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TRIUMPHS OF SCIENCE.

THERAPEUTIC OR HEALING PROPERTIES OF GALVANISM.

Dr. Wilson Philip, one of the most noted physicians of England, and a man well known to scientific scholars, has employed Galvanism, with great success, as a remedy in Asthma. By transmitting its influence from the nape of the neck to the pit of the stomach, he gave relief in every one of twenty-two cases, of which four were in private practice, and eighteen in the Worcester Infirmary. These results of Dr. Philip have been confirmed by Dr. Clarke Abel, of Brighton, England, (Journal of Science, Vol. IX.). When digestion is interrupted in nervous individuals, this vital function is much aided by the influence of the galvanic battery; and Dr. Philip states that galvanism, when properly applied, is a sure cure for Dyspepsia. In a paper read by Dr. Philip, and recorded in the Philosophical Transactions, he showed the immediate dependence of the digestive function on the nervous influence. The eighth pair of nerves, distributed to the stomach, and subservient to digestion, were divided by incision in the necks of several rabbits; after the operation, the palsy which they had eaten remained without alteration in their stomachs, and the animals, after evincing much difficulty in breathing, appeared to die of suffocation. But when in other rabbits similarly treated the galvanic power

was distributed along the nerve below its section, to a disc of silver placed closely in contact with the skin of the animal opposite to its stomach, no difficulty of breathing occurred. The action from the battery being kept up for twenty-six hours, the rabbits were then killed, and the parsley was found in as perfectly digested a state as that in healthy rabbits fed at the same time; and their stomachs evolved the smell peculiar to that of rabbits during digestion. These experiments were several times repeated, with similar results. Galvanism is now generally employed in England and in the United States, also in France and Germany, and has been found of great service in many cases, such as palsy, contractions of the limbs, rheumatism, St. Vitus's dance, and in some kinds of deafness and impaired vision.

The *Christian Age* relates an interesting case of a French officer, who, while making a reconnoissance near Sebastopol, during the hostilities between the allied powers of England, France and Turkey, was knocked down by the wind of a cannon ball, the shock of which was so severe as to cause paralysis of the tongue, so that he could neither move it nor speak. Obtaining leave of absence, he returned to Marseilles, and placed himself under galvanic treatment—After a few applications he could move his tongue with more facility, and at length, after an unusually powerful charge, his speech was fully restored to him.

ENGLISH STATISTICS.

The old system of postage was abolished in England in 1840, when Mr. Rowland Hill's penny postage was established. The price, before 1840, of transmitting the smallest letters through the country varied from six pence to eighteen pence. In the year 1833, the whole number of letters delivered in the United Kingdom was 76 millions; in the year 1857, the annual delivery exceeded 504 millions. The number of newspapers sent by post in 1857 was 51 millions, and there were 25 millions of book-parcels.—The distance over which the mails are carried, by various conveyances, is 63,000 miles a day, and the gross revenue of the post office exceeds 15,000,000 of dollars.

There are in England 7,447 miles of railway in actual operation, representing a capital of nearly 2,000,000,000 of dollars, yielding a gross annual revenue of about 100,000,000 of dollars. During the year 1857, the number of passengers on all the lines was 139,000,000.

England possesses the greatest trophy of architectural skill. The Great Eastern is the largest vessel ever built. Seven thousand tons of iron were employed in the construction of the hull, which is 632 feet long, 118 feet broad, and 70 feet high.

KNOWLEDGE.—I envy no man that knows more than myself, but pity them that know less.—Sir, T. Browne.

USE OF TEXT-BOOKS IN SCHOOLS.

We would not depreciate the value of text-books in school; on the contrary, we appreciate them at their true worth, and consider them valuable assistants to the teacher, when properly used. What we would protest against is their abuse.

Text-books are good things in their proper sphere, but, like other good things, they are often misused. We have frequently seen teachers, in hearing a recitation, take the text-book and read the questions from it, in the regular order in which they occurred; the class, in the meantime, answering, parrot-like, the questions propounded, while he who could give the answer in the exact words of the author was pronounced the best scholar.—There were no explanations asked or given as to principles involved in the subject under consideration; and there was no effort made to arouse or cultivate any faculty of the mind save the memory. Ask a child for the why or the wherefore of the thing affirmed, and he would look at you in blank amazement, or simply answer that "it was not in the book." Attempt to explain the subject to him, and he will perhaps reply, "the book don't say anything about that." He will seem to wonder where you could have acquired any information that was not contained in the "book." "The book," with him, is "law and gospel." The authors of the "book" have found out everything there is to be known upon the subject, and have expressed it in the very words in which it should alone be expressed.

We have repeatedly met with such instances, and consider such a misuse of text-books far worse than the entire exclusion of text-books from a school. It unmans a child, depresses his reasoning faculties, destroys his self-dependence, the cultivation of which should be the principal aim of the educator, and causes him to be dependent upon others for the opinions he may entertain. Such a course of education may answer the purposes of a despot, but in our country, the child should be taught to think for himself.

Our school rooms should be well supplied with charts, maps, black boards, globes, etc. Our teachers should then be so well prepared for their duties as to dispense with text-books in recitations. The class should not be required to repeat a rule as given by any author, but should be drilled in principles, and taught to reason for themselves. But, where the school-room is not thus properly furnished, the teacher must, from necessity, be more dependent upon the assistance of text-books than would otherwise be desirable.—*Wisconsin Journal of Education*.

The happiest man in the world is the one with just wealth enough to keep him in spirits; and just children enough to make him industrious.