

expected from its aid in the more difficult cases of extraction in adults. But the greatest achievement is the instantaneous destruction of an exposed pulp without pain, to the exclusion of the slow and painful method of destroying it by arsenious acid, &c. In three cases I have succeeded in almost completely reducing the acute sensibility of an exposed or partially exposed pulp, thus relieving dental surgery of one of its chief *opprobria*—the infliction of unavoidable suffering. With a stronger solution than that with which I have experimented it is fair to anticipate even more success, though of course the few examples I have brought before your notice must not be considered conclusive until more experience has been obtained. I had hoped to have worked upon more extended data, but the difficulty Messrs. Dinneford have experienced in obtaining the drug must be my excuse for any shortcomings in these few notes of my experience.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

HAMILTON CARTWRIGHT,
Professor of Dental Surgery, King's College.

London, Dec. 17th, 1884.

REFORM AT THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Perhaps it may be considered that the objects which the Association of Members of the Royal College of Surgeons has in view are of sufficient importance to warrant you in allotting a portion of your valuable space to a short letter on the subject.

This Association has only been in existence for a short time, yet it has received decided encouragement from those whose interests it has at heart; letters of approval and support have been received from all parts of the country; and the Ramsgate Medical Society has shown its interest in the undertaking by forwarding the following resolution:—"That no alteration in the Charter of the Royal College of Surgeons would be deemed satisfactory by its Members unless it made provision for the Council being elected by the Members and Fellows unitedly."

The Association of Members of the Royal College of Surgeons in many respects approves of the recommendations and alterations proposed to be included in a new Charter of the College, which have been drawn up by a sub-committee of the Association of Fellows, passed at a general meeting of that Association, and submitted to the Council of the College.

It is hardly necessary to point out that the bulk of the revenue of the Royal College of Surgeons is derived from the fees paid by its Members. During the financial year ending in July, 1884, about £15,000 out of the total income of £20,000 was received in fees for the *Membership* examinations. The principle that taxation and representation should go hand-in-hand is so generally conceded that it is not unreasonable for Members of the Royal College of Surgeons to petition for a share in the management of the affairs of the College, to the maintenance of which they so largely contribute. The Association of Members therefore claims the right for Members of the Royal College of Surgeons to have representatives, elected by themselves out of their own ranks, upon the Council.

Until the Association of Members has had more time to ascertain the general opinion of Members of the Royal College of Surgeons as to the number of seats on the Council, which they may reasonably be entitled to claim, it can hardly be called upon to name any definite number. The Association desires, first of all, to establish the great principle that a large, educated and intelligent body of men should be permitted to have a voice in the management of an institution of which they may be said to constitute the backbone.

The objection has been raised that it would be impossible to ascertain by any system of voting the desires of the constituency that would thus be formed." It would, however, only be necessary that the system of election by voting papers should be adopted, which method is recommended by the Association of Fellows. The difference between taking the votes of 1000 and of 16,000 electors is only one of degree. The expenses of the election would not be great, and the Members of the College would probably be willing to defray them.

Knowing the ready manner in which you have always supported any movement which might be considered to be advantageous to the interests of the medical profession in

general, we take the liberty of sending this short exposition of our views on the subject of medical reform.

We beg to subscribe ourselves, Sir, yours truly,

WARWICK STEEL,
J. NYIELD COOK,

Hon. Secs. to the Association of Members of the
Royal College of Surgeons.

3, New-inn, E.C., Dec. 16th, 1884.

AN ELECTRIC LARYNGOSCOPE: A WARNING.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—For several months past I have been engaged in conjunction with a young engineer, Mr. A. Vesey, and with a manufacturer of incandescent lamps and accumulators, Mr. C. H. F. Müller, of Hamburg, in Germany, in constructing a practically useful electric laryngoscope. As usual with inventions, the instrument constructed upon theoretical considerations has had to be subjected to several modifications, before being really useful. To-day, whilst we are still engaged in making these modifications, a commission agent called upon me, who had been advised to show me "a new electric laryngoscope." I was, of course, anxious to see it. What did it turn out to be? Nothing else than one of the later modifications of Mr. Müller's laryngoscopes, still in its original packings, the twin-sample of which was in my hall ready to be sent back to Germany as practically unsatisfactory. But whilst I had been charged for my specimen fifteen marks (fifteen shillings), the price demanded by the agent was no less than fifty shillings! Comment appears superfluous.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Welbeck-street, Dec. 1884.

FELIX SEMON.

"MORBID RELIGIOUS AFFECTION."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—One of the most eminent of Scotch divines, the late Dr. Candlish, gives a strong confirmation to the view you have adopted and maintained in a recent notice on "Morbid Religious Affection." In his Exposition of the 1st Epistle of St. John, page 366, he writes:—

"Love, when its exclusive object is unseen, is sometimes apt to become ideal, shadowy, and merely sentimental. Even when God himself is, or is imagined to be, its object, it has not unfrequently taken that form and aspect. Meditative musing on the nature of God, the rapt gaze of solitary contemplation, the fixed eye of secluded devotion, filling itself with great thoughts of the divine majesty, excellency, and beauty, have had the effect of begetting in the soul a certain mingled emotion of solemn awe and melting tenderness, which is apt to pass for divine love. It is akin to the feeling which the hero or the victim of an affecting tale may call forth, though deeper far and more intense. In real life, in Church history, this kinship has been but too terribly exemplified. Love to God has been spiritualised and sublimated, as it were, into a passion; such a passion as may, and must, end in one of two ways: either in a sort of mystical and rapturous absorption of the human in the divine, or in a still more dangerous substitution of the human for the divine."

This testimony from a theologian of acknowledged ability and well acquainted with the workings of the human heart may afford a valuable contribution to your previous remarks.

Yours truly,

December, 1884.

ARCHIPPUS.

"SHOOTINGS FOR LUNATIC ASYLUM PATIENTS."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—This novel method of treating insane patients, which appears to have been lately adopted at the Dumfries Lunatic Asylum, to which you call attention in THE LANCET of the 6th instant, demands more than a mere passing consideration; it will doubtless excite some interest, not unmingled with anxiety as to results, amongst members of the medical profession, the public, and the friends and relatives of the inmates, sane and insane.

The Scotch system is upon its trial at a critical period in