

professional life; 6. marriage, children and death.
—*The Daily Globe*, 25th Feb., 1889.

FATAL RESULT FROM NITROUS OXIDE.—Says the *Br. Med. Jour.*: Our Edinburgh Correspondent last week drew attention to a death which took place in the operating room of a dentist after the administration of nitrous oxide. The occurrence is fortunately very rare, but it seems advisable to ask whether this anæsthetic is as safe as it is usually considered to be. The patient, Lady Milne, was a woman aged 71, of stout build, and under treatment for fatty degeneration of the heart. She had been referred to the dentist by her medical man, in order to have two teeth removed and an opening made into the antrum. It appears that Lady Milne very much dreaded the operation, and was heard to remark she feared she would not survive it. At 9 a.m. she breakfasted, but it seems her food remained wholly undigested, for during the performance of artificial respiration, undertaken when breathing ceased, it was ejected unchanged. The operation took place at noon. The dentist noticed whilst he gave the gas, that Lady Milne breathed very shallowly, and he begged her to inspire more forcibly, but this she failed to do, for, as was afterwards discovered, her corsets and clothing were so tightly bound round her that normal breathing was simply impossible. As soon as consciousness had gone the teeth were extracted and the antrum perforated. It was then observed by the dentist and his assistant that Lady Milne had become livid, had ceased to breathe, and her heart had stopped beating. Although artificial respiration was resorted to, the tongue being drawn forward, while the stays were with difficulty slit up with a knife, and nitrite of amyl exhibited, she never showed signs of life. Medical aid was promptly summoned, but in vain. That nitrous oxide will be blamed is certain, but a dispassionate consideration of the circumstances seems to point rather to the neglect of precaution on the part of the patient than to any particular danger from the anæsthetic. It is clear Lady Milne died from mechanical rather than from poisonous agency. Persons, even with fatty heart, although of course they are the least adapted for any kind of anæsthetic, take nitrous oxide with impunity; but the recumbent posture, with absolutely loose clothing

and a stomach not distended with gases and undigested food, are conditions which can hardly be omitted without grave risk. The dentist who gave Lady Milne gas seems to have regarded her statement about her weak heart as merely the expression of a highly nervous woman, but we cannot but think it is wise in all such cases to give the patient the benefit of the doubt, and adopt the precautions to which we have above alluded.

NEW BREAD FOR DIABETIC PATIENTS.—Says the Paris correspondent of the *Br. Med. Jour.*: M. G. Pouchet, Professor at the Museum, describes in the science column of the *Sécle* a new food stuff for diabetic patients, containing an abundance of nitrogenous substance and entirely free from starch. All gluten bread contains a certain proportion of starch. The bread in question is made from the embryos of corn. M. Danysz, the discoverer of this new bread, has succeeded in isolating the embryo from its farinaceous endosperm, and has also been able to remove from the embryo all oily or other substance calculated to injure its flavor. After long research M. Danysz has obtained a large quantity of corn embryos; from these flour has been made which is extremely nutritious. Bread made with it is easily digested, and is said to be agreeable to the palate. In many of the Paris hospitals this bread is now used for diabetic patients.

WHITE LEAD IN ERYSIPELAS.—The use of white lead as a mask or covering in erysipelas is not new. It has been advocated for a number of years, and largely and successfully used. Dr. Sturver says, *Med. News*:—I have tried quite a number of the most highly lauded remedies, including the combination of sulphichthyolate of ammonium and lanolin, which is claimed by many to be a specific in this disease, but in my hands white lead paint has exerted a more favorable influence than anything else. It very promptly relieves the burning pain and feeling of tension which are so marked in severe cases; it limits the spread of the disease process, and forms an impermeable covering over the affected parts, thereby preventing the dissemination of diseased particles. If this disease, as is now generally admitted, be caused by pathogenic microorganisms, this power of the treatment to limit the spread of the disease germs should lead to its more general adoption.