

Were it in keeping with our space it would be interesting, and perhaps instructive, to follow further the development of this faculty of composition in its biological aspects: but it is sufficient that we understand, in this age of universal activity with every avenue open to those wishing to enter it, either as an amusement or an occupation, why literary composition is so common. We are convinced that to some at least, the pleasure of composition may become as intense as when to the highly gifted musician--

"The touch of his loved instrument
Gives hope and fervour, nearer draws his theme,
First guessed by faint rapturous flushes sent
Along the wavering vista of his dream."

It would be idle for us to pretend that literary composition is not affected by some, simply because it is in a sort of way *fashionable*, as in the olden troubadour times it was the *mode* to compose sonnets for their lady-loves; or as in the case of Will Carlton's eastern farmer who, regarding his boy, "guessed he'd make en editur o' him." Such may be dismissed good-naturedly as belonging to the *avine* class, who follow their leader, and change as he changes, as seen in the curious imitations of the courtly Chesterfield of a previous century.

Regarding that other class afflicted with *cacoethes scribendi*, speaking from the alienist standpoint, they must be placed on the list of *incurables*, and charitably dismissed with the hope that their sojourn here be not long. There is, however, with some of them a remarkable vitality; and it may be, perhaps, that they are designed as a chastisement to those who are heirs of all the literary past, and who amidst sweet harmonies must suffer the impingement upon sensitive organs of *base* notes. There is truth as well as wit in what some writer tacked on to the word *finis* at the end of a silly book,

"Finis! an error or a lie, my friend!
In writing foolish books—there is *no end*!"

TREATMENT OF VARICOCELE BY MEANS OF A YARN TRUSS.

A FEW months ago a man came to consult the writer with reference to a large varicocele of the left spermatic cord. He said he had noticed the much larger size of the left half of the scrotum for some considerable time—seven or eight years—but had never given it much thought. It had caused him little trouble further than a heavy, dragging feeling when long on his feet, or a little aching after a long

day's work involving much standing or slow walking. His reason for consulting a surgeon now was that he had visited a phrenologist, so called, on the previous evening to have his "bumps" read, and during the *seance* this exponent-of-the-faculties-by-manipulation asked him if he had a varicocele, and upon further explanation found he had. Whether it was a mere "guess," knowing how frequently this condition is found, or whether he fancied there was a tendency to varix, the veins being a little prominent over the temporal and mastoid regions, or, as he stated to the patient, that he knew from the bumps such a thing existed, we cannot say; but he succeeded in alarming the man so much that he immediately sought medical advice.

The patient is twenty-five years of age and unmarried. He had noticed its gradual development during the last eight years. It was now quite large, extending from the abdominal ring above to a lower level than the testicle below and felt like a "bag of worms." On lying down and elevating the scrotum the tumor lessened very considerably but the spermatic cord on that side was still much larger than its fellow, owing to hypertrophy of the walls of the spermatic veins. There was also a small encysted hydrocele projecting from the surface of the epididymis.

The left testicle was smaller than the right one and a little softer but of the normal shape. The patient said the desire for sexual intercourse had weakened considerably during the last three or four years. It is probable the varicose condition of the spermatic veins commenced about the time of puberty and caused an arrest of development in the organ. Some writers on the subject state that the dilated veins cause atrophy of the testicle; but if this were always the case we would meet with diminished testicles in varicocele much more frequently than we do. The following explanation by A. Pearce Gould is a more rational one:—"If the disease be limited to the cord, as is usually the case, and come on after the testicle has reached its full development, it exerts no injurious influence upon the structure of that organ. But when the vessels within the testicle are varicose, it may lead to a slight shrinking of the tubular structure. If, however, the varices develop before or at puberty, the usual enlargement of the testicle may not take place, and it may continue in its puerile state. The important fact is, that where the testicle is