

The value of morphine hypodermically in the renal forms of eclampsia seems, in my experience, to be considerable, but in the nervous variety chloral seems to act most efficiently.

Correspondence

To the Editor of the CANADA LANCET.

SIR,—Mr. Bryant in his excellent manual for the Practice of Surgery, states that “Dr. Crawford W. Long, of Athens, Georgia, was the first surgeon who in March, 1842, performed a surgical operation while the patient was completely anesthetized by the inhalation of sulphuric ether.”

Those of your readers who have visited the thriving city of Boston must have noticed in walking through the public gardens, the neat and elegant monument erected to commemorate the introduction into medical practice of sulphuric ether as an anesthetic, and the first surgical operation performed under its use in the Massachusetts General Hospital in 1846.

Every day experience is bringing to light that what we are taught to believe were current historical facts, will not bear thorough investigation. It is quite easy to see how this could be in matters which took place at a very remote period; but in a question like the present, which had occurred within the lifetime of some persons, it is not easy to understand how there could be such a mistake. I have always been under the impression that ether was first used as an anesthetic in Boston, am at a loss to understand where Mr. Bryant got his information, but he states it as a *fact*; and of course a surgeon of so much practical experience and withal so cautious, must have positive and reliable information or he would not have said so.

It seems highly desirable that the history of anesthesia should be clear and reliable; and as I have no other medical work in which Dr. Long gets the credit of being the introducer of sulphuric ether for this purpose, it has occurred to me that some of your readers, or perhaps Mr. Bryant himself—if he ever reads your popular journal—might kindly throw some light upon the subject. At any rate it seems well worth ventilating in the columns of the LANCET.

C. H. L. JOHNSTON.

St. John, N.B.

Reports of Societies.

THE DOMINION MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

The twentieth annual meeting of this Association took place in St. Paul's church school-room, Hamilton, August 31st and September 1st. There was a fair attendance from Ontario, and Montreal furnished a number of the profession, but the attendance as a whole was not what it should have been.

At 10 a.m. Dr. Holmes, of Chatham, took the chair. After a short address, he introduced the new President, Dr. J. E. Graham.

Dr. McCargow, the chairman of the local committee, then read an address of welcome, and extended to the visitors an invitation to a *conversazione* to be held that evening.

Dr. Graham replied, accepting on behalf of the Association the kind invitation given.

After routine business had been disposed of, the Association adjourned until 2 p.m.

In the afternoon Dr. McPhedran delivered the address on Medicine, on “The Pathological Conditions and Behaviour of Fluid in Empyema,” which will appear in our columns in full in another issue.

The discussion was opened by Dr. Mullin, of Hamilton, who, after speaking of the difficulty of making an early diagnosis between pneumonia and empyema, cited cases to establish his views on the point under discussion.

Dr. Sheard, of Toronto, referred to the cases cited by Dr. Mullin, and believed that both conditions might have been present. The illness might have commenced as a pneumonia and terminated in empyema. He believed the temperature chart was a very important element in the diagnosis of empyema.

The discussion was continued by Dr. Teskey, of Toronto, who opposed the germ theory in this disease. He was of opinion that pus was simply necrosed exudation, the result of severe inflammatory process, and that the presence of bacteria was not a *sin qua non*. He was averse to the use even of the hypodermic syringe in exploring the chest, except in those cases where the diagnosis could be made in no other way. He thought that even so light a traumatism as the introduction of