

(d) Why the removal of the fibro-cellular neurilemma has been designated as "altogether unwarrantable," "unjustifiable," and "unprecedented," and yet has been surreptitiously taken away?—No answer.

(e) Why the principal nerves of the heart have been "completely divested of the fibrous and cellular tissue"—a mode of dissection so contrary to the preceding dissections?—To which Dr. Lee replies, "No part of the neurilemma was removed."

(f) Why the nerves of the heart have been made to appear enlarged towards the apex by allowing the fibro-cellular neurilemma to remain, whilst it has been completely removed from the nerves at the base of the heart?—No answer.

(g) Why "fifty ganglia" have been described and figured on the surface of the heart in "a luxuriance of number and size;" yet when the preparations were examined, "none of the fifty ganglia depicted could be discovered," and, I may add, cannot be shown to exist?—No answer, and the question evaded by referring to the drawings which were amended after the deception was exposed.

All of the questions, except one, are therefore adroitly evaded, and certain statements made which require a notice.

1. The neurilemma, Dr. Lee admits, is preserved entire in the dissections of the gravid uterus, and removed in great part, if not in whole, in the dissections of the virgin uterus. And the following singular assertion is made:—"The most important constituent tissue of the nervous structures of the uterus, the neurilemma." If this were correct it only renders Dr. Lee more culpable for removing this most important constituent tissue from the nerves of the virgin uterus and the nerves of the heart. The neurilemma, no doubt, is most important to the existence of Dr. Lee's supposed ganglia and nerves on the gravid uterus, for, remove it, and they are resolved into organic muscular tissue, cellular tissue, veins, arteries, &c. But the gratuitous assertion that cellular tissue is the most important constituent of nervous structures is a little too strong. As well might it be said that the bones of the skull are the most important constituent tissues of the brain. Such statements as these, however, abound in Dr. Lee's writings.

2. Dr. Lee says, "No part of the neurilemma was removed from the ganglia and nerves of the heart." This is in direct opposition to the statement of the referees: "The nerves were completely divested of the fibrous and cellular tissues." It is also contrary to the fact, as I know from careful examination of the dissections. It becomes then a question of veracity. I assert that the principal nerves in the dissections of the human hypertrophied heart, described and delineated in the "Philosophical Transactions" for 1849, Plate V., are completely divested of the fibrous and cellular tissues. Dr. Lee denies it. I challenge the production of the preparations in support of my statement. Dare Dr. Lee produce them, and allow them to be examined? We might then have an opportunity of finding out from what "mysterious cause" the fifty ganglia once described and depicted over its surface "were invisible." But one word more respecting these invisible ganglia, which were invisible to the artist at the time of making the drawings, and have remained invisible ever since. On the 15th of April, 1847, Dr. Lee presented to the Royal Society a paper "On the Ganglia and Nerves of the Heart," accompanied by three drawings, wherein "numerous ganglia and gangliform enlargements" were described and delineated on the human heart. But when the preparations which were referred to "as the basis of his communication" were examined, "none of the fifty ganglia depicted" could be discovered; and the preparations "contained no warrant for the statement that such structures exist on the situations ascribed to them." The fraud—for I know of no other term applicable—was discovered, the paper rejected, and impounded in the archives of the Royal Society; but the drawings were returned to Dr. Lee on his application to the Council, stating they were unfinished. Now, when Dr. Lee is asked to explain these circumstances, he says "these ganglia, from some mysterious cause, were invisible to the referees in 1847,"—some mysterious cause indeed!—and then endeavours to avoid the responsibility by saying, "for the accuracy of the drawings the artist has been held responsible." Indeed! Was the artist responsible for the descriptions in the paper, written in Dr. Lee's own handwriting? Nor will it serve his purpose adroitly to evade the question, and allude to the drawings after the "extravagant misrepresentations" have been removed, and which were then published in the *Philosophical Transactions*. It is the paper now reposing, as a monument of Dr. Lee's accuracy and truthfulness, in the archives of the Royal Society, and the drawings which agreed with it, to which the inquiries relate.

3. Dr. Lee states that "the removal of the neurilemma"

from my preparations "was carefully concealed till 1853;" "thus practising a gross deception upon the members of the whole profession throughout the world." Such, however, was not the fact; for Dr. Lee, as well as every one else who took an interest in the question, was aware in 1843, or two years before my paper was presented to the Royal Society, that the neurilemma was removed in all my dissections; but as I have no documentary evidence of that date to show, it is probable Dr. Lee will say he has forgotten it. Still there is abundant evidence to prove that it was fully discussed at the time the paper was published. On May 2nd, 1846, Dr. Lee, in giving a report of Dr. Knows' account of these dissections, writes—"the nervous structures appear to have been shredded and deprived of their sheath." (*Literary Gazette*.) On May 16th, 1846, Dr. Lee calls the removal of the sheath "Dr. Beck's peculiar method of conducting the dissection." (*Lit. Gazette*.) On August 15th, 1846, Dr. Knows states, "Dr. Beck and his friends attach much importance to the opening up the sheath of the nerves, separating their component fibrils, dissecting the ganglions so deeply as to remove as far as possible all that is not nervous matter. Now there is no objection to this as an object of closest inquiry; but in the first place, it is *far from novel*; and in the second, it is difficult to see where it is to end." (*Medical Times*.) On November 21st, 1846, Dr. Lee, referring to my dissections, writes—"By picking off the fibrous neurilemma of the hypogastric ganglion, which forms one of its most important constituents, like the sheath of an artery, it has been made to assume the appearance of a plexus..... the result of the unwarrantable mode in which this dissection was conducted." (*THE LANCET*.) And if I might refer to my own writings, on May 9th, 1846, I thus express myself: The removal of the sheath "has been especially insisted upon as necessary, before the true nervous system of an organ can be shown. Nay, I have farther insisted that it is by neglecting this obvious first principle that Dr. Lee has been led so far astray." (*Literary Gazette*.) Again, "These dissections being all made after the same method—i.e., by the removal of the fibro-cellular neurilemma." (*Medical Times and Gazette*.) Now, considering that this subject has been especially and continually agitated for the last ten years by Dr. Lee himself, I will leave it for others to decide whether it is probable that he could have so far forgotten his own writings, without considering the other quotations, as not to be aware that he was stating a thing totally contrary to fact when he says "this removal of the neurilemma was carefully concealed till 1853"?

4. Before taking, as I hope, a final farewell of this discussion, allow me to advert to one more point which has not yet been alluded to. It has been the custom of Dr. Lee to make the most gratuitous assertions throughout the whole of this discussion—now sixteen years. Some of these assertions occur in the reply under consideration. One has been already quoted,— "the neurilemma, the most important constituent tissue of the nervous structures of the uterus,"—which, indeed, would be a wonderful discovery were it but true. Next, "It can be clearly demonstrated that every artery distributed throughout the walls of the uterus and heart, and every muscular fasciculus of these organs, is supplied by nerves upon which ganglia are formed." Then why not demonstrate it? for this would be, in itself, a further great discovery. I need scarcely point out that these are some of the many assertions made by Dr. Lee without the slightest foundation in fact; that these microscopic ganglia, like the larger ganglia on the uterus and on the heart, are merely tissues of fancy, or—perhaps by "some mysterious cause"—become "invisible" when sought for by others. And whilst I cannot admit the transmutation of the round ligament into nerves; of the organic muscular tissue into ganglia and nerves; of cellular tissue into the most important constituent tissue of nervous structures; or any similar transformation to suit the fancy of the author,—still I have no fear the prophecy of Dr. Lee will be fulfilled,—that these fancies "if destroyed, the whole human race would perish."

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

Langham-place, August, 1856.

T. SNOW BECK.

(LETTER FROM DR. ROBERT LEE.)

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,— "Dr. Snow Beck has two specimens in the preparation of which he employed eight months, removing from day to day with forceps and needles (as he told me himself), not merely the cellular tissue, but the neurilemma even, so that he has left only the fasciculi of the nervous trunks. It seems to me that the work of this anatomist ought not to be appealed to

when the subject of the volume of the nerves of the uterus is agitated, for they only present the nerves deprived of one of their constituent parts, the *neurilemma*.*

On these two worthless specimens hang all the reputation of Dr. Beck as an anatomist, the Royal Medal in Physiology, and the F.R.S. Your readers at the present time will, doubtless, be anxious to obtain some information respecting these two specimens, in the preparation of which eight months were diligently spent in removing from day to day with forceps and needles, not merely the cellular membrane, but the *neurilemma*. It has not yet been ascertained who it was that proposed to Dr. Beck to remove the *neurilemma*, but it is suspected to have originated with Dr. Sharpey, who supplied a pint of weak alcohol to cure the gravid uterus of nine months in the first instance. It is not impossible that the idea first suggested itself to Dr. Beck himself, but of this nothing can be affirmed with certainty. During the eight months that the *neurilemma* was thus being removed, Mr. Kiernan, Mr. Owen, Dr. Sharpey, Mr. Bowman, and some other anatomists whose names have not been made public, were frequent visitors to witness the scientific operation, and expressed in the warmest terms their approbation of the thing when the removal of the *neurilemma* was completed. Mr. Joseph Swan, Mr. Lawrence, Sir B. Brodie, the late Mr. Dalrymple, and some other gentleman, were requested to examine the specimens, but nothing was said to them about the removal of the *neurilemma*, and some of them remained ignorant of what had been done for eight years.

On the 29th of May, 1845, a paper by Mr. Beck, "On the Nerves of the Uterus," was presented to the Royal Society by Sir B. Brodie, president and chairman of the Committee of Physiology.

On the 19th of June the title of this paper was read to the Society, but no part except the title.

On the 3rd of July the Committee of Physiology met, when the paper was referred to Dr. Sharpey and Dr. Todd, Sir B. Brodie being present on the occasion.

The next meeting of the Committee took place on the 27th of October, 1845, pursuant to a summons, which stated that the recommendation of a paper for the award of the Royal Medal in Physiology for 1845 was to be considered. It had been announced in every volume of the "Philosophical Transactions" published since the accession of her Majesty Queen Victoria to the throne that "the Royal Medals be given for such papers only as have been presented to the Royal Society, and inserted in their 'Transactions.'"

On the 27th of October, 1845, there were present at the meeting, Mr. Lawrence in the chair, Dr. Todd, Dr. Roget, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Kiernan, Dr. Sharpey, Mr. T. Bell, and Dr. Bostock.

After the Committee had transacted some business, Dr. Roget stated to the meeting that a mistake had been made in the summons, and that there was no Royal Medal in Physiology for 1845. Upon this announcement, Mr. Lawrence then put the question twice whether there was any further business, and being informed that there remained none, duly dissolved the meeting, and left Somerset House.

No sooner had Mr. Lawrence left than Mr. Bowman, of King's College, who had received the Royal Medal in Physiology for 1842, referred to the announcements in the "Philosophical Transactions," and pointed out, as actually stated in the summons, that a Royal Medal in Physiology did fall to be awarded in 1845. This discovery having been made by Mr. Bowman, who had been audibly discussing a few days before to whom the Medal should be given, all the members of the Committee, except Mr. Lawrence, again sat down, placed Dr. Todd in the chair, and, after carefully weighing the merits of fifteen papers, which had been read to the Society, and published in the "Transactions," resolved that the Royal Medal in Physiology should be recommended to be awarded to Mr. Beck for his paper "On the Nerves of the Uterus."

On the 30th of October the Council met, when the Marquis of Northampton, Dr. Roget, Dr. Sharpey, and Mr. Bowman, were present, and the recommendation of the Committee adopted, and the award made. The Council then resolved itself into a Committee of Papers to determine whether the paper was fit to be published.

On the 6th of November the Council and Committee of Physiology met, and the award was conferred. The same evening I saw the minutes, and took a copy of the resolution confirmed the next time. Some years after I saw the Journal Book of the Council, and the confirmed minute had been erased by some chemical process, and in the vacant space were the

words, in the handwriting of Dr. Roget, "Expunged by order of the Council.—P. M. R."

When this deed was perpetrated has not yet been discovered; and the Marquis is dead, and no person present will give any information respecting it. Mr. Weld must be able to tell how it occurred, and what chemical agent was employed on the occasion.

The Committee of Physiology again met on the 20th of November, when it was "Resolved, that Dr. Sharpey and Dr. Todd be requested to draw up a report on the claims of Mr. Beck's paper 'On the Nerves of the Uterus' to the award of the Royal Medal, and that Mr. Beck's paper be sent in succession to the several members of the Committee of Physiology resident in London."

On the 27th of November the Committee again met, when the report of Dr. Sharpey and Dr. Todd recommended the paper as highly deserving of the medal, but it did not contain the most remote allusion to the fact that the *neurilemma* had been removed intentionally; and Dr. Todd has recently informed me that at the time he made or signed this report, the fact of the mutilation of the structures by the removal of the *neurilemma* had not been communicated to him, and he did not know it. Mr. Kiernan moved that the report should be adopted; and Mr. Owen, in seconding the motion, said that all Europe was anxiously waiting for the publication of Mr. Beck's discoveries. Mr. Owen said nothing about the removal of the *neurilemma*.

On the 1st of December, 1845, the Committee met to award the medal a second time, although its legal existence had terminated the day before. How many present were aware that a confirmed resolution had been erased from the Journal-book at the council is not known; but the Marquis of Northampton, Dr. Roget, Dr. Sharpey, and Mr. Bowman, must all have known the fact at the time when the medal was about to be given away, and the laws of Her Majesty Queen Victoria violated.

A few minutes after the award had been made a second time by the Council, the President, followed by the members of the Council who attended this unlawful meeting, left the Library, and came into the meeting-room where a large body of the Fellows were assembled on the anniversary day of the Society. By some agency never explained, Mr. Beck made his appearance, prepared to receive the medal long before it had been awarded. Her Majesty's approval not having been obtained, no medal was forthcoming; but its place was speedily supplied by a piece of waste paper being folded up, and this appropriate effigy of the Royal Medal in Physiology for 1845, after a written address had been read, was presented to the recipient by the President.

"The purpose for which the Royal Society was established," said the Marquis of Northampton, devoutly, after sanctioning a felonious act, "was indeed the improvement of natural knowledge for its own sake; but we can never forget that the privilege of acquiring that knowledge entails the duty of employing it to the utmost of our power, not only to the glory of Him who has given us our reasoning powers, but also to the service, as far as may be, of those who are His creatures." I will leave your readers to judge how far the glory of God was promoted by the clandestine mutilation of His works; the erasure of a confirmed minute from the Journal-book of the Council and its concealment for years; and the violation of the statutes of the Royal Society and the laws of the Queen.

The paper appeared in 1846, but it did not contain one word by which it could have been dreamed that the nervous structures of the uterus had been mutilated, wilfully and furtively.

am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Savile-row, August 4th, 1856.

R. LEE.

THE

DOUBLE SELF-ADJUSTING STETHOSCOPE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—With reference to a letter of Dr. Leared in your last impression, it is due to him to state that, when I published an account of Dr. Camman's double self-adjusting stethoscope in your columns on April 12th, 1856, I was not aware that he had exhibited a double instrument at the Great Exhibition in 1851. Had I been so, I should certainly not have used the expression "more lately," as applied to his invention, compared with that of Dr. Marsh, of Cincinnati, in 1851. The publication and exhibition of a *Stethoscope with two tubes* in this country, is undoubtedly due to Dr. Leared; and it is cer-

* Note upon the Nerves of the Uterus, by Dr. L. Hirschfeld.