

British Museum, Gallery of Arts, and many other places of interest were thrown open to the visitors. The London brethren seemed determined that nothing should be wanting on their part to make the week pass happily.

The addresses and papers read were of a very interesting and instructive character, and were listened to very attentively: some of the most important will appear in our next issue. The President's (Sir Wm. Ferguson) was on the subject of water supply to large towns and cities; a subject not exactly in his line, but which he treated with a good deal of shrewd common sense, although in a scientific aspect a little defective. He advocated an abundance of water irrespective of purity; quantity being considered by him of more importance than quality. The address on Medicine was delivered by Dr Parkes, of the Army Medical School, in which he traced the progress of medicine for the last thirty years, and was replete with valuable information. The address on Surgery was by Prof. Wood, of King's College, in the course of which he touched upon the various improvements in surgery, the antiseptic treatment, drainage in wounds, etc., and concluded by a reference to his plan for the radical cure of hernia. The address on Physiology was by Dr. J. Burdon Sanderson, and was a masterly and scientific exposition of the bearing of physiology upon medicine. The addresses delivered before the various sections of medicine, surgery, physiology, and state medicine, were also very interesting and instructive. The interest in the proceedings was evidenced by the large attendance at the meetings of sections, notwithstanding the many inducements to spend the time in holiday-making and visiting objects of interest in the metropolis.

THE VIENNA MIXTURE.

Anæsthesia is a subject of very great importance, and one concerning which a good deal of discussion has taken place lately, especially regarding the relative safety of chloroform and ether. Some have advocated the exclusive use of ether, others a mixture of chloroform and ether, while many still prefer to take the risk of continuing the use of chloroform, and so the matter stands at present, no definite decision having been arrived at by the profession. This is a circumstance very much to

be regretted. The administration of an anæsthetic is always attended with more or less danger to the life of the patient, and the responsibility attending its administration is always such as to cause considerable anxiety to the mind of the operator. This condition of affairs is not improved by the present state of medical opinion regarding the relative safety of these two agents. The *London Lancet* in commenting upon a recent case in which a woman sought to recover damages from two Dublin surgeons for the death of her husband under chloroform, says, "That as public opinion runs at present any medical man, who may be placed in a position similar to that of the defendants in this trial, runs the risk of having witnesses arraigned against him who might state that the employment of chloroform is unwarrantable, and that ether, as being less dangerous, is the only anæsthetic which with our present knowledge one has a right to employ" and suggests the propriety of registering all cases in which anæsthesia is resorted to, as a means of judging of the relative merits of rival anæsthetics.

With a view of overcoming the danger of chloroform, some have advised the use of a mixture of chloroform and ether, called the Vienna mixture, containing six parts of ether to two of chloroform. This mixture was reported to have been used in Vienna 8000 times without a casualty. It has not proved so successful in other places, as reports have been given at different times of death having occurred from its use. In the only instance in which we witnessed a death from Anæsthesia, the agent used was a mixture of chloroform and ether. These unfavorable results were predicted by Dr. Snow at the time of its introduction. He contended that it would be dangerous, and his opposition was based on the following reasons: Ether is more volatile than chloroform, and will therefore evaporate more rapidly, so that when they are combined in whatever proportion, before the whole is evaporated, the last portion will be nearly all chloroform. The consequence of this is that at the commencement of the inhalation the vapor inspired is chiefly ether, and towards the close nearly all chloroform, the powerful effect of which at this stage would be disastrous. The patient will in this way experience the stronger pungency of the ether when it is most objectionable, and inhale the more powerful vapor at the conclusion when caution is