

until nothing whatever will pass. Liquids and soft food, of course, pass more readily than does soft food. The food is either immediately regurgitated or spasmodically rejected. Sometimes a considerable quantity of food is retained for some time in a dilatation, when it is discharged, alkaline in reaction and much decomposed. In consequence of the reduced quantity of food entering the stomach the patient emaciates, becomes weak and has a retracted abdomen. The use of the bougie or probang will enable you to establish a diagnosis as to functional or organic structure. In the functional variety—although the probang may meet with resistance, this can with steady pressure be overcome. In the organic variety the bougie cannot be passed, when the disease has reached a point sufficient to attract strongly the attention of the patient to the obstruction. The patient before you is quite convinced that there is obstruction to the passage of the food. I am equally convinced that there is no obstruction other than that which is functional, and the result of a neurotic or nervous affection. In proof of this I at the time of his first visit passed a probang the full length of the œsophageal canal, and will now do so again. The passage of the instrument in the first instance seems to have convinced this patient food should pass more freely after the passage of such an instrument, and the consequence is that he expresses himself to-day as feeling somewhat better. If he does not improve rapidly I will give him iron and valerian; but in the meantime have placed him on one of the vegetable tinctures—viz., gentian as a tonic, which will assist in giving tone to his system, which, as you can judge from the man's appearance, he stands much in need of. In the organic variety little can be done in the way of treatment, though gradual dilatation may be attempted by bougies. If the cause of the organic stricture is cancer of course the case is hopeless; you can, however, do much to relieve the patient's suffering by the administration of anodyne, while at the same time the patient's strength must be kept up, when required, by rectal alimentation, in which must not be forgotten the injection into the rectum of defibrinated blood.

(From our Boston Correspondent.)

LETTER FROM THE HUB.

Editors CANADA MEDICAL RECORD.

DEAR SIRS,—The nearness of the good old Puritan city of Boston to Montreal (a half day's

journey) makes it to be frequently visited by denizens of the latter. Its many places of interest and objects of attraction, such as the Dome of the State House, the Pleasure Gardens and Common, Beacon Street, Commonwealth avenue, Trinity Church and the New Old South, the Art Gallery, its crooked streets, Forest Hills and Mount Auburn, etc., are as familiar to the Canadian almost as to the American, and are, as it were, "Forever photographed on the mind." Then, too, Boston holds a warm place in the heart of a great many married men, as it is seldom left out in a wedding tour; and although on such an occasion the groom is supposed to be oblivious of all else but his blooming bride, he no doubt manages, or it may be the attractive force of the surroundings exert their overpowering influence on his cerebral cells, and live ever green in his memory. But it is not the beautiful city of Boston itself, the Modern Athens, as it has been styled, that I wish to describe, this would be altogether unnecessary; but I thought it might not be uninteresting to the readers of the RECORD to give them a glimpse of Boston from a medical point of view, to inform you as to the nature and doings of things medical here, its medical school, hospitals, profession, and medical societies. Although perhaps not such a medical centre as New York, or Philadelphia, the Hub of the Universe, as Bostonians delight to call their native city, offers many advantages to the follower of Æsculapius. The larger size of New York and Philadelphia and, as a consequence, larger clinical experience and more central position, attracts more students to the latter cities; but one need not go out of Boston to get all the instruction, theoretical or practical, required. It can boast of one of the oldest and one of the best, if not the best medical schools in the United States, of large and well appointed hospitals, of distinguished and learned professional men, a large well stocked medical library, and well conducted Medical Societies; in fact the medical student or practitioner can have his every desire or ambition satisfied in Boston. I purpose in this my first letter dwelling briefly on the Harvard Medical school. To write the history of the School would be to write the history of medicine in the United States. I will, therefore, limit myself to the Harvard of the present, not of the past. The old Medical school still stands in the west end of the city, near the Massachusetts General Hospital, a monument redolent of the past. It was here where most of