of all the cases these are the most common,) then, under the conditions stated, the syringe should be tried, provided the case be obviously desperate without it—provided, too, you feel conscious that, lying in the situation of the patient, you would wish the essay to be made on your own person. The operation once obviously necessary, beware of delaying it too long—beware of subjecting yourselves to the painful mortification of seeing your patients perish at the entrance of the port—sink at the very moment when you are at length prepared with the very operation which might have saved them. From six to ten ounces of blood will probably be found sufficient to turn the wavering balance in our favor. From one or two friends, males in preference to women, this supply may be obtained; a large injection is not desirable; reaction of a lively kind will sometimes come forward on the subsequent day. Adhere to these rules, and you cannot wander far from the line of duty; and let me ask now, where is the folly—where the enthusiasm, of all this? (To be continued.)

II.

On the Prevalence of Fever in certain Families.

Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal,

By TIMOTHY L. JENNISON, M.D.

IN the 11th Vol. of the New-England Journal of Medicine and Surgery, there is a publication on the occasional prevalence of fever in certain families. The subject is interesting and worthy of scrutiny. I send you a brief history of two sporadic cases, in like

manner attacking solitary families.

The first occurred about 1780, in the family of N. K. in a town in this county. It was at the time when the sect of Shakers were first noticed hereabouts. An important part of this religion was dancing confusedly, and turning their bodies round rapidly for a space of time almost incredible. Mr. K.'s own family and their associates were about twenty in number, when divers of them were seized successively with fever. As they trusted not in man for help, but in the arm of the Lord, the use of medical aid was dispensed with, while they indulged unlimitedly in the use of such drinks as the house afforded, and they craved. All the sick recovered their usual health without relapsing. The situation of the house was favorable for health, and the vicinity had been, and then was, free from such complaints. It seems highly probable that that sickness originated in the excesses of their religious orgasms. The like extraordinary religious modes of worship were exhibited by that sect in the outskirts of this town about that time, but without producing the like effects.

The other instance occurred in this town thirty-five years since. A part of the facts I lately collected from the family; a part I witnessed at that time. In October, 1791, Mr. J. B. and his wife were the parents of nine children, all in good health, save the eldest son, aged 17, who was considered as of a weakly constitution, subject to a chronic cough, occasioned perhaps by indiscreetly playing a fife to excess. Six of these children were taken down by a fever,

which at this day we should call typhoid. The youngest daughter, and the two youngest sons, escaped with slight complaints. In October aforesaid, one of the daughters, aged 11, was residing at service, in a family, all of whom were in good health, near the Punch Bowl tavern in Brookline. She there sickened, and remained in that family, attended by judicious physicians, and her mother, from three to four weeks, till her recovery, when she was conveyed home. After a lapse of twelve or fifteen days, two of her sisters, one older, one younger, were seized nearly at the same time, and with the like complaints, but in a slighter degree. They also recovered in a shorter space of time. Another sister, aged 16, was at that time living at service in a family near the Colleges. She was indulged in going to her parents' house very frequently, to see her friends, and had unrestrained intercourse with them. She also was taken down in the same way, but during her sickness was attended to where she had been living, till her recovery. Early in January, 1792, another sister, aged 22, was taken ill at home. She recovered her health and strength so far as to have a desire to go to the Meeting-house, in the last week of that month, to witness the installation of her minister, Dr. Holmes. The unavoidable fatigue and exposure, on that day, caused a relapse of her fever, which was thrown off very slowly. The last of the family who became sick, was the eldest son above-mentioned. His illness was protracted till the 8th of May, when he died. An extensive mortification of the teguments of the sacrum

had been brought on by his confinement in a supine position, notwithstanding every exertion of his physicians and nurses.

It is deserving of notice, that during all that space of time, the parents continued in their usual health, and able to attend to their sick children. Neither was the disorder communicated to any other family or individual who had been a watcher, or otherwise assisted in the family. Nor does it appear that any of them labored under inflammatory symptoms, as the lancet was not used in any of those cases. There is no evidence that these young people owed their sickness to a local source, because the first case occurred in a town adjoining, in a family exempt before and afterwards from all other cases of sickness, and she was at home twelve or fifteen days before the second or third case occurred. The like negative evidence applies in the fourth case. Her illness must be attributed to a predisposition to sickness brought into activity by going home repeatedly, and assisting in the nurse's department. The house where she sickened, as also her father's, was ancient, and badly ventilated. But ill effects from such a cause were not so likely to follow, as if the disease had assailed them in the hottest season of the year. The remedies made use of among these patients were probably judiciously selected, because they were successful, except in the last case; and had one other auxiliary *then been* in common use, as it *has been* since, the young man might have escaped. I mean the Patent Bedstead, (not Jencke's,) which is so simply constructed as that at the plea-

sure of the assistant to raise up the patient on the sheet, awake or asleep, and retain him at any height the posts will admit of, for any space of time necessary. It is not for me in this communication to notice its general utility, as it is deserving of a separate memoir. I would only suggest for future experiment, that by having the sheet of a strong fabric, a part of it nearly in the centre, may be cut open on the three upper sides, leaving the aperture in the form of a parallelogram; and of such a magnitude, as that a patient affected with incipient mortification of the sacrum as aforesaid, may lie on the sheet without pressure on the diseased parts. The position would favor the application of fomentations, in the form of steam, for any desired length of time, by the agency of a bed pan, or other flat vessel, to hold the fluids. Any other practicable remedies might be used in the intervals of fomentation, without disturbing the position of the patient, unless he or she should desire it. And after the bed or mattress has been made smooth, and as soft as possible, the patient may be lowered down so far as to come in contact with, but not press upon it. This treatment would probably afford an opportunity for nature to rally her forces; and for art to aid far more effectually than if the patient were to lie in a supine position, too weak and feeble to change his position, on a bed or mattress, as heretofore. When our patients recover from sickness, we are willing to believe the recovery attributable to our mode of treating them. So far, so good. But when our best exertions fail us, without the actual loss of our patients, we are

constrained to admit the truth long since avowed by Celsus, "Multi qui a medicis diu vexati, tandem sanescunt."

Cambridge, Sept. 22, 1828.

III.

SELECTIONS FROM FOREIGN JOURNALS.

Successful Case of Transfusion.

A SUCCESSFUL case occurred a few days ago in the person of Elizabeth Evans, wife of David Evans, of Baker-Street, Shrewsbury. In consequence of a miscarriage, the poor woman had, from a violent hæmorrhage, become quite exhausted, and nature was on the point of sinking; her pulse had been imperceptible for about an hour and a half; her extremities cold, and perspiration clammy, added to which symptoms, her stomach was so irritable as to reject every description of nourishment; every cordial and stimulant that was offered. At this critical moment, it occurred to Mr. W. J. Clement, the surgical gentleman called in, that the only chance was to attempt the operation above alluded to, and having procured a healthy stout man, who was willing to aid the operation, by allowing the requisite quantity of blood to be taken from him, Mr. Clement opened a vein in each arm, and by means of Weiss's patent syringe and tubes, injected about fifteen ounces of blood with the most complete success.—In the course of a few hours she was perceptibly better, and has continued improving up to the present period, giving every assurance of ultimate recovery. In noticing this case, we cannot too strongly recommend the pro-