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MEDICAL CRITICISM.

No. 7.

FEBRUARY 24, 1883.

2ND SERIES.

A Weekly Sheet, by DAVID EDWARDS, published on Saturday, and sold at Patterson & Co.'s No. 4 Adelaide Street West, Toronto.

PRICE, \$1.50—Copies of any single number can be had, in quantities, at 15c. per dozen.

SCARLET FEVER.

A girl has been lately sent by her parents from the country, to a public school in this city ; the girl had only recovered from scarlet fever a fortnight ; shortly after reaching the school, she had a relapse and died; we understand that twenty girls in the school are now suffering from this disease ; waiving the question of the criminality on the part of the parents, in sending a girl to school, under such a circumstance, without apprising the school-mistress of it, we think that two important considerations arise from this deplorable incident. (1) The necessity of enquiring if any pupil has been in contact with infectious disease, prior to admission, and (2) the necessity of knowing who, among competitive doctors, have never lost patients from fever, and who have ; this, as we are obliged to repeat, can only be publicly known by adopting the system of registering.

THE INSANE.

We think that commiseration for this helpless class of the community would be greatly increased, if the prodigious ignorance of those who have the charge of them were apprehended. We know one gentleman, a large portion of whose life has been spent among them, who has publicly stated that one can no more predicate a man's mental characteristics by the appearance of his head, than one can tell the contents of a warehouse by its external appearance ; and we know that another—a bearer of College certificates, of course—when asked if magnetism could not be advantageously brought to bear on certain inmates, proceeded to confound it with clairvoyance ; these considerations may serve to illustrate the consequences of the unbalanced power committed to the hands of the medical faculty in regard to the insane ; consequences which, when the daily average population of such in Ontario (including 161 idiots) is known to exceed 2619.72, may well be regarded as appalling.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

Most persons who have anything to sell, avail themselves of some means of advertising, and on the assumption that what they have for sale, is worth buying, it is obviously to the interest of the public that the practice of advertising should be encouraged. *Caution* however is necessary in relation to this, as in all other great undertakings, for we find a nostrum advertised as giving ease to the chest, and this is to be dropped into warm water, before being taken ; it might be well for such as contemplate investing in this nostrum, to try the efficacy of the water first, and that they will know to be less expensive than the superadded nostrum. *Discrimination* also, as well as caution, is indispensable, in connection with these delicate

operations, for while it may answer the purpose of the vendors of "dry-goods" to announce their "tremendous slaughter" from time to time, it would scarcely be discreet for the medical profession to announce that aspect of *their* vocation, after a similar fashion; we are of opinion however, that *whatever proof any person has to offer, of the capacity to cure, should be accessible to the public in the easiest possible way*, and while we utterly repudiate the licences of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, in view of the present rate of mortality and the present amount of sickness and suffering, we will as cheerfully accept *proof* of the possession of healing capacity from a licenced practitioner, as from an unlicensed person, and this proof, we maintain, ought to be publicly displayed in a register office.

AN INCIDENTAL ADVANTAGE OF VACCINATION.

A minister known to us, decided to be vaccinated, at a period of small-pox epidemic; he found that the operation would not succeed in his arm; the operator therefore suggested a trial of it on one of the gentleman's legs; this succeeded, but entailed a temporary lameness on the subject of it; in his limping condition, he went by request, to attend the sick-bed of an elderly woman, and the good soul was so touched by this act of kindness, that she bequeathed \$20.00 to him the following day. *This occurred at N. York, Oct. 1872. Was my experience.* *M. B. Johnson*

FROM THE WORLD.

"Governor Crittenden of Missouri says in his message to the legislature that the state of Missouri is full of medical quacks who are killing annually, through their criminal ignorance, more men, women and children than die from natural causes." Question of questions—Who are the quacks?

NEURALGIA.

This distressing disorder, which exceeds the power of Dunglison and his followers to conquer, is so easily overcome by means of magnetism and galvanism, that no case of the kind is known to those who treat neuralgia by such means, which has not yielded in a few hours.

THE LATE PRESIDENT GARFIELD.

The *case* of the late President will live in the annals of surgery, as long as will his name in the history of the world; the *case* too is perhaps as instructive, in relation to the condition of the art of surgery, and (what is styled) the healing art, as is the biography of the illustrious sufferer, in relation to ordinary life; we therefore borrow a few thoughts on the subject, from an adept who writes in the Eclectic Medical Journal. This writer treats the case of the late President as "a sad commentary on Medical and Surgical Science"; "wounded on the 2nd of July, (he observes) he lived eighty days, under the inspection of a large number of physicians, without one of them suspecting the location of the ball. It is natural to think that a pistol or musket ball will go in a straight line until stopped by the tissues; the exception would be that it might be deflected by tissues, which would oppose its direct progress. If the attendant surgeons had thought of this, they would have located the ball correctly, for it followed the rule—a direct line—and passed to the left side of the body. If they had put a skeleton in the position of the President, measured the distance of the assassin, taken the angle of his arm and pistol, the line of the ball (if direct) could not have been mistaken. They have been inclined to "throw dust in our eyes" from first to last. They say, "It is not good surgery to probe cavities." Of course not, but it is good surgery to determine that

a cavity has been perforated; guessing in these cases does not answer. It is good surgery to enlarge the wound, so that the course of the missile may be traced, and this should have been done in the President's case; the poorest physician should know thus much, and any one who possesses a finger, has the best probe for the purpose. If we are to be guided by the report of the autopsy, there could have been no danger in following the course of the ball, with a Nelaton's probe, for they say explicitly that no cavity was penetrated. But their anatomy seems to have been seriously at fault, for the ball could not have reached its position without passing through the inferior part of the cavity of the thorax, unless it passed through the extremely tenuous structure of the diaphragm. Free drainage is a cardinal principle in modern surgery, and it is no excuse to talk of cavities, situation of ball, or anything else; free drainage we must have, if our cases are to do well. . . . Notwithstanding that they had now an opening into which a man might almost pass his hand, they commenced probing with a catheter, and injecting some kind of fluid, into what they supposed was the track of the bullet, but which was evidently a channel made by this persistent bad surgery, and by the gravitation of the pus. They worked at it industriously as long as the patient lived, and had carried it down some eleven inches into the iliac fossa, dissecting the kidney in the operation. We have every reason to believe that had it not been for the operation of Prof. Agnew, providing for the passage of the pus into the abdomen, and the persistent probings and injections, there never would have been such a sinus and such accumulations of pus, and there would not have been the danger of pyæmia, which ultimately caused death. We have said nothing about the first persistent assertion that it was a wound of the liver, without a symptom of such injury being present; we have something to say about the persistent use of morphia, which certainly lessened the President's power to live, and which was most likely a cause of the gastric disturbance. With an experience of twenty years in the hypodermic injection of morphia (injecting it under the skin), I assert that it will produce just such an irritable stomach as was named in the reports. Common sense would have given the sufferer the food he had been accustomed to—solid food especially, as it could be taken. Why the physicians should have administered "koumiss" and the other advertised nostrums, it will puzzle anyone to discover. It would also puzzle one to determine by what mal-action of the medical brain, the yolks of eggs could have been suggested as nutritive enemata. Found rotting in the patient's bowels, by one of the consulting surgeons, he sends for powdered charcoal to be injected as a disinfectant. There was no mistaking the depressing influence of the eggs, which almost terminated the case then and there. Good food might have sustained the strength of the patient; the fact that the ball was encysted, and the track of the wound nearly healed, shows this clearly.

APOPLEXY.

In pursuance of the plan already announced, we follow the Rev. John Wesley's alphabetical arrangement of disorders, and give, in the first instance, Mr. Wesley's suggestions with regard to the treatment thereof. Apoplexy (says Mr. W.) involves a total loss of all sense and voluntary motion; it is generally characterized by a strong pulse, hard breathing and snorting.

1. To prevent it, use a cold bath, and drink water only.
2. In the event of a fit, put a handful of salt in a pint of cold water; and if possible pour it down the throat of the patient; he will quickly come to himself. (So will one who seems dead by a fall, if similarly treated.)
3. If the fit occur soon after a meal, *do not bleed*, but give an emetic.*
4. Rub the head, feet and hands thoroughly, and let two strong men carry the patient upright, backwards and forwards about the room.

5. A seton in the neck, with low diet, has often prevented a relapse. There is a wide difference between sanguineous and watery apoplexy; the latter is often followed by palsy. In the former case the countenance becomes florid, the face is swollen, and the bloodvessels of the neck and temples likewise; the pulse beats strongly, and the eyes become prominent and fixed, the breathing is difficult, and amounts to snorting. Sanguineous apoplexy is more sudden than the watery. When the patient is so far recovered as to be able to swallow, let him take aperient medicine; but if he be unable to do this, an enema should be administered, with plenty of fresh butter, and a large spoonful of salt with it. In the watery apoplexy, the pulse is less strong, the countenance less florid, and the difficulty of breathing is not so great; three grains of tartar emetic may be given in this case, and aperient medicine subsequently. The powder of white hellebore should also be blown up the nose. This kind of apoplexy is generally preceded by an unusual heaviness, giddiness, and drowsiness.

VACCINATION.

The subjoined figures are based on a Return to the House of Commons (No. 392—Session 2—1880):—They indicate to what an extent various kinds of disease have been introduced at the point of the lancet.


<i>Average Yearly Deaths under One Year of Age per 1,000,000.</i>						
ENGLAND.	Syphilis.	Erysipelas.	Skin Diseases.	Pyæmia.	Scrofula.	Mesenteric Disease.
Voluntary Vaccination, 1847 to 1853	564	817	183	155	351	2,981
Obligatory Vaccination 1853 to 1867						
Enforced Vaccination 1867 to 1878	1206	781	253	180	611	3,371
	1738	834	343	180	908	4,373

Not distinguished before 1862.

That is to say—that while the death-rate of infants from all causes is declining, the death-rate from inoculable, (and therefore vaccinal,) diseases is increasing.

A COLD.

One of the simplest remedies for this common ailment is within everybody's reach, and yet it is so satisfactory to many to receive the visit of a doctor, that they prefer confiding in such a gentleman, and paying his little bill, to availing themselves of it. Anyone who can command a bucket of boiling water, a cane-bottom-chair, and a blanket, may conquer anything of the nature of a cold; immediately that the blanket is thrown off, the body should be well scrubbed with a cold wet towel, and the cold will be found to have yielded, by the following morning; a few mint leaves, if thrown into the water will increase the perspiration; and fifteen or twenty minutes, if the person perspire freely, will be long enough to sit over the water.

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“PULPIT-CRITICISM,” by the same author, sold at PATTERSON & Co.'s, 4 Adelaide Street West. Price \$1.50 per annum.