

his condition. I should not have recognised him; his head was swollen to twice its natural size; not a feature could be discerned; and his complaints were urged in muttering delirium. I immediately ordered him (as his bowels were costive) a large dose of calomel, fomented his head and face, punctured the scalp, and prescribed diaphoretic effervescent draughts. The day following he had but slightly improved, although his bowels had been freely opened, and I immediately proposed a consultation. The gentleman who met me recommended bleeding—a remedy to which he especially trusted in all cases of febrile action. But as the patient had a very dry tongue, attended with delirium, and was complaining of great thirst, muttering in almost inarticulate sounds his desire for porter, I proposed that we should try its effect: this was consented to, and I held a pint of porter to his lips; he drank it off at a draught—soon fell into a sound sleep: when he awoke he was perfectly free from delirium, and from that moment his recovery rapidly progressed.

In relating this case, gentlemen, I do not mean to inculcate the propriety of the invariable use of stimulus, but I do believe that in most cases it will be found a safer remedy than bleeding, more particularly in London, or any crowded city; nor have I formed this judgment from the solitary case just mentioned, but it is an opinion founded upon my own experience and the practice of my colleagues in this hospital as well as in private.

A lady, applied to an eminent surgeon, to ascertain from him whether a small encysted tumor could be removed with perfect safety from her head; to which he replied, "certainly." The operation was immediately performed, but seven days afterwards she was dead from an attack of erysipelas.

The next case, as the patient was not attacked by erysipelas after the operation, may be considered out of place with regard to our present considerations; I have mentioned it, however, merely to exemplify the necessity of ascertaining the real constitutional condition before you venture to submit a patient to any mechanical lesion.

A short time ago, an individual came under my care with an external pile and a fissure in the mucous membrane of the rectum; he was considerably out of health, and attributed all his ailments to the sufferings he experienced in the passing of his motions, owing to the local disease; he urged me to relieve him by operation. I kept him, however, a week or ten days under my care before I operated, and by soothing remedies had somewhat improved his condition, when I removed the external pile, and drew the bistoury across the fissure, the whole time of the operation not exceeding half a minute. The patient felt immediate relief after the operation; he had little or no pain in passing his motions, but in the course of four or five days he was seized with symptoms of subacute peritonitis; calomel, and opium, and leeches were ordered, but four days afterwards he died.

Upon examination of the body, he was found to be the subject of granular kidneys, (the morbus Brightii) which no doubt had caused his death.

It had been ascertained, during life, by my dresser, that his urine was albuminous; but I considered the severity of his suffering demanded the performance of this slight operation; although the sequel renders it a matter for consideration whether I was right, under these circumstances, in subjecting him to a fresh source of irritation.

From such cases as these you must be impressed, gentlemen, with the necessity of doing everything which the science of surgery can insure, so far as lies in your power, to place your patient in the greatest state of security before you subject him to any surgical operation, and even then never promise that any operation, however simple, will be perfectly free from danger; for depend upon it, it is as unwise to treat slightly the most trifling incisions of the skin, as it is dishonest to attach to an operation more importance than it justly deserves.

Some surgeons suppose that it is better to perform what are usually considered simple operations at the moment, than to allow the dread of anticipation to remain in the mind of the patient, and then proceed to act upon this opinion without any preliminary precaution. There are, however, I believe, but few patients, who will not duly appreciate the cautious recommendation of a surgeon to submit to some little preparatory discipline, and he will gain much more confidence from the patient by this display of his judgment, than from the hasty recklessness which evinces boldness and self reliance, rather than judicious precaution.

THE British American Journal.

MONTREAL, JANUARY 1, 1848.

COUNTER-PETITION TO THE GOVERNOR GENERAL.

We purpose, at present, to examine into the memorial lately presented to the Governor General, which we published in our last number, and to analyze its statements. We know not who all the signers of the memorial are; their names have been studiously concealed. We have heard, however, that a goodly number are not members of the Corporation, and the good sense and taste which they have displayed may be, therefore, accurately appreciated. The proceeding, taken as a whole, is remarkably puerile, and is a beautiful exemplification of what is termed in common parlance, "reckoning without the host." It was a shot fired at—nothing; and would have been a harmless shedding of ink and waste of paper, did not the memorial contain several misrepresentations which it is proper should be at least corrected. Had any occasion *really existed* for such a "counterblaste" against the proceedings of the Board of Governors, we ourselves would have appeared among the protestors; but there should be no protest unless there be something to protest against; something more than *supposed intention*, something done, some act or deed committed, either of an illegal nature or having a bad tendency, before such a proceeding can be brought to bear, or such an act have force. The fitful phantom of a disordered mind possessed a substantiality as real as that against which the memorial was directed.

1st. It is asserted that the present intention of the Governors to submit the rules of the College to the members of the Corporation at Quebec, in May next, was the result of an "*order from the Executive*" to that effect, consequent upon the presentation of the memorial. This is entirely incorrect. It was in consequence of a legal opinion obtained from the crown officers, and applied for in the early part of the week preceding that in which the memorial was presented.

2d. No rules and regulations being in force, none could be suspended.

3d. The proclamation of the Governor General (paragraph 3 of memorial) did not "summon all the physicians of Lower Canada to meet together on the 15th Sep. last to name governors," &c. It summoned the *first meeting of the Corporation*, appointing, at the same time, the day, and nominating the first President.