

possible. Those who are most skilful succeed in learning how to make the fluid come back through the nasal fosse (as is done with tobacco-smoke), thus bathing the mucous surfaces in the most complete manner. The experimental proof of the penetration of the gargle into the larynx is the impossibility of respiring. Whoever respire while gargling, gargles badly. Very little practice is necessary sometimes to learn how to gargle in this way, without swallowing a drop of fluid; the less the head is thrown back, the less the need for swallowing is felt, and it may in this way be altogether put an end to; and, on the contrary, the more the head is thrown back, the greater the stimulus to deglutition, and the more of the gargle is swallowed.

THE GALVANIC CAUTERY.

In a discussion which took place at the Paris Société de Chirurgie, on the advantages and drawbacks of the galvanic cautery, M. Trélat (France Médicale, September 27, 1873) remarked that he had used the galvano-caustic styilet for the use of small erectile tumours, with satisfactory results. The styilet is brought to the maximum of red heat, and acts like the actual cautery. In naso-pharyngeal polypus he used the wire loop, which is, however, sometimes difficult to apply without preliminary operation, whether by the nose or the throat. M. Labbé has succeeded in one case of naso-pharyngeal polypus with the galvano-cautery, but failed to remove more than one-half of the tumour by the same means in another. M. Lannelongue has used the loop in a case of varicocele, and, as the tissues did not become divided he made traction, upon which a jet of arterial blood appeared, the spermatic artery having been cut it two. This artery is difficult to insulate in the midst of the veins coursing with it, and it was found necessary to tie it. M. Verneuil prefers the écraseur to the galvanic loop. When he employs the galvanic cautery, he uses puncture and section with the galvano-caustic knife. For removing a cancrroid from the ala nasi, he once used successively the loop, knife, and knob. For naso-pharyngeal polypus he had unsuccessfully divided the pedicle and cauterized the remainder, and thinks the écraseur preferable for partial sections.

THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

The Association was founded forty years ago by a provincial physician, Dr. Hastings, who aimed at raising the country practitioners to a position more nearly resembling that of the great metropolitan practitioners than they then held. He wisely held that this was best done by uniting them in an effort to cultivate high objects, and to sustain their honour and prove their claims to position by the development of scientific effort and the maintainance of a high ethical code. The advance of the provincial practitioner in position since the establishment of this Association, has been marvellously great; the Association alone could not have effected this result. It is due, in no small measure, to the general diffusion of a degree of culture which was once the property of the few and to such an improvement in the tests for diplomas, that the ordinary general practitioner of to-day is of necessity possessed of a larger amount of technical information than the

hospital physician of forty years needed to possess, so far as strictness of examination demanded it of him. But the Association has had a vast influence in the fortunes of the provincial practitioner, by giving him what he did not before possess, the power which union commands and the ambition which that power begets. Fortunately, the men who guided the Association in early years were not beset by petty notions or by the wish to pull others down in the desire to aggrandize themselves. They worked in this way. They arranged branches or sections in all the different districts of the country (as far as they could); each station or branch elected its own officers, held its own meetings for scientific purposes, and elected one delegate for every twenty members, to act in the General Council. The General Council assembled once a year only, at the date of the annual meeting of the whole Association, and then proceeded to elect twenty members as a Committee of Council, or Executive Committee. This executive committee acts throughout the year as the ruling body of the Association in all matters of general policy; and it alone can speak for the Association. Besides the twenty elected members, the president for the year and the honorary secretary of each branch are also members of the executive committee *ex officio*. Thus, any thing like jobbery is prevented. The Association can also appoint standing committees on particular subjects, throughout the year, but the action of such committees can be at any time controlled by the executive committee, who are also empowered to decide all questions of expenditure. The president of the executive committee is elected biennially, and is not competent for re-election, but becomes, on retiring from office, a life-member of the executive committee. The Association meets every year, in a different town, by invitation, and elects a president from the practitioners of the town at which it meets. This alone gives dignity and prominence to provincial practitioners, and as the nomination of the president of the year is made by the local profession, the result has always been satisfactory.

We come now to the question of funds and members. The great element of success in any institution requiring a subscription, is that it shall give some obvious and palpably adequate return for the subscription. Sentimental reasons will attract a certain income, but will die off if not sustained by evident sufficient results, and will never be large. The first return made was in the form of "Transactions," but such transactions were soon found to be of insufficient interest, and not to compare favourably with those of societies having a permanent residence in the great centres of learning and activity throughout the year. They were valuable, but they were tardy in issue and heavy in character. A weekly journal was found more lively, prompt and vigorous, and a return more valued, while it kept the Association well together and reported the affairs of all its branches. It has of late years developed into all the characters of a weekly paper of vigour, and, without saying anything more about it, I may say that it is popular and cheap, ranks as an au-

thority outside of the profession, and is read more largely than any other within it. It has been pointed out lately by the Council, by Dr. Quain, by Mr. Baker, and by all impartial observers, that the development of the Journal has greatly favoured the growth of the Association.

It is, however, very apparent that the Journal, while helping the Association in an incalculable degree, has also raised up for it powerful enemies by the very fact of its existence. The whole influence of the other medical papers has, indeed, been incessantly employed against the Association, which they have with reason regarded as a rival publishing company, interfering with their business. In the case of the British Medical Association, where the constant meetings of the branches require not less than weekly publication to give cohesion and continuity to the work of the Association; it has answered well to brave that disposition, and the battle has been carried to a highly successful issue. It would be very unsafe to predicate a similar success for any other association, if placed under similar circumstances. What is really necessary is, to make a return for the money subscribed. Now, in the case of an annual association, experience has shown that money spent on "Transactions" should be limited. The professional papers may be trusted to give a fair account of the proceedings; and only the most important papers read; should be published in the transactions. No money should be spent out of the funds of the Association on the reception and annual meeting. These should be entirely furnished out of the subscriptions raised *pro hac vice* from the local practitioners who have the honour and pleasure of receiving the visit of the Association. No money should be paid to any official, except the under secretary, who need not, and had better not, be a professional man (but a business man), and who need not, and had better not, have a vote in the Council. The annual meeting should be made attractive by arranging for the delivery of retrospects of medicine and surgery, obstetrics, physiology, &c., by eminent men, who should be officially invited to deliver them, by a joint arrangement of the local reception committee and the executive committee; ethical questions should be entirely excluded from discussion at the annual meeting, and referred, the first instance, to local committees, and then to the general executive committee. For each day's work, a series of questions should be prepared; some one gentleman of known experience in the matter being invited beforehand to prepare a preliminary paper on the subject. Meetings so arranged could not fail to be popular; they would be proportionally influential, and there would be a handsome surplus for general and scientific purposes.

This is, of course, only an outline sketch of views which are derived from observing the course of our various British societies. I have stated them, perhaps, dogmatically in form, but not in intention; and the form is due to the necessity of being brief, with the hope of avoiding a fault into which I fear that I have nevertheless fallen, that of being tedious.—[Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]