

Lallemand, vol. i., p. 15.—“Left hemiplegia complete; on the right side the leg was so flexed that the toe touched the nates, and the thumb was applied to the shoulder. *Dissection.*—All the surface of the right hemisphere softened; the right corpus callosum softened; the left hemisphere softened in some points.”

IV. Where true spinal symptoms appeared subsequently to the paralysis, and upon dissection a healing process was found to have commenced in the brain.

Andral, p. 324.—“Became suddenly paralytic on left side; paralytic limbs much wasted; subsequently they began to contract. Large cavity in right hemisphere with organised membranes surrounding the cavity.”

V. There is another kind of evidence to which I feel, as I write anonymously, I have no right to refer; I will, however, allude to one example.

Vomiting is an alleged true spinal symptom. I find that it occurred in thirty-two cases of palsy out of four hundred and forty. In twenty-two of these it came on at the commencement of the attack; in ten it appeared subsequently; in twenty-one it ceased entirely upon the occurrence of stupor and oppression, and in no case was vomiting present where the functions of the brain were suspended.

I am aware that Dr. Hall says that vomiting is partially a voluntary act, but every practical man knows that in most cases of cerebral disease it is totally involuntary, and the suspension of this symptom, so soon as the functions of the brain are, in a great measure, annihilated, is an argument that the act of vomiting is chiefly dependent upon the brain.

Whatever may be the impression which those remarks may leave on the mind of your readers, my own conviction is that in many cases the symptoms called true spinal, or palsy, depend upon some source of irritation existing in the brain. I am, of course, quite aware that this conclusion is apparently contradictory to the experiments in animals made by Dr. Hall and others; I can only say that as I am the propounder of no theory it is not my duty to reconcile those anomalies.

I fear that I have not convinced “M. B.” that the symptoms I have adduced “can exist only in the imagination of the author,” but I trust that others less enthusiastic in the support of the reflex theory will be led to reflect further on the subject. “M. B.” advises me to pay more attention to the writings of Dr. Hall, and his advice is no doubt disinterested. Will he allow me, in return, to recommend that the authors named in this paper be occasionally brought down from his library shelves, and (only that I fear to offend him) I would willingly suggest to him the spirit of the noble sentiment of our immortal bard,—

“I prithee think there are livers out of Britain.”

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

ANONYMOUS.

August, 1844.

#### SICK-ROOMS.

*To the Editor.*—Sir: I think it must be evident to most persons, that however desirable a temperature, regulated to a certain degree of Fahrenheit, may be in diseases of the lungs, it can only be obtained at the expense of what is more important still, a pure atmosphere. Imagine an apartment, closed up, as recommended by Dr. Marshall Hall, in the last number of *THE LANCET*, with a sick person in it,—the deteriorated atmosphere, impregnated with emanations from the patient’s body, &c. Surely the vapours of a marsh must be wholesome in comparison. Such an atmosphere would certainly be injurious to healthy lungs, and what would act detrimentally on a sound organ must, as a matter of course, act with still worse effect on one diseased. I think that the rapid and uniform recovery, in the severe case related by Dr. Hall, may with reason and justice be attributed to the bleedings, and medicines administered, and that by their judicious use the patient recovered, notwithstanding the foul atmosphere he was confined to. I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. HOLMES PERRY, L.A.C.

Worthing, July 22, 1844.

#### CALCULUS OF THE BLADDER TREATED BY ELECTRICITY.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—A “SUFFERER” imploringly asks in your last number whether you know anything of a method for the cure of stone by electricity, and seems justly to estimate its importance. For his comfort I beg to inform him that there is such a method, and, I believe, a successful one. The author of it, whom at present I have no authority to name publicly, was so good as to call on me, about a fortnight ago, with a patient, on whom he had successfully operated, in order to show me what had been done. The man was perfectly well after, I think, about two months’ treatment. I questioned him as to his previous suffering, and there can be no doubt that he had laboured under very aggravated symptoms of stone in the bladder. He had, moreover, been sounded, I was told, at one of the Borough hospitals, by an eminent surgeon, whose opinion was that there was a large calculus. The physician who brought him to me informed me that it was a very large lithic acid calculus that had been decomposed. I presume that very soon the subject will be brought before the profession and the public. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

WM. MACLURE.

Harley-street, Aug. 5, 1844.

#### ON THE POSSIBILITY OF SUPPORTING LIFE ON A VEGETABLE DIET.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—In the *Times* newspaper, of the 4th instant, you are reported to have said, “That you had found, to your surprise, that for the first fortnight of an untried prisoner’s incarceration he was subjected to the lowest possible diet, being denied, in fact, all animal food for the first fourteen days of his confinement;” you obviously would represent this restriction from animal food as a most inhuman and injurious treatment.

I apprehend it to be impossible for you not to know that the experience of all ages has proved that the healthy man can be perfectly nourished without using a particle of animal food. I will fearlessly assert, from long experience, that vegetable food is much more salubrious than mixed diet in common use, in which, however, animal matter commonly enters in the smallest proportion. Numerous instances may be cited of persons who have lived for years in very good health without animal food; but I will here content myself with very shortly informing you of my personal experience in this matter.

In the year 1804 (in January) I resolved to confine myself to a strict vegetable diet; I was induced to this by severe bodily suffering. In this course I have persevered, without deviation, to the present time, now more than thirty-eight years, and by its means have now advanced considerably in my eightieth year. The diet has been aided by other measures, which I need not enter into. I have brought up a large family on the same plan with perfect success. My eldest son, who was in childhood very delicate, with an obvious consumptive tendency, has used the same regimen for an equal length of time, and is in perfect health, and I could cite numerous instances of its beneficial effects in various individuals.

I am no advocate for starvation, and opposed, certainly, to a mere bread-and-water diet. Indeed, I cannot approve of any fixed dietary, it being abhorrent to nature, which delights in variety,—the vegetable kingdom affords variety sufficient to satisfy any healthy appetite.

I have addressed to you these facts, as in the station you hold as a member of Parliament what falls from you on medical subjects may have considerable influence either for good or for evil, and I shall be sorry to see talents of no mean order employed to fortify vulgar prejudices, or to disseminate erroneous opinions. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

WM. LAMBE, M.D.

Brompton, July 6, 1844.