

ment of MM. ROUX and BEHRING, it is to be found in the results of the unfortunate feud between HERR BEHRING and PROFESSOR VIRCHOW. Stung into a wholly unnecessary access of passion by VIRCHOW's conservative and somewhat critical attitude toward the serum treatment, BEHRING made a bitter attack upon the eminent and popular scientist, and, with singularly poor taste and judgment, selected a pronounced political journal as the medium for the publication of his diatribe. VIRCHOW's half century of scientific work needs no defence and his high character is proof against attack; nevertheless, the Berlin Medical Society deemed it incumbent to formally declare that "it is necessary we show that we feel an indestructible thankfulness and veneration for VIRCHOW and behold him with pride at our head." VIRCHOW thanked the Society, expressing the hope that, for such a cause, such expression would never be called forth again, and it was believed the affair was ended.

A cable dispatch of the 3d inst., however, announces that VIRCHOW's assistant, DR. HAUSEMANN has informed the Berlin Society of his intention to contest PROFESSOR BEHRING's claims of the curative and prophylactic properties of the antitoxin—mentioning several cases in which patients had died, although, as alleged, they had received the injections in the prescribed quantities and within the defined period of the attack; he also challenges the accuracy of the published statistics, averring that no cure of proved diphtheria by the serum treatment has yet been substantiated, while, on the other hand, "there seems reason to believe that the serum causes kidney diseases, pains in the joints, fevers and other ailments." Making due allowance for partizanship, it still remains that HAUSEMANN's notification gains significance from his association with PROFESSOR VIRCHOW; that the Professor has probably sanctioned his assistant's action; and that, therefore, the verdict of the profession on the claims of the new treatment—which seemed to be crystallizing into one of unanimous approval—may be seriously delayed.

For the benefit of the medical profession of this country, as well as for the probable benefit to the public, which is now suffering from an unwonted prevalence of diphtheria, this verdict should be arrived at as speedily as may be, and with all the weight and authority that a National Commission of competent investigators can give.

Let there be created a Department of Public Health!

LOCATION OF CONTAGIOUS DISEASE HOSPITALS.

One of the vexed questions in sanitary administration is the one pertaining to the location of hospitals for contagious diseases. The matter has been recently brought to the surface in Washington City in a most unpleasant way.

As is well known, the unfortunate residents of the

Capital City have no voice in the selection of their rulers, the right of suffrage being denied them. The natural consequence is that the District Commissioners pay little or no attention to the wishes of the people, and like the late Mr. Vanderbilt, when any of their acts meets with popular disapproval they snap their fingers and say with much unction: "The public be d—d." One of the handsomest parts of the city, one having one of the finest views about Washington was chosen by the Commissioners as a site for the new contagious disease hospital. Naturally, the property owners in the vicinity, whose real estate is damaged by this action are indignant, and a public mass meeting has been held to denounce the Commissioners' action. The action of the Commissioners is considered all the more irritating and arbitrary, as there are many acres of equally salubrious land on the brow of the hill between the Bladensburgh road and the Almshouse, not near desirable residence property, and far enough away from the other charitable institutions to prevent conveyance of infection to the inmates, and at far lower prices.

Congress is confidently appealed to by the citizens to prevent the consummation of this scheme.

No municipal government has the right to disregard the welfare and property rights of citizens in selecting sites for these necessary institutions, and as all citizens of the United States are directly interested in all that makes the Capital better and more estimable, we desire to express our opinion on this question, as citizens and sanitarians, to the effect that the proposed site should be abandoned and that right speedily.

Let there be created a Department of Public Health!

CORRESPONDENCE.

Letter from Vienna.

VIENNA, NOV. 18, 1894.

To the Editor:—As the Behring remedy for diphtheria is causing a great commotion in medical circles throughout Europe, and probably also in the United States, it may be of interest to inform your readers of the status of the remedy on this side of the Atlantic, in so far as it is possible to get at the facts.

I made daily visits until a few days ago, for three weeks at Professor Koch's barracks in Berlin where Dr. Kossel is conducting the treatment of diphtheria patients with Behring's blood serum, and am happy to be able to say that, in the main, the treatment of his cases has been followed by satisfactory results while the work there has aroused the interest of European physicians. Every day a number of different foreign physicians are to be met there who have come to investigate the progress of the treatment, and its results. Dr. Kossel asserts positively that nearly every case sent to him thus far before the third day of the disease, has recovered, but with each successive day's delay the chances of recovery are greatly diminished. In other words, to get the full benefit of the treatment the "serum" should be injected within the first three days after the invasion of the

disease. The first case he lost was one that came to him on the seventh day and died of a mixed infection, streptococci having invaded the child's blood.

One day on entering the ward we found three children breathing through tracheotomy tubes, aged respectively 2, 4 and 7 years. The Doctor explained that the 2-year-old child was on the point of suffocating when he entered the barracks; the 4-year-old child came to the hospital on the sixth day. His larynx was involved at the time and before the serum had had an opportunity to retard the progress of the disease, stenosis occurred and tracheotomy became necessary. The 7-year-old child was brought in on the third day with a thick membrane in the larynx; his parotid glands were greatly swollen. In this instance, Dr. Kossel conjectured that the disease was of longer duration than was known. All three recovered.

One of my colleagues expressed surprise that tracheotomy was still necessary with this treatment. The explanation given was that in some cases the laryngeal stenosis comes before the remedy has had time to influence the disease, as in the case above mentioned. In other instances the patients were so profoundly poisoned that the membrane continued to form for hours after the serum was injected and during this time stenosis could occur. This made it necessary in a percentage of cases to use the tube.

The percentage of recoveries in the barracks since August, when the blood serum treatment was introduced was 85; before August 1 recoveries were 40 per cent. Out of twenty-five tracheotomies 55 per cent. recovered. He also mentioned that of fourteen tracheotomies in children who came under treatment before the third day, twelve recovered.

Roux, of Paris, states that the mortality rate in the children's hospital there was reduced from 55 to 26 per cent. since the Behring treatment was introduced.

In Vienna, the serum was used in a case of puerperal fever, although Behring claims that the remedy is only to be relied upon to attack the germs of diphtheria. The patient is recovering. How much the serum influenced the disease one can not tell, although her temperature has steadily descended.

The treatment is simple; Koch's syringe is used for the purpose; ten cubic centimeters of the serum are injected below the axilla, where the connective tissue is quite loose. *Asepsis strictly observed.* The temperature in nearly every case begins to descend in from eight to twenty hours. There is no reaction after the injection. No elevation of temperature or discomfort to the patient occurs.

The injection is repeated after twenty-four hours if no improvement is noticed in the patient, and may be repeated daily if necessary. Usually, however, the first injection is followed by decided improvement within twenty-four hours, and in the milder cases one injection is sufficient to stay the progress of the disease. After twenty-four hours the membrane softens and in many cases comes away in shreds. No other medicines are given, except to weak patients who are supplied with an abundance of wine, milk and beef tea. Behring says the serum is a *specific* for the destruction of the diphtheria germ *only*, and if complications arise in the case as a result of a *mixed* infection his treatment should not be held responsible for it, as diphtheria is a disease peculiarly liable to be accompanied by a mixed infection; other germs finding an infective atrium in the naso-pharynx, larynx and bronchial tubes. Any complications appearing must be treated by the usual methods, but so long as diphtheria germs are discernible the serum is to be used to *destroy them*.

He also wishes to have it understood that the remedy is not a poison like Koch's tuberculin, but an *antitoxin*, being the blood serum of an animal (horse or sheep) that has suc-

cessfully stood inoculation with the diphtheria culture. He claims to have found small "bodies" in the blood serum of such animals which he says are antagonistic to the diphtheria germ. He calls them "Heil Köfer" and claims to have proved his discovery by repeated experiments upon lower animals. As the remedy is considered an antitoxin, many of the most prominent members of the profession in Berlin, Vienna and Paris say that the remedy can not injure the patient and ought to be thoroughly tried in view of the fact that such remarkable statistics have been presented in its favor by thoroughly competent and well-known physicians of Germany and France.

Yours truly,

F. C. SCHAEFER, M.D.

The Discoverer of Anesthesia.

ATHENS, CLARKE CO., GA., Nov. 26, 1894.

To the Editor:—Dr. Ephraim Cutter, in his note to the JOURNAL of November 17, says the rotunda of the Capitol contains a statue of Dr. "J. D. Crawford," the discoverer of ether in 1842. This note is replied to by Dr. W. H. Sharp, of Parkersburg, W. Va. Dr. Sharp's note is on the right track. Dr. Crawford W. Long used ether as an anesthetic in 1842 in Jefferson, Jackson Co., Ga., eighteen miles from Athens, to which fact a number of old citizens of Jackson County will testify. It was first used for surgical purposes on a man named Venable, and a member of this same Venable family lived near Jefferson, Ga., for several years previous to 1842.

Both in Jackson and Clarke Counties the young people at parties would call for volunteers to whom ether should be given for the amusement of the crowd present on these occasions. My own mother was present at a number of these entertainments in Clarke County, one of which was at the old Weir place four miles from Athens, on the Monroe road. At this time ether was given to a negro boy, and when full anesthesia was established, the young men who gave the ether became very much frightened, thinking they had killed the negro. In their fright they sent to Athens for a physician, but when he arrived the negro had come to life as they thought, and so expressed it.

Now as to the statue spoken of by Drs. Cutter and Sharp, I have this to say, which I think will explain the matter fully. A few years after the death of Dr. Crawford W. Long, portraits were made of two of Georgia's most distinguished citizens (two portraits of each one); one to be placed in the State Capitol at Atlanta, Ga., the other in the rotunda of the Capitol in Washington, D. C. The name of Dr. Crawford W. Long was presented as one of the number, being the discoverer of ether as an anesthetic in 1842. This claim has been fully established by abundant proof, and some authors give the honor to Dr. Long. In the "American Text-book of Surgery," by Keen and White, Dr. Long is named as the discoverer, and one or two English authors give the credit to Long. In the East the credit has been given to Dr. Morton, who first used his anesthetic in 1844, and to whom a monument has been erected, and a public demonstration held in his honor as the discoverer. Dr. Morton deserves all this as one of the discoverers, but Long having antedated Morton two years, he should at least share this honor, notwithstanding the fact that Morton did make known first his discovery to the world. The medical profession of the world should take up this subject and ask for a monument fund, to be raised by voluntary subscriptions by the physicians of every nation.

The statue to Sims, at the unveiling of which I had the honor of being present, is an honor worthily bestowed. The noble profession of the healing art deserves much praise for this work, and I hope the good work will go on. The