

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE HEALTH OF TOWNS' ASSOCIATION.

SIR,—You will extremely oblige an occasional contributor to your valuable journal, and perhaps render benefit to a good cause, by giving insertion to the following communication.

I have just received papers which are being generally distributed amongst the profession, and emanate from a body denominated the Health of Towns' Association.

There cannot be a question regarding the utility of such an institution when in able hands; but I must confess that, on reviewing the names of the parties to whom our labours are to be entrusted, they appear by no means such as I should feel inclined to support. In my opinion, the object of such an institution is to be obtained through those medical practitioners who are attached to public charities, and are in daily contact with a very large number of cases. Of these there are, in London especially, very many, the greater part of whom have laboured, by the careful examination of disease, to contribute towards the progress and advancement of medical knowledge. My proposal, then, is, that the Physicians of the large public charities and others having the superintendence of public bodies, shall form an institution of this kind. If the heads of the profession will come forward, I, and I am sure all others who must be interested in the cause, will readily join, and do our utmost to support it.—I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

A LEGALLY QUALIFIED SENIOR PHYSICIAN  
TO A LARGE PUBLIC CHARITY.

\* \* \* The writer of this letter makes a rather severe attack on the constitution of the medical portion of the committee of the Health of Towns' Association, complaining that some of the members are even "unlicensed practitioners." In a list of the committee now before us, we find the names of only six medical men, all of them well known, and to whom the designation used by our correspondent cannot possibly apply. For this reason, that portion of our correspondent's letter in which this charge is contained could not be inserted. At the same time, it appears to us that for a Health of Towns' Association a committee composed of fifty-nine persons, among whom there are only six medical practitioners, is but little fitted to fulfil the objects proposed by its appointment; and it is not a little remarkable that, instead of the Presidents of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, and the Master of the Apothecaries' Society, we find in the list representatives and active supporters of homœopathy, mesmerism, and hydropathy! Lord Robert Grosvenor is President of the English *Homœopathic*

Association, Lord Morpeth is a patron of the *Mesmeric* Infirmary, and Sir E. L. Bulwer is the great advocate of the "*Wet sheet,—the true life-preserver!*" We are at a loss to know how this strange combination of advocates of the three great quackeries of the day, can assist in carrying out the objects mentioned in the subjoined paragraph.

"The objects of this Association are to agitate before the public the great question of sanitary reform; to show the fearful amount of mortality and pauperism which result from the absence of *medical* supervision in our large towns; to diffuse information on the *subject of preventive medicine*; and to familiarize the public with those *authentic observations of science* on which every sanitary law must be based."

MODE OF EMPLOYING ETHER VAPOUR IN SURGICAL OPERATIONS.

SIR,—Having now administered the vapour of ether for the purpose of rendering surgical operations painless in a great number of cases at our metropolitan hospitals, and at my own private residence, with perfect success, by means of an apparatus invented by myself and Dr. Boott, and now manufactured by Mr. Hooper, of Pall Mall, permit me, if not encroaching too much on your valuable columns, briefly to state the appearance of the patient when under the influence of the vapour that indicates the proper time for the operation to commence.

As my own operations on the teeth have now become various and satisfactory to those medical men who daily witness them, I will not occupy the time of your readers by entering into details.—I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES ROBINSON.

7, Gower Street, Bedford Square,  
Jan. 16, 1847.

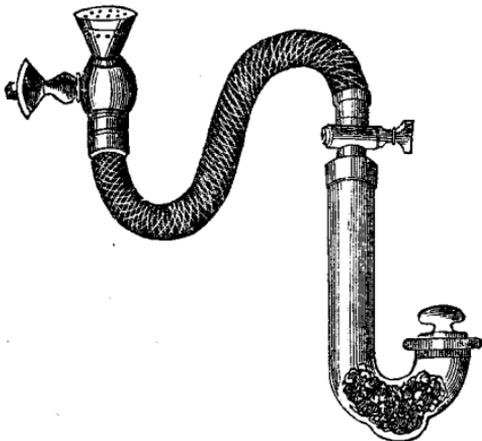
At the commencement of the inhalation, always allow the patient to inhale the vapour three or four times without closing the nose; the nose being closed, observe carefully the appearance of the eye, the pupils of which will be found in most cases, after about a minute's inhalation, to be considerably dilated; after eight or ten more inhalations, the pupil will remain stationary and fixed for a period varying from two to three seconds; it will then turn towards the upper eyelid; this motion will be repeated several times. If the vapour be continued, the pupil will be observed to turn under the eyelid, and remain *fixed*; three or four inhalations more, and the operator can commence.

In operations which are protracted, and require any length of time, cut off the vapour by means of the stop-cock attached to the apparatus; permit the patient to breathe

the atmosphere through his nose five or six times; again let on the vapour—breathing alternately atmospheric air and the vapour of ether, at intervals of half a minute, until within two or three minutes of the completion of the operation, when the pipe, &c. can be removed with perfect safety as to the result.

APPARATUS FOR THE RESPIRATION OF  
ETHER VAPOUR.

SIR,—I have used the vapour of ether in seventy cases for procuring insensibility to pain during the extraction of teeth, with the various apparatus recommended for that purpose, and kindly supplied by Mr. Ferguson, Instrument-maker to the Hospital. I can bear testimony to their general efficiency in all cases where the vapour has been properly inhaled. As my experience increased, I could not but observe the inconvenient size and costliness of the various apparatus, coupled with the expense of preparing them for use; and, as economy and convenience must be considered in that which will become general, my thoughts were directed, like those of many others, to the production of an apparatus which would at once combine simplicity with utility; and, as Hookahs have been chosen as the fashionable shapes, so mine bears some resemblance to a German pipe. I have sketched it below. The pipe is of glass, and mounted at the top with a brass cap and stop-cock, into which an elastic tube is screwed of 16 inches in length, which is surmounted by a double-valved mouth-piece of the description in ordinary use, a steel compress, padded, being used for securing the nostrils. It has been hinted to me that a valve made of some fine tissue, and secured to the top of the mouth-cap, would be an improvement on the compress in general use, as many patients dislike their noses being secured by such an instrument.



As much ether may be poured into the pipe as will fill the well and saturate the sponges. The mouth-piece should be placed between the patient's teeth, the stopper should be removed, and the stop-cock turned on, when the patient should be directed to inhale in a natural way. The operator will derive a great advantage in the use of this apparatus, as he will perceive the rising of the fluid in the tube as the air passes in at each inhalation,—a means which will greatly aid his judgment as to the probable effect of the vapour on the patient's system. I have performed more than 20 operations with this apparatus, making in the whole above 90 cases, and I can with safety affirm that this has answered better than any other I have used.

It was again tried in an operation (likely, from its character, to be a protracted one) performed here by Mr. Skey on Saturday, the 16th. A boy, aged 10 years, met with an accident five weeks since, by which he ruptured his urethra: it was followed by an abscess and almost entire closure of the canal. Mr. Skey, after some difficulty, succeeded in perfecting the communication of the separated portions of the tube. The operation occupied 25 minutes, during the whole of which time the patient was insensible to pain. I need scarcely observe that he inhaled the vapour at intervals during the whole time, and, before being taken out of the theatre, exclaimed, to the question—"Have you suffered pain?"—"No; he put something into my mouth, which sent me to sleep." I may here add that the patient is doing well.—I remain, sir,

Your obedient servant,

S. J. TRACY.

St. Bartholomew's Hospital,  
Jan. 18, 1847.

N.B.—The apparatus described was manufactured by Mr. D. Ferguson, Instrument-maker to St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

### Medical Intelligence.

#### ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL.

MR. VINCENT has resigned the office of Surgeon to St. Bartholomew's Hospital. Mr. Paget, Mr. M'Whinnie, and Mr. W. Pennington, have already announced themselves as candidates for the office of Assistant-Surgeon.

#### ETHER VAPOUR APPARATUS.

THE invention of an ingenious apparatus, which has been employed at all the metropolitan hospitals, for the respiration of ether, is generally, and we believe with propriety, ascribed to Mr. Robinson, of Gower Street.

It is so constructed that the air expired by the patient cannot be returned into the vessel, but escapes by a valvular opening. The English agent for the patentees of the process, finding that probably he cannot legally prevent the respiration of the vapour of ether, now lays claim to this apparatus, which he calls the "*Patent Lethæonic Apparatus*," — the ancient mythological river Lethe being drawn in to supply a mystical name! He has issued a prohibition against its manufacture or use. This question regarding the means of inhaling the "Lethæ" vapour is therefore likely to come before a Court of Law; and we trust the inquiry may end in proving that the patentees have as little right to the apparatus as they have to the vapour.

Although we think nothing can justify the patenting of this process, we understand that Dr. Jackson, the inventor, was compelled, in self-defence, to take out a patent, as Dr. Morton, to whom he had communicated his secret, had threatened to anticipate him.

#### SURGICAL OPERATIONS WITH THE VAPOUR OF ETHER AT ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL.

THERE was a large concourse of spectators at St. George's Hospital on the 14th inst. to witness the administration of sulphuric ether to some persons who were to be subjected to surgical operations. The first patient who was placed upon the table appeared to be a weakly lad of 19 or 20 years of age, labouring under disease of the great toe. He was under the care of Mr. Cæsar Hawkins, who was prepared to remove the part, if the boy could be reduced to a state of insensibility. All attempts, however, to induce him to inhale the ether were fruitless. What with fright, and what with coughing, he always stopped before a sufficient effect could be obtained. He was removed, without any surgical operation being had recourse to. The second person who was brought in was a robust young man, a patient of Mr. Cutler's, with a diseased finger. He set about the inhalation *con amore*, and carried it on, with some persuasion and an occasional struggle to abandon it, for ten minutes at the least. He appeared to suffer a good deal from it, turning very red, or rather purple, in the face, and resisting at times somewhat violently. The effect on the bystanders was anything but favourable, several declaring that the ether was as bad as the operation, or worse. At last, the seeming insensibility and concurrent circumstances warranting a resort to the knife, Mr. Cutler proceeded to remove the finger. The patient was at once restored to his senses, and shouted so loudly, and snatched his hand from the operator so vigorously, as to leave no doubt that he suffered pain as acutely as if no steps had

been taken to deaden it. This case, then, was a total failure\*. The third and last patient was a young man of powerful frame, who laboured under disease of the ankle-joint. He was a patient of Mr. Henry James Johnson, who exhorted him earnestly to inspire the ether until he felt its full effect. The poor fellow followed the advice implicitly; and, in three or four minutes, insensibility having taken place, Mr. Johnson at once performed amputation below the knee. The operation was executed with such rapidity that in less than a minute the limb was off. The patient regained his senses while the saw was being applied to the bones, when he remarked that he felt the instrument. During the cutting of the skin and muscles he did not evince the slightest consciousness of pain, and altogether the case was very satisfactory.—*Times*.

#### PAINLESS OPERATIONS AT THE LONDON HOSPITAL.

ON the same day, an Irishman was brought into the London Hospital with a compound fracture and dislocation of the tarsal bones of the foot. The man, after considerable reluctance, at last consented to amputation of the leg, provided the pain was in some way diminished. The vapour of ether was had recourse to, and applied in the presence of Dr. Pereira, and a numerous assembly of medical gentlemen. In five minutes the inhalation proved successful, and in less than another the leg was amputated by Mr. Adams, the patient during the time giving sly winks and facetious nods to those surrounding him. During the intervals of the inhalation his observations were of the most facetious character, forcing from the bystanders involuntary laughter, and converting that which was to the poor fellow a most tragic event into a scene little short of a farce. Upon removing the ether he called out, "Hold hard there a bit, let's have another go at the grog," which he drew in with the greatest avidity. Not for one moment during the operation did he exhibit the slightest symptoms of pain, but, on the contrary, his countenance was expressive of the greatest hilarity; and at the conclusion of the operation, after the effects of the ether had passed off, he could scarcely believe that his leg had been so painlessly removed. His ideas whilst under the influence of the vapour were similar to those of a person enjoying a pleasant dream.—*Times*.

#### CAUSE OF DEATH IN NEW-BORN CHILDREN.

DR. KING, of Sackville Street, has just submitted to the Medico-Chirurgical So-

\* The ether employed should be washed ether, rectified by distillation. The presence of alcohol which is contained in common ether may materially affect its properties.

England and Wales shall henceforth (reserving the rights of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge) be required to submit their pretensions to the Censor's Board (to which the College deutes the Examination of those whom it Licenses), in order that their competency may be properly tested, and that they may be enrolled as Members of the College.

By another Clause in the new Charter, power was given to the College, in certain specified cases, to expel unworthy Members. As circumstances sometimes arise requiring the exercise of such a power, the College believes that it would be expedient that it should possess it. A similar power has recently been given by Charter to the College of Surgeons.

It was also provided by the new Charter, that persons who having exceeded the age of forty years, and, having been duly examined by the College, are found competent to practise as Physicians, shall be entitled to use the designation of Doctor of Medicine, although not Graduates of any University. Whereas, for all Candidates who present themselves for the License under the age of forty, it is made an indispensable requisite that they should have obtained the Degree of Doctor of Medicine in some recognised University, before they can be admitted to examination by the College.

The reason of this distinction is, that in a practical profession, like that of Medicine, it is always right that those who, by superior talents and industry, have raised themselves in public estimation, should have the power of rising from a lower even to the highest rank in the Profession. It seems reasonable that the College, to which such persons must apply for legal authority to practise as Physicians, should be empowered to confer the title, which through common usage is necessary to render the License intelligible by the Public and useful therefore to the possessor of it. In this way a want which is occasionally felt in the Profession might be supplied, without detriment to the Universities, and without material infringement of the rule, which ought to be upheld, that those who intend to be Physicians, should resort to the Universities for preliminary and general Education.

Such being the objects and principal enactments of the new Charter which has been prepared for the College, the salutary changes which it would effect are calculated, in the opinion of the College, to render it an Institution more generally acceptable to the Physicians of this Country, and more useful to the Profession and the Public.

Therefore, the College respectfully but earnestly requests the assistance of Government, in order that a short Act of Parliament may be passed, enabling the Crown to grant this Charter, on the Petition of the

College, and in order that the Crown may be advised to grant it.

FRANCIS HAWKINS, M.D. Registrar.

REPORT OF A COMMITTEE ON THE SUBJECT OF INHALING THE VAPOUR OF SULPHURIC ETHER TO PREPARE PATIENTS FOR SURGICAL OPERATIONS.

FROM the great interest attached to this subject, and the probability that ether vapour will be extensively employed throughout Great Britain for the purpose of rendering operations painless, we here reprint at length an interesting report drawn up by a number of practitioners at Boston U.S.

At a meeting of Dentists of this city, held at the house of J. F. Flagg, Dec. 4th, when this matter was fully discussed, a committee was appointed to report at an adjourned meeting some expression of opinion, which they could lay before the public concerning the adoption of the abovementioned agent in Dental practice. At a second meeting on the 7th, at the house of Dr. Dana, the committee made a partial report, the subject of which was freely discussed for several hours, and the meeting adjourned to meet on the 10th. The meeting assembled according to adjournment. The committee made the following report, which was unanimously accepted, and a resolution passed to publish the same with the signatures of all present.

We, the undersigned, Surgeon-Dentists, of the city of Boston, members of the Massachusetts Medical Society, have heard, with much interest, within the last few weeks, of the extraordinary results of a discovery, which promises to be of important service in diminishing the amount of human suffering usually endured in severe surgical operations. From all which we have heard, seen, and proved by experiment concerning it, we are led to hail it as a messenger of glad tidings to many of our diseased and suffering fellow beings. We refer to the discovery that, the vapour of sulphuric ether inhaled into the lungs for a few minutes only, will in a majority of cases produce such a degree of inebriation or stupor as will allow great violence to be done to the body, without there being any or but slight consciousness of pain at the time, or recollection of it after the restoration of the senses.

We have diligently sought for the facts in relation to the authorship of this discovery, and, from the direct information, which we have been able to obtain, we are satisfied that society is indebted for it, be it more or less valuable, *solely* to our very worthy fellow citizen and professional brother, Dr. C. T. Jackson. By the superior talents, deep learning, and indefatigable industry and research of this gentleman, important public

interests, not only of our city, but of our State and of our country, have been advanced.

If the advantages, which this discovery now promises, should be but in part realized, (for we see and know that it is not about to do all the good which ardent minds anticipate as we shall presently show), it will still be, beyond doubt, a blessing to mankind, and we shall feel that he has given to the world a boon, which, ethereal though it be, will outweigh all the treasures he has brought to light from the deep and teeming bowels of the earth. And the blessed result of that single thought, which has applied his discovery to the practice of operative surgery, will be remembered with gratitude by tens of thousands, when all his achievements in the mine and the laboratory shall be in a measure forgotten and lost in the voluminous records of similar labours.

But we have not tested the effects of the inhalation of ether sufficiently to pass an unqualified decision in favour of its use; for although it promises great and most happy results, it is not without deleterious effects. Although we have been desirous to use it, and have been determined to do so, as we should become satisfied of its utility, still we know the power of the agent, and we know that in many instances its operation would be uncontrollable. We have not felt warranted in using it without great caution in regard to the age, temperament, health, and habits of our patients.

A fair trial of it has hardly been commenced. There have been some half dozen experiments with it at the Massachusetts General Hospital; perhaps as many more in the private practice of the Surgeons of that Institution. Some of these we have seen, and also some of the cases which have occurred at Mr. Morton's room, where some of us have attended by invitation, and at the request of our friends, who wished to be subjects of the experiment at his hands.

From these sources, and from some patients whom we have visited since they have left his operating room, we have made up the following opinion, and present the following unfavourable cases. Several favourable ones are widely spread before the public, and we are satisfied of their correctness.

The symptoms manifested by the presence of this agent are striking, remarkable, sometimes alarming. Inhaling its fumes but a few minutes, induces, in some persons, agitation of the system, violent coughing, determination of blood to the brain and the eyes, dilatation of the pupils and distortion of the features; followed by general prostration, laborious breathing, anxiety, sighing, groaning, fright and delirium.

It must, therefore, be apparent that the drug in question is possessed of energies

peculiarly *potent*, and for this reason it cannot be doubted that its administration in certain conditions or constitutions, especially where there is a predisposition to apoplexy, to morbid vascular derangement, to sudden impressions or congestion of the sensorium, to diseases of the heart and to all pulmonary or bronchial affections, must, consequently, be in some degree prejudicial to the health and safety of the patient.

In relation, therefore, to its practical utility in our particular branch of surgery, we are inclined to the opinion, that when its operations shall be more thoroughly tested, it may not so entirely meet the public favour as now anticipated by a large majority of those who have only heard reports of its favourable results.

We feel, therefore, that this whole matter, be it of greater or less value in surgical practice, should be in the hands of those only who are in some good degree physiologists and pathologists—of those who have testimonials from some one of our medical colleges, that they are worthy of being trusted with the health and life of their fellow citizens.

A few brief cases will serve to show that we are not unduly cautious in our admonitory remarks.

A young lady, a patient of one of the subscribers, was accompanied by him to Mr. Morton's, as she wished to have the operation performed under the influence of the sulphuric ether.

Before the inhalation, being much excited, her pulse rose to 130. After the inhalation pulse 70, eyes injected, (blood shot) respiration stentorous, slight frothing at the mouth, general appearance like one going into a state of epilepsy. Several minutes elapsed before restoration to natural state, for some time much confused. Several hours after the operation, she said: I felt when the tooth was coming out as if I was having a horrid dream. [She gave a scream during the operation.]

Before the lady was operated upon, a young man submitted to the operation. He appeared to have much suffering, throwing his body almost from his chair, pulse rose to 150 while inhaling, action of the temporal artery very strong. Eyes injected, more than in case of lady, respiration laborious. Every indication of great cerebral excitement.

Miss A. D., aged twenty, slender constitution, nervous temperament, went to Mr. Morton's rooms on Monday, December 7th, took the ether, and had a tooth extracted. She lost consciousness in three or four minutes after inhaling, felt no pain; but when senses returned, felt aching of head and dizziness for a few minutes, and a trembling of the whole frame.

Her friend, Miss J. R., near the same

age, inhaled the ether and had a tooth extracted at same time. She became very much excited, and talked strangely; felt but little pain from the operation. They both left Mr. Morton's rooms together at about 12 o'clock, went to a shop, and while there Miss J. R. was seized with delirium, and was carried home in this state. She remained so, except at short intervals, for three days,—friends afraid to leave her. She complained of sickness and distress of stomach.

Miss A. D. became delirious about an hour after they got home. This lasted all night. On Tuesday morning she raised blood from the lungs, it was supposed about a pint; bleeding soon ceased, but she was ill and much dejected on Wednesday evening.

We have authentic accounts of other similar cases, more or less grave in their character, but the above are sufficient. Names are withheld, at the request of the individuals.

We have not felt authorized to suppress these details, while our object has been to present the truth. Yet we would state distinctly, that we do not know of any permanently serious effects of the ethereal vapour, which ought to prevent its use in severe surgical cases, where the operators shall deem it advisable to apply it.

In order then to have this important matter fairly investigated, and brought before the medical world and the public as it deserves to be, we would propose that, as is done in similar cases by the learned societies in Europe, the whole subject should be entrusted to a competent committee appointed by the Massachusetts Medical Society, or if it can be done more conveniently and expeditiously, by the Boston Association of Physicians and Surgeons, who shall collect information from all sources which can be relied upon, and after they shall have made a full and scientific investigation of the matter, report at such times, and in such a manner, as they shall deem proper.

But there is a dark side to this subject which we would gladly have been spared from presenting, and which, if allowed to remain, will throw a shade over all the truths which are yet to be learned concerning it. This discovery is one of interest to the whole civilized world. It may be applicable to the wants of millions of sufferers, and should be a free offering to those who can be relieved by it.

Yet how is this thing as it now stands before the public? It has, to be sure, been introduced, in a manner which we do not clearly understand, to the free use of the surgeons of the Massachusetts General Hospital, for the benefit of that institution; but from all else, an attempt is made to shroud it by secrecy—by the mottled mantle of "ethereal compound" and "anodyne vapour," and to exclude it by what we believe,

from abundant legal authority, to be an unwarrantable and invalid patent. All this aim at exclusiveness we deprecate as unworthy of all regular and honourable physicians, surgeons and dentists; and we will not in any way give countenance to efforts for depriving the unfortunate and suffering portion of our fellow beings, from the full and free advantage of that which appears to us to be their inherent right.

Though it might have been a pecuniary benefit to each and all of us to have complied with the exorbitant and otherwise unreasonable demands, which we are informed have been made for the right to use the vapour of ether by the "proprietor" of the said patent, we heartily protest against holding the right to use it on such tenure, or as a secret medicine. And we have good reason for saying that we believe, relying on the well known character of Dr. Jackson, that from whatever cause his name has appeared in the specification for a patent, it could not have been in conformity with his own original design, nor in accordance with his own noble and generous feelings as always heretofore manifested, to keep the discovery a secret, or exclude it from free and general use.

But, the question is asked, should there not be secured to the discoverer some reward or compensation? We answer yes; and if our hope shall be in any considerable degree realized in the benefit of the discovery to mankind, the consciousness of having made it will be reward enough for any true philanthropic spirit; and if a more substantial recompense shall be due, there is a high, honourable, and generous way for the public to do it, that will be of more value than all the patents in the world.

In the case before us, is there any new invention, or manufacture of instrument or apparatus by which the ether is administered? No; for we have seen an attested copy of the specification furnished from the Patent Office at Washington. The apparatus used by Mr. Morton, (and now, as we learn, by many others who dare to use the long known manufactured article—pure sulphuric ether,) as contrived and manufactured by an ingenious philosophical instrument maker, Mr. N. B. Chamberlain, in School street, and we have his certificate to this effect.

We now close by saying, that we have presented this subject in the manner above expressed, in reply to the numerous questions and demands of our fellow citizens who desire to know what they have a right to know about it; and we have endeavoured to discharge the duty which our position requires, by assuming them. If we have succeeded in this attempt to advance the cause of science and truth, we shall be content.

(Signed) J. F. Flagg; Joshua Tucker; Thos.

Gray, jun.; D. M. Parker; E. G. Tucker; Francis Dana; A. L. Waymouth, W. W. Codman; E. G. Kelley; C. F. Barnard; C. Eastham; J. Clough.

### Selections from Journals.

#### PATHOLOGY.

SARCOMATOUS ENLARGEMENT OF THE SCROTUM REMOVED BY OPERATION. BY DR. M'CUCCLOCH, OF MONTREAL.

LOUIS BENOIT, æt. 60, a strong, healthy French Canadian farmer, consulted me in the summer of 1840, for a very large tumor of the scrotum, which had existed for three or four years, and was of late increasing so rapidly, that he stated it had doubled its size within the last six months. The tumor extended to within a few inches of his knees; it was somewhat irregular upon its surface, but without any discoloration of the integuments; it obliged the patient, from its weight and bulk, to stoop forward when walking, and to keep his thighs widely separated. The parts of generation were completely buried in the morbid growth, no trace of the penis or testes being visible, and the urine escaped from an opening (resembling the umbilicus) in the superior and anterior part of the tumor. As the great magnitude of the tumor precluded any prospect of a cure by absorption, and the freedom from pain, and from discoloration of the investing integument, indicated the absence of malignant degeneration, the patient's general health also being exceedingly good, the operation of excision was proposed and executed (with the assistance of my friend Dr. G. W. Campbell), in the following manner. It being of great importance to endeavour to preserve the sexual organs, imbedded in the tumor, a straight sound, after frequent unsuccessful attempts, was at length introduced into the urethra, to serve as a guide in the subsequent dissection. An incision was then made on either side of the sound, toward the pubis, at the distance necessary to preserve a sufficiency of integument to cover the penis; these incisions were carried round the root of the tumor, and connected together upon its posterior part, leaving lateral flaps to afford a covering for the testes. The penis was in the first place dissected out of its bed in the tumor; the testicles were then looked for, and the situation of each being discovered by following the cord, it was carefully isolated, and committed to an assistant. The dissection was then rapidly continued until the morbid mass was completely detached. About two pounds of blood were lost during the operation, and eleven or twelve arteries required ligature. The generative organs were enveloped in the integuments preserved for that purpose,

which were maintained in apposition by a number of interrupted sutures. The patient, although extremely exhausted during the operation, rallied very speedily; the wound closed nearly throughout its whole extent by primary union, and at the end of three weeks was completely cicatrized. The tumor weighed upwards of nine pounds avoirdupois, and appeared to consist principally of hypertrophied and condensed cellular substance. Two years have now elapsed since the operation was performed; my patient has continued in good health, and his young spouse (by a second marriage) has cheered his old age by presenting him with more than one living proof of his still possessing unimpaired all the functions of the generative organs.—*Dublin Med. Press.*

#### THERAPEUTICS.

MODUS OPERANDI OF NITRE, TARTAR EMETIC, AND OTHER REMEDIES, IN THORACIC INFLAMMATION. BY DR. ZIMMERMANN.

If the congestion of the lungs is not recent— if effusion have taken place with morbid changes in the blood, in the capillaries, and the organs themselves—bleeding is of secondary value, and other remedies must be adopted. Nitre and tartar emetic are the most generally and successfully adopted in Germany. The results of experiments show that the action of nitre on blood out of the body is to prevent its coagulation, to diminish the tendency of the blood-vesicles to unite, and to contract the membrane of the latter. Its chemical relations to fibrine as a solvent have been established. When taken into the stomach, it is absorbed into the circulation, and excites both the capillaries and blood-vesicles to contract. It hinders the tendency of the fibrine to coagulate, and by rendering the effused plasma more soluble promotes its absorption. It also renders the absorption of oxygen into the blood more active, and so facilitates the decomposition of the "pseudo-plasma," and its excretion by the kidneys and skin, in the form of urate of ammonia, &c. Dr. Zimmermann instituted an experimental inquiry into the comportment of tartar emetic towards the blood when out of the body, and found that two grains added to one thousand of blood rendered the coagulation imperfect; and six grains caused the blood of a patient having the buffy coat to coagulate into a jelly-like mass, without any buff: unlike nitre, it rendered the fibrine less disposed to decompose, and seemed to form with it rather an insoluble chemical compound. Unlike nitre also in its action on the blood-vesicles, it rendered them less contractile,—these, when examined under the microscope, appearing large and expanded, the membrane being