

ciously made one incision down the whole length of the swelling. It would be found that such incisions were by far the most effectual means of treatment in phlegmonous erysipelas, and of terminating satisfactorily the local symptoms and general disturbance. When erysipelas is accompanied by inflammation of the subjacent cellular tissue, it frequently evinces a disposition to spread; the adhesive inflammation, in other words, does not intervene to arrest its progress; in these cases free incisions are also by far the best means of counteracting the disease. In the first place they occasion a copious flow of blood from the inflamed parts, the vessels bleeding with infinitely greater energy than is observed in ordinary wounds of the same extent; but the relief is not solely attributable to the bleeding, for an equal quantity abstracted by other means will always fail to produce an equivalent effect. The incisions, however, operate most effectually, by relieving the great distension of the parts; the limb, previously red and shining, becomes pale and wrinkled, and the pain is almost immediately abated. In the present case the incision operated in this manner; the spreading of the local inflammation has been arrested, and the patient now only labours under a simple healthy wound.

ACUTE HEPATITIS, TERMINATING IN SUPPURATION.

He had occasion once or twice to notice the application of the same principles of treatment to internal and external inflammations. There were at present some cases in the wards which illustrated this analogy further. In "Henry" there was a patient named George Booth, æt. 33, admitted with a large phlegmonous abscess over the right hip, and who also laboured under hepatitis. Generally speaking, one inflammation was as much as the animal economy could undertake at a time; but, in this case, two were in action. He had been unwell about a fortnight before admission, but could assign no cause for his illness. He said his hip had been "lanced" by a doctor, but nothing followed but blood. As he felt a deep fluctuation, he introduced the lancet a little further, and a copious discharge of pus immediately followed. Still the relief was not so great as might have been expected; the skin was sallow, his features contracted, and he complained of pain in his right side. On uncovering his abdomen, the cause was at once perceptible; he breathed entirely by his ribs, and studiously avoided the exercise of the abdominal portion of his bellows. These appearances, coupled with great abdominal pain and other usual indications, at once proved the nature of the

affection. It was not, however, one of such a dangerous character as is sometimes seen; in fact, in these climates, the termination of acute hepatitis in suppuration is comparatively of infrequent occurrence. He was bled to sixteen ounces. Had jalap and calomel, and a saline mixture, with tartar emetic and sulphate of magnesia, every sixth hour. He was moreover cupped once, and had a blister to the side. He continued taking one grain of calomel and five of jalap till his bowels were effectually relieved, and till it was considered the purging had been carried to a sufficient extent. Active as this was, however, none of the bad consequences were produced on the intestinal mucous membrane, of which our brethren on the other side of the channel seemed so much afraid.

Under this treatment the man had nearly recovered. In these cases he would again repeat, that the same principles of cure which referred to external inflammation, were also applicable to those of internal parts. There were some other patients then under treatment which further illustrated this position, but of these he would speak at the next lecture.

INQUEST AT HAMPTON.

LETTER FROM MR. MORSON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Anticipating some comments would be made from the report which you gave in your publication of the 9th October, of the inquest held at Hampton on the 2nd, I purposely delayed offering any observations before, anxious to ascertain first the feelings of that respectable body of men denominated "General Practitioners" from the result of the case in question, the practice of one of whom, it appears, in the instance of Mr. Bowen, has recently most unjustly been called in question, and, as far as I am capable of giving an opinion, been made the subject of unmerited animadversion.

Previously to my noticing any portion of the report taken at the inquest, and embodied in No. 371 of your LANCET, I must pause for a while to express freely the surprise and indignation which I felt on perusing a letter from Sir Andrew Halliday (physician to the Duke of Clarence), published in your 372nd Number, and in which I find he has endeavoured, but in a very pitiful manner, to exculpate himself from what he would wish *others to regard*, as merely "an apparent inconsistency," in reference to his original assertion to Mr. Sells, of Kingston, and that afterwards made

to Mr. Taylor. The conduct, Sir, lately practised by Sir Andrew throughout the whole of this most unpleasant affair, I can have no hesitation in pronouncing, to have been perfectly at variance with the criteria by which *I have been taught* to estimate the conduct of truth and honour; and he himself must be well aware, that I am not singular in this opinion, or without proof "as strong as holy writ" to justify it. I now, Mr. Editor, boldly call upon Sir Andrew to account for the five different assertions which he made, respecting the removal of the arms of the child, and the non-delivery of the woman. 1st, To Messrs. Sells and Taylor; 2nd, To Mr. Jackson; 3rd, To Mr. Bowen and myself; 4th, To the Coroner and jury; and 5th, After the inquest, in the letter which he addressed to Mr. Taylor; no two of which, I do assure you, Sir, in the least correspond. Thus far, I trust, I have adduced enough to satisfy you, and your enlightened readers, that Sir Andrew's conduct savours of something more than "apparent inconsistency." Also, that the assertion which he has since made in your Journal, accusing others of having used "great efforts to implicate him personally," is, like the rest of his statements, wholly without foundation.

Already I fear, Sir, you will consider me as trespassing largely upon valuable pages, but as you have afforded space for the attack, you will, I hope, in justice, grant a similar favour for the defence.

It was not until the morning of the 26th August, that Mr. Bowen was apprised of what (as since proved) had been secretly hatching for a month before. At this time Mr. Kent, an inhabitant of Hampton, at the request of the minister, called on him to say, that his attendance was required at the residence of Mr. Jackson, where the parish authorities were sitting in council. Mr. Bowen, notwithstanding this *very brief notice*, having had no prior intimation that such meeting was to take place until an hour after the witnesses had assembled, readily obeyed the summons, when, on arriving at the field of action, to his great surprise he was informed, that his presence had been requested to answer to the charge of improper treatment towards the late Frances Clarke, who was represented to have died, a month previously, in the pains of labour, during his attendance upon her. This charge Mr. Bowen was likewise informed, was preferred against him by Mr. Sells, a surgeon at Kingston, who, without giving him any antecedent notification of his intentions (although they had met each other *frequently* after the death of the deceased), had applied to a magistrate to take cognizance of the case. Mr. Cowe, of Sunbury (the magistrate applied to), not deeming himself

sufficiently authorised to interfere, recommended Mr. Sells to apply to the churchwardens of Hampton; he did so, and it was in consequence of *this application* that the churchwardens met, and convened all those persons who were in attendance with Mr. Bowen on the deceased previously to her death; when, after a patient and minute examination of each, which lasted five hours, and when depositions were recorded which materially differ from those subsequently taken at the inquest, they were induced (upon hearing a further statement of the case given by Mr. Bowen) to appeal to three eminent obstetric practitioners of this metropolis for their opinions; and as these gentlemen all agreed as to the propriety of the treatment pursued, they (the churchwardens) immediately expressed their approbation of Mr. Bowen's conduct, in a letter which this gentleman received a few days after. Thus, Sir, you will observe, that the statement in your report, which informs us "that some inquiry was entered into by the parish officers, but this only went to ascertain how far the surgeon at Teddington was culpable in declining to attend," is perfectly erroneous. The meeting was instituted for the purpose of investigating the foundation for Mr. Sells's charge, and I *believe* with a view also of allowing this individual, and *all others* interested, the opportunity of substantiating the same; but, strange to say, Mr. Sells *never came forward*; and lest ignorance of the meeting might be alleged by Mr. Guy (retained, as asserted, on behalf of Mr. Clarke) as the cause of *his* non-attendance, it is but justice to say, that during the sitting of the churchwardens, a letter, written by him, was received by Mr. Jackson, containing instructions, and such questions as he wished to be put to the witnesses, and which *were put*. This obvious listlessness on the part of Mr. Guy, I leave for him to explain; it must, however, unquestionably suffice to show, that he at least was *well acquainted* with what was going on, and if, as he has since vaunted, it was "ever his practice to tread lightly on the accused," why did he not *then* generously come forward, and allow Mr. Bowen the opportunity of repelling aspersions, as unfounded in their nature as they were malignant and prejudicial in their tendency? But no, Mr. Editor, this was an act of plain dealing hardly to be expected.

For the satisfaction of your readers, remote from the scene of this late disgraceful transaction, it may not be amiss to state that Mr. Bowen, the gentleman accused of ignorance and inhumanity, has, for nearly the last three years, filled the situation of visiting assistant to Mr. Davies; during this period his conduct proved always so uniformly correct; the opportunities which

he had of exercising his profession were so extensive and multifarious, the satisfaction he afforded to those of every class committed to his care had been so universal; nay, so beloved and well known was he throughout the neighbourhood, for mildness and assiduity in his profession, that upon Mr. Davies's relinquishing his practice at Hampton to become domestic surgeon to their most gracious Majesties, many of his patients, the greater part of whom are individuals of the utmost respectability, opulence, and rank, solicited Mr. Bowen to become Mr. Davies's successor. Arrangements for this purpose were accordingly made, and I beg it will be borne in recollection, that it was not until a few days before Mr. Davies's final departure from Hampton to accompany the King to Brighton (fully one month after the death of the deceased), that this attack was made. Hence Mr. Bowen has every legitimate right to infer, that those persons who propagated the report of his improper treatment of the deceased were influenced in doing so, by motives *other* than purely philanthropic and humane. Inasmuch as he is prepared to prove that the very witness, Ann Ellam, who bore testimony against him, declared, very shortly after the demise of Frances Clarke, to Mr. Keene, a gentleman of property residing in the parish of Teddington, and one of its overseers, that Mr. Bowen's conduct to the deceased had been most "kind and attentive." Inasmuch as Mr. Clarke, the widower of the deceased, acknowledged to a gentleman, a resident of Hampton (whose name, if required, I am authorized to give), when asked how he intended to remunerate Mr. Guy, replied, "I can only do so with my gratitude, but I have some good friends who I have every reason to hope will do so for me." Who these *good friends* are, Mr. Bowen has yet to find out, together with many other circumstances upon which "clouds, shades, and darkness, rest." These slight abstracts will, however, I hope, suffice to prove that although it has been maintained, that the proceedings which took place were instituted at the sole desire of the husband, such could not have been the case; also, that throughout the whole business Mr. Bowen has had to contend with some secret miscreant, who, like the owl which fears to prey by day, was compelled to seek for nightly cover for the execution of his base designs.

I shall now, Sir, go on and briefly offer a few additional remarks on the evidence taken before the parish officers at Hampton prior to the inquest, and that which was subsequently obtained, and since recorded in your Journal of the 9th inst. To this part of my communication I beg leave more particularly to invite the attention of your readers,

who, by contrasting both, will, I am quite assured, discover the conflicting nature of such testimony, as well as the very apparent motives which led to its elicitation.

One of the witnesses, Mary Ann Elliott, when examined by the parish authorities, on the morning of the 26th of August, stated, "that on her mentioning to Mr. Bowen that Mrs. Clarke wished to have further assistance, he *insisted* on some other medical gentleman being sent for, stating, at the same time, that there was no use of sending for any one from Hampton, as he knew there was no one at home."

Ann Ellam deposed on oath to the coroner and jury, that when she asked the deceased, in the presence of Mr. Bowen, if she would not like to have some other medical man? "Mr. Bowen said nothing to this."

On the contrary, Sarah Chillman, the midwife, likewise on oath, contradicts the before-mentioned statement of Ann Ellam, and says that when she asked the deceased if she would have Mr. Taylor who attended her before, and when deceased replied she would, that she then told Mr. Bowen; he said, "If Mr. Taylor came, he would go out of the house."

Many more such-like discrepancies in the evidence I could wish freely to expose. But I fear, in doing so, I should only be obtruding upon your valuable time and indulgence. Let it then suffice to say, that upon the "*mens conscia recti*," and upon the decision given by that tribunal before which Mr. Bowen has lately so unfeelingly been arraigned, but which decision I regret to say was never accurately published, as will be seen from the following correct copy of the verdict—"Died by the visitation of God; and it is our opinion that the medical attendant did all that *was possible* to be done, to deliver the deceased under the circumstances"—does he *rest his claims* for future public confidence and approbation. This I am certain will not be denied him, when every circumstance is duly deliberated upon, and when it is more particularly recollected, that when called upon to render his assistance (after another had positively refused), he did so with alacrity and good feeling, that his attention during the progress of the labour was prompt and unremitting, that he left her but for a short period, and that *then* he was obliged to do so (having to visit elsewhere), the whole of Mr. Davies's extensive practice being, at the time, intrusted to his care.

Let those, therefore, disposed, Mr. Editor, to censure Mr. Bowen *hastily*, remember "He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone."

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
J. H. MORSON,
M.R.C.S. of London.

28, Cockspur Street, Oct. 20, 1830.