil, and 3ss of laudanum. Hot fomentations to the hypogastrium.

18. Bowels had been freely moved; catheter passed just as before, but not so much urine escaped. *Liquor opii sedativus*, xxv m.; pimento water, 3j.

19. The bladder greatly distended; no urine escaped on passing the catheter; is in great pain, and quite delirious. Ordered tincture of opium, 3j; starch, 3ij, as an enema; and sedative liquor of opium, xxv m., by the mouth. In the evening was greatly relieved by the opium, and perfectly tranquil, but no urine had passed.

20. Although a little urine had dribbled away, the swelling was not diminished. Venesection to 3xii, and repeat the anodyne.

21. Not having passed any urine, and suffering severe pain, Mr. White determined to cut into the bladder; the patient was placed as in the operation for lithotomy, the incision being made as in the lateral operation, but some difficulty was experienced in cutting into the bladder from its altered position. When the bladder was divided, about a pint of urine escaped, but the distention above the pubes was not diminished, nor was the