

they were such as no one conversant with those which the genuine disease exhibits at that period, would have confounded with the true vaccine. A peculiar agent had been inserted under the cuticle, and the consequence, almost the immediate result, was that hurried, irregular, excessive action, which such a cause is calculated to produce. No constitutional-symptoms whatever occurred. The immediate action of the virus ended with itself; and, without forming the true vesicle, began very soon to subside, and with it the local disease which had been excited. These cases were frequently examined. They were in the same house, and many in the same room, with cases of the genuine disease, and could be, and were, compared with them. How far these individuals, or any of them, were susceptible of the varioloid, is a question which will not be discussed. The cases show that a local disease may be produced, by the vaccine matter, in persons who have had the genuine disease, none of the characters of which, however, belong to cowpox.

### III.

#### SELECTIONS FROM FOREIGN JOURNALS.

##### *Spurred Rye in retained Placenta.* By R. RENTON, M.D.

ON Sunday, the 13th of January, 1828, I was requested by Dr. Moncreiff to visit a Mrs. G. aged 30, the mother of two children, supposed to be ill of fever, but who had that morning at 8, given birth to a fœtus between the third and fourth month.

The placenta had not been expelled at 3, P. M. when I first

saw her, and it was in consequence of its detention, having created alarm in the mind of the patient and her friends, that my attendance was requested. From particular circumstances, I found it impossible to make an examination, so that no correct opinion could be formed of the real situation of the placenta. As the patient was of a very spare and feeble habit, and seemed much exhausted from fatigue as well as flooding, I recommended the adoption of the usual means in such cases, and took my leave. At my visit on Monday I found her somewhat refreshed; she had passed a good night; had suffered no pains; and the discharge had abated in some degree. On examination I found the anterior part of the *cervix uteri* much distended, which I attributed to the presence of the placenta or coagula, or of both. The placenta was found situated within the *os uteri*, but from the impossibility experienced in attempting to dislodge and extract it, I was satisfied that an adhesion existed between it and the anterior part of the *cervix uteri*. As the patient had complained of few after-pains, and of none three hours after the expulsion of the fœtus, the inactivity of the uterus, in addition to the adhesion of the placenta, was obviously an indirect cause of the detention of the after-birth. In order to induce uterine contraction, stimulating clysters were recommended to be thrown up the rectum, and moderate pressure applied to the uterus by means of bandaging round the body. These means were persevered in during Tuesday and Wednesday, without having produced the least effect on the uterus. As there were good grounds

for apprehending a sinking of the general system, partly from the drain that had been kept up for several days, notwithstanding the means adopted to counteract it, as also from the constitutional mischief likely to arise from the presence of a putrid placenta in the uterus, the signs of which had now become very evident, I regarded the case as a most favorable one for subjecting the *Secale cornutum* to the test of experiment. On Wednesday evening a drachm of it was infused in four ounces of boiling water for half an hour, the one-half of which was directed to be taken at half-past nine, and the remainder in an hour, if no pains occurred. Both doses were taken without having had apparently any effect. In rather less than half an hour after swallowing the last dose, uterine contraction commenced, which continued with intervals of about two minutes between the pains, till 6, A. M. the following morning, each contraction having been accompanied and followed by sanguineous discharge, both in a liquid and coagulated form. The patient complained of the severity of the pains, and represented them as violent as those she had experienced during her former confinements. The greater portion of the placenta had been expelled during the night; but on examination a part still was found adhering to the uterus. On explaining to her the object in giving her the medicine, she agreed to take another dose in the evening, if the remaining portion of the placenta should not be discharged. This was, however, not found necessary; for in the effort of pressing at stool in the course of the evening, the remainder of the pu-

trid diseased placenta was expelled; after which her recovery became progressive, and is now complete.

Two facts worthy of remark present themselves. 1st. That the uterus had given no evidence, either to the patient or her attendants, of any disposition to expel its contents later than three hours after the expulsion of the fœtus. 2d. That within half an hour after the last dose of the rye, uterine contraction ensued, which continued for the space of seven hours,—a most unusual occurrence in such cases, particularly in feeble constitutions, rendered more so by protracted flooding.—*Edin. Med. and Sur. Jour.*

The increasing obstacles to the prosecution of practical anatomy, and the wretched state to which surgery, and the medical profession generally must be reduced, unless men of enlarged views, of wise and liberal minds, take a deep and proper interest in the subject, is engaging much attention in England. The following contains a short account of what has been recently done in that kingdom in regard to it.

*House of Commons, Monday,  
March 24.*

MR. DUGDALE presented the following Petition from the Physicians and Surgeons of Birmingham, complaining of the inconvenience by numbers of their profession from the want of bodies for dissection, and calling upon the House to remove the impediments which were at present thrown in the way of the cultivation of anatomical science.

*“ To the Right Honorable the Commons, &c.*

WE, the undersigned, physicians

and surgeons of the town of Birmingham, respectfully implore the attention of your right honorable House to the urgent necessity of adopting some measures to remove the impediments to the cultivation of the science of Anatomy.

Unfortunately deprived of legislative authority, exhumation is, at present, the only method by which bodies can be procured for anatomical purposes, a method painful to the feelings of the public, and opposed by the laws of this realm.

In various parts of the continent of Europe the prosecution of the science of Anatomy is protected by their respective governments, and every facility afforded for its liberal and extended cultivation; hence, the youth of Great Britain, designed for the medical profession, are compelled to proceed to foreign countries in pursuit of that information which is denied to them here.

As the practical surgeon is formed only by the laborious study of Anatomy and actual Dissection, your petitioners presume not to dwell upon the advantages to be derived by the public service and society at large, by attention to their prayer.

Your petitioners most earnestly solicit your right honorable House to take this important subject into its serious consideration, and adopt such measures as in its wisdom may be deemed fit.

And your petitioners will ever pray."

Sir H. FERGUSON thought that few, if any, such petitions had ever before been presented to that House; but he could not help thinking that the subject now called to their attention, perhaps for the first time, deserved the

most serious consideration of the House. It was a matter of the most vital importance, and the difficulty of procuring subjects was at present so great, that he feared, if it were suffered to continue, the teaching of anatomy must stop, and the schools would be deserted for the want of means to offer instruction to the pupils.

Sir J. YORKE said, he had presented some petitions of this kind in the course of last year, and he was glad that the attention of the house was now recalled to the subject. He wished for a declaratory law, the object of which should be, to let the public know that any one *in articulo mortis* was at liberty to sell his body for anatomical purposes, and to allow executors, administrators, and assigns, to give over the bodies of such persons to the purchasers. He was certain that if such a law was passed, there would be bodies in abundance; for there were few paupers who would not be glad to leave ten guineas to their widows; and the practice, thus introduced, would have this particular advantage about it, that those who went out of the world with any particular disease would be known to the medical profession, who would purchase their bodies, and thus be better enabled to ascertain the nature of that disease, and its effects upon the human frame, than they could possibly hope to do when, as at present, they were generally supplied with healthy subjects, that were only good for the purpose of teaching the younger pupils the common processes of dissection. He thought the House should state the law to be what he had mentioned; for now he believed it was generally considered that such a disposition of

the body by the executioner, although under the directions which the testator had given, was not authorised by law.

Mr. WARBURTON said, that in a short time he should move for a Committee to inquire into the subject which the petition had brought under the notice of the House. He had determined on doing so, in consequence of the particular request of some of the first surgeons in the metropolis. In a subsequent part of the evening, the Hon. Member fixed his notice of motion on this subject for Thursday next.

Mr. P. THOMPSON thought, that among the alterations of the criminal law, the House might introduce one which would materially assist in destroying the prejudice now commonly entertained against anatomical dissection. One of the concomitants of the severest penalty of the law was, in some cases, the handing over the body of the malefactor for dissection, and that circumstance tended to create a strong feeling of prejudice, which would probably cease to exist when that part of the law was altered. There was no such feeling in France, where bodies might be procured at ten francs each; in consequence of which there was no want of subjects for the schools, and the science of anatomy was taught under much greater advantages than in this country.

The petition was brought up, read, and ordered to be printed.

*Lancet.*

*On the period of the disease at which Measles begins to be infectious.*

Various opinions have been entertained regarding the period at

which smallpox, measles, and other exanthematic diseases begin to be capable of propagating themselves. It is unnecessary for our present purpose to particularise these opinions and the foundations on which they rest. It is enough to mention that many believe measles in particular not to be infectious till the eruption has broken out. The following observation lately made by Dr. Harnier of Pymont establishes satisfactorily the contrary. A London merchant set off from London for Pymont on the 30th of June 1825, along with his wife and three children, leaving behind, under the charge of a nurse, a fourth child, who had been attacked the day before apparently with catarrh. The party arrived at Pymont on the 8th of July, and had not been long there before they heard from London that the illness of the child left behind had turned out to be the measles, the eruption having appeared on the 1st July. Meanwhile one of the children at Pymont, the play-fellow of the one left behind, had been taken ill on the 9th with what appeared to be a common catarrh, and the rest of the family were not kept apart from it till the 11th. On the 12th the eruption of measles broke out. On the 24th and 25th of the same month the two other children, and three little girls belonging to the house where the family lodged, likewise fell sick, and in due course of time all of them had the eruption of measles. The five little patients had not seen the second child after the 11th, the day before the appearance of the eruption, and the three girls of the Pymont family had even been sent out of the house altogether. There was not a case of

measles at that time in Pymont, and in consequence of the strict seclusion of the different patients, the disease did not spread.

*Rust's Mag.*

*On the Treatment of Intermittent Fever by the application of Sulphate of Kina to the Skin.*

Doubts have been justly entertained whether the skin is capable of absorbing substances applied to it, unless the cuticle is previously abraded, or the substance is thrust through the cuticle by friction. It is agreed on all hands, however, that the surface of the true skin, stripped of its protecting cuticle, absorbs with rapidity; and our readers are probably aware that advantage has been lately taken of this physiological fact, in order to introduce into the system medicines which cannot be administered in sufficient quantity internally. M. Lesieur of Paris seems to have been the first who suggested the method now alluded to, and it has been since applied by himself and others to the administration of various active remedies. The paper of which a short analysis follows, is descriptive of the mode of treating intermittent fever by sulphate of kina administered in this way; and certainly the success and advantages held out by the author, M. de Martin, are very flattering. He states, that when the sulphate of kina is applied in a convenient form to a freshly blistered surface, it never, even when used in small quantities, fails to check the disease at once. In a state of purith it is ineligible, as it very soon irritates and inflames the surface of the true skin which is exposed to it, exciting livid redness, causing the formation of a gelatinous pseudo-mem-

brane, and even destroying here and there the vitality of the surface of the skin, so as to produce small superficial sloughs. But when it is mixed in a state of fine powder with cerate, no such effects are produced, and in a short time it all disappears. The advantages of introducing the remedy through this channel are, first, that it can be safely and efficaciously used, when, owing to irritation or congestion in the alimentary, it is either unsafe to administer it internally, or useless, on account of its being rapidly discharged by vomiting or purging; secondly, that a less dose acts with equal power; thirdly, that it acts more rapidly as the system is sooner brought under its influence; and lastly, that it can easily be administered to those who are averse to taking internal remedies, and more particularly to refractory children.—The circumstances connected with the action of kina through the skin, illustrate well its mode of operation. M. de Martin remarks, that it cannot act by effecting a revulsion, or as a counter-irritant, because local irritation is not only not necessary to success, but even also prejudicial; for he has invariably found that the remedy was least certain in its effects, and that the largest doses were required when inflammation was excited. This is easily explained on the principle that it acts through absorption; for the gelatinous effusion which is thrown out in the cases in which inflammation is caused, obstructs its access to the absorbing surface. In point of fact, a great part of the powder always disappears when inflammation is not produced. The following cases will serve as ex-

amples of the author's plan of treatment. *Case VI.* A stout man, 35 years of age, had been affected for three months with a quartan ague, which had been checked four times by various preparations of cinchona. In the fifth attack, M. de Martin found him at the commencement of the fit with a frequent, strong, hard pulse, intense heat, flushed countenance, frequent strong cough, mucous expectoration, short breathing, pain under the left nipple, and a dry, red tongue. On account of the pulmonic affection, sixteen ounces of blood were taken from the arm. The fit returned again three days afterwards. Next morning, a blister having been applied three days before, and the part continuing to present a fresh surface, six grains of sulphate of kina were mixed with the cerate with which it was dressed, and twenty-four hours afterwards the dressing was changed, and six grains more applied in the same manner. He had not any return of the fit, and from that time improved rapidly in general health. The blistered surface was not in the slightest degree irritated. *Case V.* A woman, 23 years of age, long liable to pulmonary catarrh, and affected for a year previous with wandering pains in the chest, oppression there, and dry cough, was attacked towards the end of November 1826, with quotidian ague, of which she was cured by the internal exhibition of sulphate of kina. Towards the close of December the disease returned, still in the quotidian form. During the fit the heat was intense, the pulse strong and frequent, the general oppression considerable, the breathing difficult, and interrupt-

ed by paroxysms of violent cough. She was bled to eight ounces during the second paroxysm. On the morning of the third day, four grains of the sulphate of kina, mixed with cerate, were applied to an old blistered surface. The paroxysm never returned. The dressing was renewed every twenty-four hours for four days. The cough and difficulty in breathing continued after the ague had long ceased. The blistered part became somewhat red at first, and a thin pseudo-membrane was formed; but the irritation, slight from the beginning, gradually diminished, and at length disappeared before the fourth dressing. *Case II.* This case exemplifies the kind of local inflammation which is caused by the remedy when not mingled with unctuous substances, as well as the effect of the inflammation in preventing its being absorbed. A soldier had suffered in the course of five months repeated attacks of tertian intermittent, and came under M. de Martin's care after the third paroxysm of a relapse. On the morning of the day on which he expected another, six grains of powdered sulphate of kina were sprinkled on a freshly blistered surface. The paroxysm appeared soon afterwards. Next morning the blistered surface had a deep red color, was covered with a gelatinous exudation, and likewise showed here and there little yellow spots, which consisted of particles of kina covering little depressions in the cutis vera. Six grains of sulphate of kina were again applied, however. But now the pain became so intense, and the surface so red, that it was necessary to remove the powder, and apply a poultice. On the

third morning the blistered part was covered with a thick, livid, moist eschar, having red edges, from which serum was discharged. The paroxysm reappeared this day, and again on the third, fifth, seventh, and ninth days afterwards. During this period the eschar became first black and dry, then round the edge soft and yellowish; and this softening extended inwards in the way usual with superficial eschars of the skin. After the sixth paroxysm the sulphate of kina was given internally, with the effect of checking the disease at once.

*Revue Medicale.*

BOSTON, TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 1828.

*Manual of Pathology; containing the Symptoms, Diagnosis, and morbid Character of Diseases: together with an Exposition of the different Methods of Examination, applicable to Affections of the Head, Chest, and Abdomen.* By L. MARTINET, D. M. P., &c. Translated, with Notes and Additions, by JONAS QUAIN, A. B., &c. Philadelphia, 1827.

This is an excellent work. It has been compiled from the best French writers, and the author's own opportunities of observing disease add greatly to its value. To the student, but especially to the young practitioner, this volume is particularly applicable. Mr. Martinet has descended to minute details under an excellent order, and shows how important it is not merely that the whole truth in disease should be known, but that it should be arrived at by such steps as will not fail to present it to the mind after the most useful manner. His methods proceed on the best

principles of diagnosis, that difficult but invaluable department of medicine, and the individual symptoms which distinguish diseases, the facts in cases, are here shown after a simple and very striking manner. It is to be regretted that the type in the American edition is so small. It is a manual, to be sure, and were it only for the pocket, this would be of less consequence; but it is also a work for study, which its present size and type will render to some readers no easy task.

#### BOSTON MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

Benjamin T. Prescott, M. D. and Charles T. Greene, M. D. have been admitted members of the Association, since March 29, 1828.

Attest, J. G. STEVENSON,  
Sec'y B. M. A.

#### WEEKLY REPORT OF DEATHS IN BOSTON,

Ending June 6, at noon.

May 30.	John B. Laurent,	55 yrs.
	Willard Martin,	5 mo.
	Edner Fling,	10 wks.
	James A. Harrod,	4 mo.
	Augusta B. Lincoln,	21 yrs.
June 1.	Sibyl Doolittle,	4
	Capt. Samuel Child,	49
	Elizabeth C. Miller,	20
	David Harris,	1 mo.
	Ellen Cole,	9
	Sarah Ann Prouty,	18 yrs.
	8. Edwards P. Fitzgerald,	5 wks.
	Owen McGarahan,	28 yrs.
	Mary Boyd,	64
	Emily Johnson,	3
	4. Nancy Johnson,	28
	Susan Henley,	44
5.	David Porter Hill,	5
	Helen M. Fracker,	1 1-2
6.	John Howe,	64
	Abby P. Allen,	10 mo.
	Sarah Walker,	4 yrs.

Brain fever, 1—consumption, 8—croup, 1—hooping-cough, 4—lung fever, 4—unknown, 3—stillborn, 3. Males, 10—females, 12. Total, 22.