

the Cæsarean section, with the modifications proposed by Porro, where, in addition to opening the uterus and the removal of the foetus, the ovaries and uterus are also extirpated. A chapter is devoted to Laparo-elytrotomy, an operation proposed to take the place of the Cæsarean section, in which the advantages of the former over the latter operation, and the cases for which it is suitable, are clearly and ably set forth. In the chapter on Transfusion the observations of Schäfer, recently published, have been incorporated. The work has been carefully revised, and maintains its high position as one of the best text-books on midwifery.

New Inventions.

THE AROMATIC AND DEODORISING WATER-CLOSET.

THIS closet, the property of Messrs. Brazier and Son, 106, Blackfriars-road, presents some novel points. It is composed entirely of earthenware, and is in two pieces, the basin and the trap. The basin is of the ordinary conical form, with a flushing-rim. The trap into which it fits is an ordinary S bend, with a ventilating shaft leaving its highest point. The novelty consists of a subsidiary chamber, forming one piece with the trap, and communicating with it below the water-level by a small hole. There is a special plug-hole for "charging" this subsidiary chamber. The charging consists in putting some quicklime in the bottom and attaching a bag of camphor to the margin of the plug-hole. The water is then allowed to flow into the subsidiary chamber, and the level of the water is the same as in the trap. The plug is then replaced, and the only interchange between the trap and the chamber is by diffusion, for it is evident that no flow can take place from the chamber (in which the fluid is retained by atmospheric pressure as in a "bird fountain") into the trap. The chamber contains water saturated with camphor and lime, and if the water in the trap be not renewed too often that also becomes saturated with camphor and lime.

What the effect of a watery solution of camphor and lime may be upon sewer-gas or fæcal matter we must leave professed chemists to determine and practical men to find out after a fair trial of this novel invention, the name of which is strangely contradictory, for that which is aromatic cannot be without odour.

MEDICAL TRIALS.

EXCHEQUER DIVISION.

(*Sittings at Nisi Prius, before MR. JUSTICE STEPHEN and a Common Jury.*)

EATON v. BASKER AND OTHERS, COMMITTEEMEN, AND THE MAYOR, CORPORATION, ETC., OF GRANTHAM.

MR. DAY, Q.C., and Mr. Finlay were counsel for the plaintiff; Mr. J. C. Lawrance, Q.C., and Mr. Dugdale appeared for the defendants.

This was an action brought by a surgeon against two sets of defendants to recover £97 7s. 9d. for medical attendance supplied to the poor in certain fever tents at Spittlegate and Little Gonesby, near Grantham, during an epidemic of scarlet fever in July, August, and September, 1878. The defendants pleaded that this was not a contract under seal; that if it was a contract it was contrary to sec. 200 of the Public Health Act, 1875; and that the contract was not made by the Local Board of Spittlegate or Little Gonesby, or by the Corporation under their seal. But these defences were stigmatised by Mr. Day in his opening as the reverse of meritorious; and he laid stress on the fact that this was a

very special attendance, as the fever tents were in a field, to isolate the patients, distant some one and a half miles from Grantham, where Mr. Eaton resided. It cut the plaintiff practically off from the rest of his practice, as few people would like to employ a doctor brought into such painful contact with a raging scourge as the fever then was, being of a particularly malignant type. While thus employed, the business of the plaintiff was almost wholly suspended. After arguments by counsel on either side as to the law of the case, Mr. Justice Stephen said he should allow the case to proceed, and the plaintiff was called, and deposed that Dr. Ashby, the medical officer of the sanitary authority, had applied to him to undertake the fever tents after a meeting in the Town-hall. At first he declined, as he believed it would injure his practice; but Dr. Ashby insisted that some one must do it, and the plaintiff suggested the names of several other well-known practitioners in Grantham. Whereupon the doctor replied they had most of them large and young families, and they much objected to running that risk; that the plaintiff must undertake the work, as he was the only bachelor in the profession in the town. Upon this the plaintiff consented, stipulating for half a guinea per day for the first two tents of six patients, and 5s. 3d. a day for every other similar tent. At first there was overcrowding, for Dr. Ashby had sent seventeen patients to the tents that properly held twelve. The witness had attended from June 30th to September 15th, sometimes seven hours a day, sometimes five or six, sometimes less; coming generally three times a day one and a half miles out of town. Out of sixty-five patients treated there only six had died. A correspondence was then read between the plaintiff and the secretary of the defendants, from which it appeared they had offered him at different times £58 and seven guineas, which sums, it was said, Dr. Ashby would pay after application and notice. The plaintiff added in his opinion his claim was a great deal too low.

Mr. Lawrance thereupon said he could not, on the part of the Mayor and Corporation, go on contesting the amount, some £30; but he submitted the committee were not personally liable, and the Corporation could not be sued on a contract not under seal.

Ultimately it was agreed to discharge the jury, and reserve these points of law for further consideration before his Lordship.

INFECTIVE PHTHISIS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The following, making due allowance for the ignorance and terminology of the period, looks so like a case in point, that if you do not think my estimate of it overstrained I will thank you to publish it in THE LANCET. It occurs under the head of "Catching an Atrophy," in Fizherbert's "Life of Cardinal Allen," and was taken by me from a little brochure, entitled "Cardinal Allen's Defence of Sir William Stanley's Surrender of Deventer," Chetham Society's publications, p. 69. The italics are mine, and the context implies, I think, that syphilis was not the cause of this "infection." However that may be, acute tuberculosis, or so-called galloping consumption, would appear to me to be the more appropriate interpretation; and I will only add, that I never saw or heard in India of the precautions against phthisis that Dr. Thompson mentions. "In those days [the reign of Elizabeth] a certain noble English youth, who had been entrusted to Alan's care at Louvain, had an atrophy, *his body gradually growing thinner*. As Alan, *assiduous in doing his duty*, remained with his pupil, he was also in a short time *infected with the same wasting away*, unnoticed at the commencement, for he was a man of vigour, *and yet the disease was not slight, as presently appeared*; for the poison was so attracted to the marrow, and so infused into the viscera, that besides infecting Alan with a disease which no course of time would cure, it so set at defiance all medicine, *that it threatened to bring him to a speedy death*, unless some escape . . . might by chance be obtained from the goodness of his own native climate and soil. Therefore Alan . . . returned stealthily to England," and regained in time his former health, as we learn from other sources.

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM CURRAN.

Warrington, Nov. 1880