having for nearly that time prescribed it for others, with equal success, I feel bound to publish it through your columns, if you will do me the favour to insert this letter, the results of its use in a harassing disorder, with which many persons are at this time threatened.

The preparation recommended, and which I have always prescribed, is the tincture of *nux vomica* of the "Dublin Pharmacopœia." Ten drops of this should be given for a dose, in water, and increased gradually to twenty drops, three times a day: the action of it should at first be watched. It is an agreeable light bitter; increases the appetite; and influences the Schneiderian membrane, no doubt through the medium of the nerves.

I have accompanied the administration of the tincture with the application of an ointment (as high up in the nostrils as possible) composed of one drachm and a half of Goulard's extract; two ounces of spermaceti cerate, and a few drops of oil of roses or of bergamot.

Hertford-street, May-Fair, May 24, 1850.

REPORT OF A CASE OF

STRANGULATED INGUINAL HERNIA, COMPLICATED BY IMPERFECT DESCENT OF THE TESTICLE.

By H. FEATHERSTONHAUGH, Esq.,
SURGEON TO THE GATESHEAD DISPENSARY.

On the 14th of January, 1850, William S—, aged twenty-one, an athletic young man, a miller, was suddenly attacked with severe pain and tenderness in the epigastric and umbilical regions, accompanied by a sense of tightness and distention of the abdomen, with inability to evacuate. Some years previously, Mr. Annandale, of Newcastle, was consulted, it being supposed by his parents that he had a rupture on the right side. Mr. A., however, detected that it was the right testicle in the canal, and explained to them the needlessness of his wearing a truss. Since then he has had repeated attacks of constipation and obstruction of the bowels, which always yielded in two or three days to purgatives, injections, &c.

On examination, I discovered that the right testicle had never descended into the scrotum, but could be felt just below the external ring, the tumour above having a soft feel. No impulse was felt on coughing. He was also suffering from gonorrhœa, and a suppurating sympathetic bubo on the same side.

Jan. 15th.—Symptoms unabated.

16th.—Still suffered from severe pain and distention of abdomen; constant vomiting of dark fluid; hiccup; and pain over tumour, with complete obstruction of the bowels, notwithstanding the treatment he had undergone.—Twelve o'clock, A.M.: Had a consultation with Mr. George Heath, and determined upon performing the operation, in which he assisted me. An incision was made along the course of the inguinal canal, and the dissection carried down to the sac at its lower part; in doing so the upper part of the bubo was laid open, and a quantity of pus let out. On opening the sac just below the external ring, a good deal of fluid escaped and omentum, of a dark and thickened appearance, covering the body of the testicle, which was small and healthy, firmly adherent, and brought into view. On enlarging the incision, and opening the canal upwards towards the internal ring, the epididymis was observed, and in carrying the finger up to the internal ring a very small portion of gut could be felt protruding and strangulated at this point. The stricture was then divided, and the intestine returned into the abdomen. The greater part of the omentum was cut off, and a ligature applied to one or two bleeding vessels, the rest being allowed to remain in contact with the testicle, which had retracted slightly in the canal; wound dressed by means of sutures.—Six o'clock P.M.: Surface of body warm; abdomen softer; freer from pain; had slept a little; pulse fuller; hiccup and vomiting had ceased. Ordered a draught with tincture of horeyamus, and an enema with castor oil, and warm water.

17th.—Less pain and distention of abdomen; bowels had acted; complained of severe pain in the loins; pulse 105, and full; slight hiccup; no vomiting; thirst; had slept occasionally during the night. Continue enemata, with calomel, two grains, powdered opium, quarter of a grain, every four hours.

18th.—Distention and pain of abdomen less; hiccup ceased; pulse 100; thirst less urgent; tongue cleaner; bowels had been

moved freely; he had passed a quantity of urine; wound looked well. Continue powders and enemata.

19th.—No pain except in the loins; distention of abdomen less; pulse 90; thirst abating; bowels open; a good deal of swelling and inflammation of the wound. Continue injections, with linseed poultices to the part.

20th.—Complained of severe pain in the loins; pulse 86; tongue cleaner; slight thirst; he wished to have food; bowels had been moved; free from pain and tension of the abdomen; uneasiness in the wound about the testicle.

21st.—Still better; pulse 80; no thirst; bowels open; pain and distention ceased; appetite improved; wound suppurating freely. Continue enemata, poultices, and castor oil, occasionally, with beef-tea.

29th.—Going on well, and wound healing.

April 1st.—Has progressed satisfactorily from this time, and is now quite well.

Newcastle-on-Tyne, April, 1850.

ON THE ELECTRIC AND MAGNETIC FLUIDS.

By W. F. STEVENSON, Esq., F.R.S.

THE phenomena apparent in the electric and magnetic fluids—viz., the positive and negative qualities of the former, and the attractive and repulsive qualities of the latter, as well as the *direction of the magnetic needle to the north pole*—are not the effects of any peculiar properties in those fluids, but are due solely to the circumstance that the two fluids are in perpetual motion (when free) upon the earth's surface, and that they progress invariably in the direction of the Arctic pole.

These theorems are proved by the following experiments:—

1st. Let *a-b* be a brass-cylindrical rod, suspended by a non-conducting or silken string, or placed upon an isolated table, and then receive the electric fluid at the end *b*, when such fluid will be immediately found to have passed from *b* to the other extremity of the rod *a*, from whence it will continually escape, and be ultimately carried off by the slower conducting power of the atmosphere.

If any number of similar isolated rods be in like manner made to receive the fluid at the end *b*, and are then connected together with the first rod by approaching the end *a* of one rod to the end *b* of the preceding one, the fluid of all the rods will be found to have passed on to the extremity *a* of the first rod. That the fluid which has so passed on to the end *a* of the first rod, and is there making its exit, will be found to be positive (as it is now called), whilst the other extremity of the rods will be found to be negative—the positive end being that where the *exit* of the fluid takes place, and the negative end that where it entered, and thus forming together a current of electricity.*

That the phenomena of the positive and negative qualities of the fluid are the result of the movement of the fluid along the rods, will be evident on reversing the first rod, and placing the end *a* (where the fluid is escaping) in connexion with the end *a* of the second rod, when the current will be necessarily interrupted, and from which circumstance there will be found no positive electricity at the latter extremity of the rods. It will be seen, from what I have stated, that, as the electric fluid is in perpetual motion, and that in its free state it is constantly passing over the earth's surface in one direction, a good conductor must be such an instrument as will best facilitate the transit of the fluid, or enable it to join the general current whenever it is met with detached from such current. Now, although a metal is the best material for a conductor, its power of conduction depends nevertheless upon its shape. For instance, if the fluid is to be conducted or transferred from any body where it may be found into the general current, it is evident that a metal in a circular form, or that of a ball, cannot facilitate such transfer; that, on the contrary, the fluid upon metal of such a shape must be, in a manner, confined and imprisoned, and thus prevented from passing into the general current.

It is this circumstance which leads to the use of small globes at the ends of metallic conductors, when it is desirable to retain the fluid, and that conductors with pointed ends are those which best allow of the exit of the fluid.

It follows, from what I have advanced, that the negative fluid, as it is called, is only the ordinary fluid when met with upon a non-conducting substance, or upon a surface which,

* "Electricity is the only element which is constantly in motion unless restrained; the only one, therefore, that may be said to possess force."—Dr. BENGE JONES, F.R.S., (THE LANCET,) June 10, 1847, p. 32.