

wards nearly, not completely, saturated with carbonate of potash, and made to boil, in order to expel the carbonic acid; then it is boiled with clear lime-water as long as any precipitate is formed; the lime-water first saturates the excess of acid, and then precipitates with the arsenious acid as arsenite of lime, and with the phosphoric acid and other animal substances decomposed in the nitric acid. If, instead of saturating the acid with lime-water, you add first caustic alkali till the liquid becomes alkaline and then add lime-water, no precipitate will be formed, because the arsenite of lime is held in solution by the alkali.

This statement of the solubility of arsenite of lime in a solution of alkali, being in contradiction with certain facts, M. Schweigger was induced to examine the circumstances more minutely, and was ultimately led to the following explanatory experiment:—prepare an arsenical liquid, pour it into three glasses, and add to one portion an excess of caustic-potash; to the second, excess of caustic-soda; and to the third, excess of caustic-ammonia. On adding lime-water, a deposit of arsenite of lime will be formed equally in each of the glasses. Now add to each a few drops of acid, (for instance, nitric acid,) yet so that in all the alkali shall predominate; whilst no solution of the precipitate will take place in the glasses that have the potash and soda in them, it will immediately begin in that with the ammonia; and all the arsenite of lime will be finally dissolved, although the ammonia be not saturated by the acid which has been added. Of course, the solution will take place in the three glasses when any acid is in excess; yet, on saturating the acid with alkali, the precipitate will be re-formed immediately in those glasses that contain the potash or soda, but not in that which holds the ammonia, however one may neutralize the liquid.

By putting muriate or nitrate of ammonia into a liquid containing arsenic, and adding lime-water in any quantity, no precipitate will be formed, even though heat be applied. Thus it will be seen, that it is not the ammonia, as *caustic alkali*, which retains the arsenite of lime in solution, but it is the presence of a soluble salt of ammonia which prevents the formation of the deposit; and if, instead of ammonia, caustic potash or soda be used in the process described by Berzelius, then lime-water will instantly form the precipitate of arsenite of lime.—*Phil. Mag.* lxxvi. 253.

Hygrometric Property of Sulphuric Acid.

The quantity of water that sulphuric acid sp. gr. 1.840 is capable of absorbing from an atmosphere saturated with vapour, has lately been determined, by exposure of 50 grains of acid of the above strength to such an atmosphere. In the course of four months, it gained 423.2 grains of water, considerably more than eight times its original weight, its sp. gr. being diminished to 1.0706.—T. G.—*Phil. Mag.*

ANATOMY, PHYSIOLOGY, AND PATHOLOGY OF THE BRAIN.

A COURSE OF LECTURES on these interesting and important subjects, was commenced by Dr. SPURZHEIM on Thursday last, in the Webb-street Theatre of Anatomy, in the presence of a very numerous class of Medical Students. The Doctor, in an admirable Introductory Address, forcibly illustrated the advantages which must result to medical practitioners from their being acquainted with the structure of the brain, and with its healthy and diseased functions, and commented in a spirited manner on the *insane practice* which an ignorance of these subjects leads people to adopt, with a view to cure *insanity*.

The lecture was exceedingly well received, and appeared to give great satisfaction. We have no doubt that all classes of medical men will feel it a duty to attend these valuable Discourses.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I beg to enclose for insertion in THE LANCET, the copy of a letter addressed to Sir A. Carlisle, which, I trust, will appear in your next Number.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
J. M. C.

TO SIR ANTHONY CARLISLE.

SIR,—When you delivered the Hunterian Oration, two or three years ago, I was one of your hearers, and was exceedingly gratified by it; and it is out of no personal disrespect to you, either as a man or as a surgeon, that I signify to you my intention of not being present at the next anniversary; for, independently of the detestation with which I view the

various disgraceful and arbitrary acts which proceed continually from the Corporate Body of the College of Surgeons, I consider it extremely degrading to be obliged to pass down Portugal-street, celebrated only for its stables, butchers' shambles, and dirt,) that I may enter at the *back door* of a building, which has a handsome portal, through which pass none but a self-elected body of about twenty individuals, and some of their very particular friends.

I, for one, protest against such uncalled-for distinctions, and thus set an example which, I trust, will be followed.

I am, Sir,

Your humble and obedient servant,

JAMES MORSS CHURCHILL.

77, Park-street, Grosvenor-square,
February 1826.

We readily give insertion to the letter of Mr. Churchill, and highly approve of the indignant manner in which he alludes to the oppressive and insulting conduct of the Court of the College; but we entirely *disapprove* of his determination not to attend the Oration on Tuesday next, even at the sacrifice of entering the College at the *back door*; the Oration will be delivered only *four days* previous to the Meeting, which is to be held at the Freemasons' Tavern, for the purpose of applying an antidote to the College abuses, and it is probable that on Tuesday some preliminary measure may be adopted. At all events, we hope there will be a very full attendance of the Members at the delivery of the Oration, that the Council and Court of Examiners may receive *unequivocal testimony* of the detestation with which their proceedings are viewed by the great body of the surgical profession.

On the subject of the Meeting, which is to take place the 18th instant, we will say a word or two in our ensuing number, meanwhile we would advise the *general practitioners*, to be on the alert, and have an eye to their undoubted rights.

FOREIGN DEPARTMENT.

ANALYSIS OF FOREIGN MEDICAL JOURNALS.

REVUE MEDICALE—JANUARY.

A Table of Diseases observed at the Hôpital de la Charité, in the Clinical Wards of Professor Laennec, during the last Six Months of 1825, by M. M. Laennec

THE number of patients admitted into the clinical wards of Professor Laennec, during the second scholastic half year, that is, from the 1st of April to the 20th of August, has been 168; the total number of deaths has been 18, which is less than a tenth part, a circumstance which M. Laennec considers very flattering, as occurring in a hospital into which are received indiscriminately all kinds of patients, and which he partly attributes to the greater number being acute, instead of chronic diseases, and partly to the patients being generally young and robust workmen, who had repaired to Paris on account of the busy scenes which were going on in that city during the last summer. On reviewing the different diseases, the following is the result:—

Acute Diseases.

	Number.	Deaths.
Continued fevers	20	1
Intermittent	6	0
Eruptive	4	0
Acute rheumatisms	7	0
Phlebitis	1	0
Anginæ	4	0
Acute catarrhs	8	0
Pleuronemonies	18	3
Metallic colics	5	0
Chorea	1	0

Chronic Diseases.

Chronic rheumatisms	5	0
Nervous diseases	2	0
Ringworm	1	0
Syphilis	9	0
Cerebral affections	5	1
Paraplegia	1	0
Chronic catarrhs	12	1
Phthises	18	6
Gangrene of the lungs	2	0
Chronic pleurisies	5	2
Diseases of the heart	11	3
Aneurism of the aorta	1	1
Ascites	1	0
Curvatures, contusions, diarrhoea, hypochondriasis ..	21	0