

to be a college devoted entirely to the cultivation of anatomy and surgery as a science.

1103. Even under this diploma he could not practise surgery, unless he became a member of the College of General Practitioners?—*No.*

1104. *Therefore a gentleman might take out a diploma of surgeon from the College of Surgeons, without being entitled either to register or to practise as a surgeon?*—The object is to improve the efficiency of the medical practitioner; that is the effect, there is no doubt of it.

Correspondence.

“Audi alteram partem.”

ON THE EFFECTS OF COLD IN CAUSING UTERINE CONTRACTION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In the lecture on midwifery, in the number of *THE LANCET*, for Dec. 16th, reference is made to two suggestions of mine, for the suppression of uterine hæmorrhage, which have been misunderstood; probably from the brief and indistinct manner in which they were originally enunciated.

That I did not suggest the insertion of a bladder into the uterus, and then injecting it with cold water, merely for the suppression of hæmorrhage on mechanical principles, will appear from the following extract from the appendix to my “*Essay on the Present State of Therapeutical Inquiry*,” page 28:—“A bladder attached to the end of such a tube, or distended with a current of iced water, by means of smaller tubes passing through it, would, like the introduction of the hand, give the stimulus of distention, while it would diminish the space to be filled, and afford a better means than any hitherto employed of applying cold directly to the part.” Here, it is obvious, the intention is to arrest the hæmorrhage by exciting contractions of the muscular fibres, and by the specific agency of cold, as well as by mechanical agency. A bladder distended with cold water, acting by its weight through a long vertical tube of vulcanized India rubber, with an open end, would yield to the contracting womb, and would constitute, on many occasions, a valuable expedient, of very easy construction and application.

The second reference in the lecture is to the manner I have proposed to apply cold externally, in certain cases. The recommendation is made incidentally, in the following comment upon a passage of Dr. Hamilton’s lectures on dystocia:—“Pressure on the womb, by the hand, is often had recourse to for the purpose of renewing uterine action, suspended by this and other causes.” Were this pressure made by a bandage, constructed on the principle of certain life-preservers, which could be tightened by inflation, it would result, that in addition to the direct stimulus from this measure, the liquor amnii, by being forced at intervals against the os uteri, would probably excite the contraction of its fundus by sympathy, or consent of action existing between them—in other words, by the reflex nervous function. Such a bandage, by the equality of its pressure, and the ease with which this could be regulated, would afford a better security against atonic hæmorrhage after labour, than that commonly employed. For such a purpose, the air may be replaced by cold water; and this could be constantly renewed in the manner which has been described, appendix, &c., p. 9. It was not the purpose of my work to enumerate or describe all the modes of using cold in the various uterine hæmorrhages; but only to notice such additional modes as had occurred to myself. That, in question, would be appropriate to the cases referred to in page 25 of my essay, where the usual plans of checking hæmorrhage (amongst which, the sudden application of cold, according to Gooch’s method, is assuredly one of the best) had been tried in vain. So far am I from recommending that cold shall always be employed continuously, or merely for its depressing power, that I speak (at p. 20 of the same essay) of employing it in certain diseases of women, in an interrupted manner, in order that it may stimulate, or prove tonic by reaction. But in the cases under consideration, where contraction of the womb has not been effected, and where we must rely mainly on the mechanical action of a bandage, surely it is of great importance to conjoin with this the use of means fitted to regulate the temperature of the uterine region. The common modes, employed with this intention, are generally nugatory, and often mischievous.

I shall feel obliged by the early insertion of this explanation. I am confident that the very able lecturer, who has un-

intentionally misstated my suggestions, will be equally pleased with this permission to supply the deficiency in my first enunciation of them.

I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,
Brighton, Dec. 16, 1848. JAMES ARNOTT.

REMARKS ON THE STATE OF PATHOLOGICAL SCIENCE, ILLUSTRATED BY AN ENUMERATION OF CHOLERA SPECIFICS!

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

“Who shall decide when doctors disagree.”

SIR,—It is now pretty evident to the most ordinary observer, that a complete revolution has of late years taken place in the ideas of professional men. The rival theories of Cullen and Brown are almost forgotten; at least, they no longer excite hostility, faction, or declamation, even in our schools of medicine. Darwin, also, has had his day; and, upon the whole, there seems everywhere a disposition to ground all pretensions to medical character, not upon a fondness for abstract theoretical learning, but a talent for collecting and selecting useful facts.

Accordingly, those who render themselves most conspicuous at the present day in the cause of professional improvement, are neither Cullenites nor Brunonians; nor, in short, partisans of any hypothesis, ancient or modern, but cautious, sensible men, who feel that experience is more to be prized than ingenuity, and that one fact, well observed, will be more durable than volumes of speculation, however brilliant or imposing. Perhaps the great advances which have recently been made, and are still making, in every branch of natural knowledge, but particularly in chemistry, as they are continually letting in upon us new views, and showing us the shifting nature of the ground on which we had lately founded some of our first principles, may have tended to make medical philosophers distrustful of themselves, and to convince them that the time is not yet come for a complete and satisfactory system either of physiology or pathology. But, whatever the cause may be, the effect is certain—that there is evidently, at this moment, a greater disposition to cultivate the healing art according to the inductive method, than at any former period since the days of Hippocrates. Our physicians and surgeons no longer suppose their glory to consist in the defence of this or that scholastic opinion, but in giving proofs of plain sense, in earnestly seeking out truth, and in manfully recording their mistakes as well as their successes. This, surely, is a step of no small importance, provided it be true that the first part of wisdom is to know that we are ignorant.

I have been led to reflect upon these important subjects by the perusal of the last seven numbers of *THE LANCET*, wherein I find, under the head of “Cholera,” the following *fifty* remedies—I will not say *specifics*:—creosote; petroleum; warm baths; brandy; chloroform; bleeding; tartar-emetic; hot-air baths; acetate of lead, with opium; transfusion; calomel; inhaling oxygen gas and atmospheric air; quinine; opium; injection of saline fluid into the veins; laudanum, and spirit of ammonia; charcoal, maple sugar, and lard; mercury, with chalk, and laudanum; cold water *ad libitum*; camphor and laudanum; nitrate of silver; calomel and opium; cajeput oil; laudanum and brandy; saline solutions; bismuth; bleeding from the feet, in hot water; cannabine (or Indian hemp); terchloride of carbon; croton oil; immission of arterial blood; musk; nitrous acid; naphtha; ether; soda-water; electricity; common salt, carbonate of soda and oxymuriate of potash; oil of turpentine; effervescing mixture; assafoetida; mustard emetic; Cayenne pepper; carbonic acid gas; calomel and muriate of morphia; galvanism; liquor potassæ and brandy; cupping; calomel and camphor; *the reeking skin of a fresh slaughtered sheep!*—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Margate, Nov. 1848.

JOSHUA WADDINGTON, F.R.C.S.E.

SPASM OF THE HEART.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Residing on the borders of Notts, and being acquainted with several of the personal friends of the late Lord George Bentinck, I have read with great interest the controversy in your valuable periodical between Mr. Squire Ward, Medicus, and others, and not being at all satisfied with the result, I have taken the liberty to ask Mr. Squire Ward what he thinks of the following passage from Kirkes’ “*Hand-book of Physiology*,” p. 80, a work which will shortly be a text-book in physiology, and in the hands of every person who wishes to read up to the knowledge of the day.