

maintains that it acts specifically as an arterial sedative, without depressing the vital powers. This statement I must distinctly contradict; and on the other hand maintain, that it is by depressing the vital powers, and that in the most marked and painful manner, that influence on the circulation is obtained. That a drug so potent in inflicting pain, and so inert till extreme nausea is induced, should ever find a place in British medicine as an arterial sedative, is exceedingly improbable. The drug may have virtues we know not of; but this, after many careful experiments, we do know, it has no arterial sedative quality. And while we have such a sedative as aconite to rely on, it will be most strange if, even for a time, practitioners should be so unwise as to neglect it on the bare assertion that there is a better."—*Ed. Med. Journ.*, Jan. 1864.

6. *Tinctura Boleti Laricis Canadensis*.—This is a new remedy highly recommended by Dr. Grant as a remedy for rheumatism. Dr. JAMES WATSON states (*Ed. Med. Journ.*, January, 1864), that he has used it in one case of rheumatic fever, without any effect.

7. *Sarracenia Purpurea*.—Dr. JAMES WATSON has experimented in eight cases of smallpox, in the Royal Infirmary, with this newly vaunted Canadian remedy for smallpox, and found it absolutely inert.—*Ed. Med. Journ.*, Jan. 1864.

8. *Turpentine as a Styptic*.—Dr. WILKS believes that turpentine does not hold the place among styptics which its merits deserve. He has long been in the habit of giving it, and often found it arrest hæmoptysis when other ordinary remedies had failed; he has also seen it very beneficial in one or two cases of purpura hemorrhagica.

9. *Physiological Properties of Nitrite of Amyle*.—Dr. B. W. RICHARDSON read a paper on this subject before Sub-section D, of the British Association. He first described the mode of manufacture and the chemical properties of the nitrite, and then passed on to the physiological action. The first remarkable fact was that the nitrite when inhaled produced an immediate action on the heart, increasing the action of the organ more powerfully than any other known agent. As the action of the heart rises, the surface of the skin becomes red, and the face assumes a bright crimson colour. A little of the nitrite was here placed on a piece of bibulous paper, and passed round to show the effect on the face, and the effect was most remarkable, causing the faces of the persons who smelt the vapour to become instantaneously flushed. Carried to an excessive degree, the nitrite excites the breathing, and produces a breathlessness like that caused by sharp running or rowing. On animals, when the agent is given in large quantities, death is produced. The author at first thought that the nitrite, like chloroform, would cause anesthesia; but experiments had shown that this view was not borne out. Animals would, it is true, lose consciousness; but when such a stage was reached, great dangers resulted, owing to the slowness by which the poison was removed from the body after its absorption. On the blood the nitrite produces darkness of colour, but it does not materially interfere with coagulation in the body. In the lungs it excites congestion, and in the brain slight congestion. It causes no severe spasm and no sickness. After entering into certain other details, Dr. Richardson proceeded to say that the most remarkable effect produced by the nitrite was that in the lower animals—frogs, for instance—it led to suspended animation, which could be maintained for so long as nine days with perfect after-recovery. This fact was of curious historical interest. The ancients, especially Theophrastus (Paracelsus), had stated that there was a poison which, when taken one day would not take effect until some future day. This statement, long considered as a myth, had within the present year been shown to be true by Dr. Letheby, who had discovered a poison which really produced this phenomenon. In like manner the ancients had an idea that there were medicines which would for a time suspend life. The proceeding of Friar Lawrence in giving the distilled liquor to Juliet, was based on this old fiction, or shall we not say fact? The next point discussed