in this number, which is certainly written in a vein of intolerance of opinion regarding questions of great importance, which are not only still on trial on both sides of the Atlantic, but concerning the value of which the wisest and most learned of past generations have differed as widely as those of the present. We will be pleased to receive communications from any and all sources, and will endeavor to treat all honestly expressed opinions on topics of interest to the profession with liberality; but we earnestly request all writers to cultivate the habit of treating the views of others with the same respect as they would ask for their own.

THE CONVENTION OF MICROSCOPISTS.—In this number we complete an interesting account of the proceedings of the National gathering of those specially engaged in microscopic investigations. The meeting was a highly interesting and profitable one, and our readers may be favored with some additional matter gathered during its progress.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE.—This important National Organization of Scientists is holding its Annual Session in Minneapolis as we go to press with this number of THE JOURNAL. We expect to favor our readers with some account of its doings in our next number.

BACK NUMBERS.—Inquiries still come whether members who now pay up, or non-members who subscribe, can have the numbers from the beginning. To all such we answer, yes. Complete files can be supplied, and missing or imperfect copies cheerfully replaced.

CORRESPONDENCE.

IS QUININE AN OXYTOMIC?

WEAVERSVILLE, N. C.

There has been, and is yet, a controversy among medical men as to whether quinine has oxytomic properties or not, some contending that it has such beyond doubt, and warning the profession to be cautious in its use in cases of pregnancy, and others equally learned and experienced affirming that it is a mistake that quinine has no such therapeutic action. May not both sides be correct, as the idiosyncracies are so very different? I once had a patient that neither quinine or ergot had any effect upon, but the decoction of uva ursi acted quickly and with power. I have a female friend to whom spirits of turpentine is more poisonous than the rhus toxicodendron—even a few drops, in lineament, rubbed on the hand, in a few hours will inflame her arm to the shoulder, producing the same effect as a thorough application

of the poison from the poison ash. Now, if the idiosyncracies of persons are so very different, may not quinine act upon some women as an oxytomic, while it would have no such effect on others? My own experience is, that it acts as an oxytomic on about one in ten, while you may give it in large or small doses to the other nine in any state of pregnancy, or even at delivery without any effect in that direction.

From all the facts before me, together with my experience, my conclusion is that we should be cautious in its use, unless we know precisely the effect it has, by direct observation, on the woman to whom we are about to administer it, but if we know that it has no oxytomic effect on our patient, then we may give it with impunity. J. A. REAGAN, A.M., M.D.

ENLARGED TONSILS.

STONE MILLS, N. Y., July 25, 1883.

EDITOR N. S. DAVIS—*Dear Sir*: I notice in THE JOURNAL an item in regard to the treatment of enlarged tonsils which put me in mind of a case which I had treated some time ago. I was called to see a little girl, about 6 years old, who had both tonsils enormously enlarged, so much so that she could hardly breathe, and was becoming pigeon-breasted.

My *modus operandi* was as follows: I took a stick of caustic potash, rolled it in paper, leaving one end bare, placed the bare end on about the middle of the tonsil, held it there about two seconds, withdrew it, waited about a minute, then had her rinse her mouth with vinegar. Repeated treatment twice per week until they were reduced to normal size, being careful to apply in same place each time. I made in all twenty-three applications, treating but one tonsil at a sitting.

I treated her three years ago, and her tonsils have been all right since. GEO. G. SABIN, M.D.

CHOLERA PREVENTION.

NASHVILLE, August 10, 1883.

EDITOR JOURNAL OF AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION,

My Dear Doctor: THE JOURNAL of July 28 has an excellent letter on cholera from Dr. H. Raymond Rogers, of Dunkirk, N. Y.; but I beg leave to insist on it that such expressions as the following should be omitted from cholera articles: "We know this disease laughs at cordon sanitaire or quarantine."

Now, it is time the profession had gotten over such free and easy statements. His excellent ideas on the pathology and treatment of cholera are marred by such a statement.

Cholera is, in a broad sense, a contagious and infectious disease, and the world should be taught to admit it, and act accordingly. It is communicable by persons, by traps of all kinds, by water, through the mails, and perhaps through the air for short distances. It is useless to cite authorities to prove this; it is one of those well established facts that no unprejudiced person can doubt, if he will read a part of or all the mass of evidence in any library in the land.

I will not go into details, but I insist that no such

general statements should be used at this time, as public confidence is thereby destroyed in all preventative measures. It may be true that fresh dejections or personal contact will not produce cholera, but this refinement of argument should be entered into if anything at all is said about it.

The fearful difficulties sanitarians meet with are increased tenfold by such statements, made thoughtlessly at the beginning of, or just before, an epidemic invasion. They are treasured up by bigots, and the explanation in extenso not being at hand, they are used with great force by those self-taught and ignorant meddlers we find in every community. Only last evening I was present at a medical society meeting, where a prominent physician started out by saying he did not regard the disease as contagious or infectious, or communicable, in an accurate sense; yet in the course of his remarks he dwelt on the great value of quarantine and prophylaxis, and referred to it as a germ disease, due to a cryptogamic poison, etc. What did the reporters do? Why, of course they seized on the first remark, and heralded it to the world in the morning paper that Dr. So-and-so said cholera was not contagious or infectious, and therefore not communicable, not a word being said in regard to the other remarks.

What I insist on is that the doctors sometimes talk too much with the mouth, and are not particular enough in our applications, and we thus destroy public confidence.

Please tell Dr. Rogers about this, as well as your other correspondents. I believe you are going to have a splendid journal, if you do not let in too much Massachusetts politics, and code and advertisement wrangling. The JOURNAL will be a credit to the profession and to the American Medical Association, but it cannot afford to be partisan or one-sided. Very respectfully,

C. C. FITE.

SOCIETY PROCEEDINGS.

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MICROSCOPISTS.

[Continued from No. 5.]

Thursday morning Dr. A. M. Bleilie, of Columbus, Ohio, read the following paper, entitled "The Effects of the Division of the Vagi on the Muscles of the Heart."

Some of the gentlemen present may remember that at the meeting held last year I presented a paper having for its object the demonstration of nutritive or trophic nerves for the heart. The procedure adopted was as follows: One or both vagi were divided in the neck, and after a certain time the heart was examined. In all cases was found a fatty degeneration of the heart, much sooner when after division of both nerves than if one nerve had been practiced on and better marked the more the time had elapsed between operation and death. These results were all obtained on the rabbit. The Society requested that this investigation be pursued further and a report be made at this meeting. Various causes have since prevented our carrying out the work as thoroughly

and systematically as we could have wished. Chief among these was our inability to procure more than a few rabbits. We finally concluded to use pigeons, and even here we had some difficulty in procuring a large stock of animals and a regular supply. The procedure with pigeons was the same as that followed in the rabbit, one or double-sided vagotomy, and where animals did not die from changes superinduced by the operation, death was caused by decapitation or nicotine. A small part of each heart was examined fresh, and the other portion divided into two parts. One was immersed in alcohol, the other in diluted chromic acid. We found that light staining facilitates examination, and of late have almost exclusively used a very diluted eosine solution, the preparation being immersed in this for one or two minutes just before tearing. The granules themselves are not stained by this agent, but the slight tinging of the basis substance was found to be quite a relief in protracted observation. Tearing the pigeon heart is a much more tedious process than with the rabbit heart, nor can such satisfactory preparations be obtained, owing to the extreme delicacy of the fibers in the former. In preparing specimens of the normal heart for a standard, it was soon found that young pigeons were entirely useless for this work, as in them the muscular fibers are all finely granular, the cross-striæ being only indicated by a row of granules. This we verified with many hearts. Pigeons which have undergone double vagotomy die in from ten to thirteen days. Immediately after the operation they are profoundly affected; recover somewhat after a few days, though never fully, and death comes on suddenly without any noticeable signs. At the autopsy the crop is usually found filled with corn and a whitish, fetid fluid, but the direct cause of death is not apparent. In animals which have undergone a one-sided vagotomy only, everything appears to have passed off in a few hours, the pigeon appearing just as one uninjured, nor is there any microscopic change after death.

As a result of our work I would name the following points:

1. The fibers of the pigeon are more delicate and more friable than in the rabbit.
2. In young pigeons the cross-striation of the muscular fibers of the heart is indicated by the fine granules which might be mistaken for beginning degeneration.
3. Even in the adult pigeon granular fibers are occasionally found by the side of well-marked striated ones, the former being perceptibly narrower. Possibly the granular fibers are still embryonic, and destined to replace the older ones as needed.
4. Recently Pohl Rincus has pointed out that the frog's heart has two sets of muscles—the outer one termed the mouth, and the other forming by its arrangement into trabeculæ a system of lacunæ in which the blood circulates. In our pigeon heart preparations blood corpuscles seem to lie in interstices, possibly corresponding to the lacunæ of the frog's heart, and these corpuscles, when altered by reagents, might be mistaken for larger fat granules.
5. After division of one vagus only there follows