

without measuring the acid, and was known to be more strongly impregnated at one time than another.

In none of the cases was there an excessively high temperature, or a frequent pulse observed, which could possibly be considered as due to carbolic poisoning.

In eighteen cases the clamp was used, and in thirty-two the ligature; in one of the latter a drainage-tube was also inserted. In the patient who died the pedicle was tied. One patient was in the fourth month of pregnancy, and was afterwards confined at term of a living daughter.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

Birmingham, Dec. 18th, 1880.

THOMAS SAVAGE.

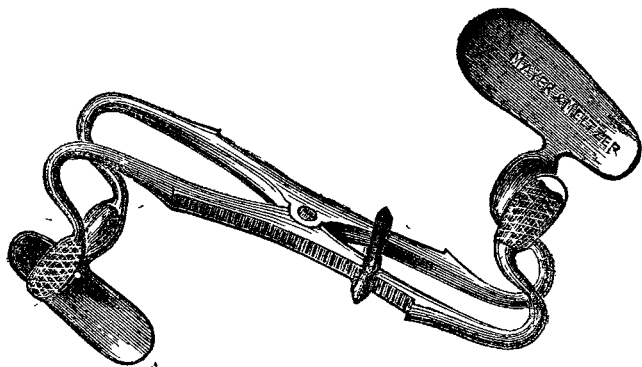
P.S.—Since writing the above, the patient upon whom I last operated died four days ago, so that my statistics should be stated as 2 deaths in 50 operations, and not 1 in 50, as stated above. The death was due to one of those unforeseen and, as far as can be told at present, unpreventable causes—viz., tetanus, which will always be liable to step in and raise the mortality of ovariectomy, apart from the question of antiseptics or non-antiseptics. The patient was perfectly well up to the ninth day; wound healed without pus; sutures removed, and looking forward to leaving the hospital. She first complained of a little "cold" from a window draught, and from that symptoms of tetanus developed, which terminated her life in twenty-four hours. At the post-mortem made by Dr. Saundby there was no appreciable cause for death. The abdomen was quite healthy; a piece of small intestine was adherent to the stump, and there was not a trace of serum or pus to be seen in the pelvis. I am now sorry that I did not wait a little longer before sending the record of my last fifty cases; but I was anxious to make the contribution as soon as possible after the Medico-Chirurgical Society's discussion.

December 27th, 1880.

#### NEW FORM OF GAG.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I would venture to recommend a somewhat novel form of gag, which will be found useful in operations for the removal of tonsils, and in some cases of staphylophary. The instrument is essentially Mr. Rose's double-ended modi-



fication of Mr. Coleman's gag, to which Messrs. Mayer and Meltzer have adapted an ingenious sliding-ring-catch, to keep it open. To this a tongue-plate is now added, so that the gag answers almost all the purposes of the more expensive instrument usually employed in operations on the palate. The accompanying illustration will probably save the necessity of a further description.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Stratford-place, Dec. 31st, 1880.

THOMAS SMITH.

#### ON CHIAN TURPENTINE AND PROF. CLAY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I deeply regret that the remarks with which I prefaced the report of my cases, and which were intended to convince Prof. Clay of the readiness with which we gave the Chian turpentine a fair trial at the Middlesex Hospital, and the satisfaction with which we should have welcomed any measure of success from it, have failed in their object, and have apparently left room for him to suppose we have "a prejudice against the Chian turpentine treatment not justified by the cases recorded." I would also mention for

his information that the resolution of the Medical Committee was passed not owing to the results of my experience alone, but to those of my colleagues as well.

Although Prof. Clay says in his letter of last week, "I have never yet affirmed Chian turpentine to be a positive cure for cancer," I think it very pardonable if he has been misunderstood on this point; for he has made statements which to the ordinary mind distinctly imply the contrary. For instance, in his first communication (THE LANCET, March 27th, 1880) he has written, "Judging by my experience it is no figurative expression to say that it acts as a direct poison upon the growth, probably causing its ultimate death..... In the early stages of cancer it may be affirmed that *an undoubted cure may take place speedily*,..... and experience justifies the expectation that under such circumstances a recurrence of the disease will not follow." He has recorded a case (Case 2) in which the os and cervix uteri "were enlarged from carcinoma to the size of a hen's egg. The os was dilated and the cavity of the cervix was filled with epithelial growth which bled freely"; and the result of treatment is described thus: "The case was a most remarkable one. The turpentine acted upon the growth with great vigour, literally melting it away in the brief period of four or five weeks," and it is added, "*She had continued quite well*." In his second article (THE LANCET, October 2nd, 1880) Professor Clay says, that the cases previously reported by him "are unique of their kind, for, as far as I know, they are the only instances on record of cancer being *cured* solely by the administration of an internal remedy. I feel justified, therefore, in stating that uterine cancer at least may be removed by the use of Chian turpentine." And further on he writes: "It is possible, therefore, to formulate a line of treatment which shall be successful in cancers of the uterus." In short, his writings teem with phrases which imply, when they do not absolutely state, the curative agency of the treatment he advocates.

Nor do his published statements permit him to object, consistently, to my cases on the ground of their severity, and to say, "It was never contemplated by me that the remedy should be used in the treatment of cases verging on death, as five of the uterine cases reported by Mr. Morris evidently were." On referring to Prof. Clay's first case we find him stating, "The patient evidently had *not a long time to live*. The uterus was so extensively destroyed by the cancerous ulceration that its cavity readily admitted three fingers." The case was so desperate that it seemed to Prof. Clay justifiable to try the Chian turpentine "even if the remedy should produce unfavourable symptoms." Yet on the twelfth day, as he informs us, "the os was quite contracted and would now scarcely admit the finger;" in the twelfth week the parts were cicatrising, the patient's health good, and she could walk a mile or two easily. In his second paper Prof. Clay says: "It is advisable not to be too precipitate in rejecting a case of uterine cancer on the ground of its being too far advanced for treatment," and he then goes on to state how that the patient, who is said to have been told at the Middlesex Hospital "that her case was incurable, and that *she had not long to live*," was so much improved in nine weeks that she was about to return to London, "with every prospect of soon being cured." In the face of these statements, it is perfectly amazing that Prof. Clay should object to any case short of one actually moribund.

But it is a distinct, although I am willing to think an unintentional, misrepresentation of my cases for Professor Clay to say respecting them: "Nor did I ever suggest or imagine that Chian turpentine would build up a new uterus, or repair a cancerous fistula of the intestines, or patch up a great cavity into the bladder, or restore a large recto-vaginal fistula with the fundus of the uterus extensively destroyed. Yet several of the cases described by Mr. Morris were of this character." These were the conditions brought about by the ravages of the disease during the administration of Chian turpentine over periods varying in the several cases from seven weeks to nearly seven months, and found at the post-mortem examinations; *not* the conditions at the time the treatment was commenced. Moreover, some of the patients who have been taking the medicine for months are still going about, although getting gradually worse.

Indeed, no one who will take the trouble to read my cases, as well as Professor Clay's, can arrive at any other conclusion than that even in the worst of my cases the cancer was in a less advanced stage when the turpentine was commenced than in those cases of Professor Clay in which he obtained such brilliant and merciful results.