

pensatory, published in 1742. After entering into a distinction between *Persicaria non maculata* and the *Persicaria suc maculosa*, he proceeds to say that "In scorbutic cases, hypochondriac affections, and all disorders from a sluggish circulation of the fluids, it may be found highly useful. Etmuller said that the English have it so much in esteem as to use it in the belly-ache, cholick, scurvy, spleen, and all chronic diseases. Mr. Boyle greatly commends its distilled water in the stone, and in that opinion he agrees with many who have valued it among their secrets for its efficacy in such cases. Also externally applied to dissipate bruised blood." "It is said to be antiseptic, diuretic and aperient."

Fountain, in writing on diseases of irritation, in the *New York Medical Journal*, Vol. V., pages 410 and 411, said (under the head of *Purpura urticans*), "After he had used various remedies in the case of a female patient to no purpose, a neighboring quack said to her that he could cure her in twelve hours. She consented, and he fulfilled his promise. He fomented her legs an hour or more with a strong decoction of the *polygonum persicaria*, and bound a large quantity on the affected parts. On removing it, twelve hours after, not a vestige of the complaint was to be seen."

My own experience, for many years, of its medicinal powers, goes to corroborate in a measure the above ideas of its therapeutic operation. I have used the *Persicaria urens* in many obstinate cases of tympanitis and flatulent colic, with the best effects in every instance. I order a strong decoction to be used every three or four hours, according to the urgency of the case, by applying it over the abdomen, assisting its operation by an enema, and freely using a drink of the same. I have also found its external application to have succeeded much better than the terebinthian liniment, in cases of chronic erysipelatous inflammation peculiar to the extremities of aged people. I say chronic, for I have considered it proper to suffer the acute stage of the disease to pass over before using the *polygonum*.

Respectfully yours, &c.

Middle Haddam, Ct., Aug. 19, 1839.

N. SMITH.

BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, SEPTEMBER 4, 1839.

MEDICAL BOTANY.

By referring to a communication in another part of this Journal, the reader will find that Dr. Wheeler introduces to the notice of practitioners an indigenous plant, which, according to his opinion, possesses very valuable properties. It is worth while to have the subject thoroughly investigated by those who have an opportunity of testing the efficacy of the plant in protracted parturition. If it is less dangerous than the ergot, and equally certain in its action, it is destined to have a conspicuous place in our *materia medica*. Another article has also been advantageously used by a Connecticut correspondent, as will be seen in a preceding page, which likewise merits more general attention. Medical

botany is not pursued with that ardor in this country, at present, which it merits. Plants without number abound in field and forest, whose medicinal character is quite unknown. If Dr. Lee meets with sufficient encouragement in the great work he proposes, a hope is entertained that he will be more thorough than those who have gone before him. He will have the advantage of possessing all that others have written, and facilities for conducting inquiries throughout the United States, which no other individual in that department of science ever enjoyed.

Dr. Gallup's Institutes of Medicine.—Amongst the bibliographic notices of the New York Journal of Medicine and Surgery, a writer, under the signature of J. A. S., consigns the venerable Dr. Gallup's two volumes to fire and faggot, without having read them. Is this the true way of writing criticisms? "We do not pretend to have read the above work," says this candid commentator, and we verily believe he speaks the truth. "A very few pages at the beginning, an occasional paragraph in the middle, and a hasty closing of the book at the end, with a willing determination never to meddle with it again, is all we have been able to accomplish." We hope that this wholesale and unfair process of exciting a prejudice against Dr. Gallup's labors, will not succeed. That the work far outweighs in character a host of imperfect things in the shape of medical books, which are elaborated every day in the week, will be acknowledged by those who honestly investigate its claims. The fact is, Dr. Gallup must be read with fixed attention;—this J. A. S. manner of skipping from the title page to the middle, and from thence to the word *finis*, would answer well enough for a directory, but will not do in studying the laws of life.

It is very amusing, doubtless, to find fault when one imagines that he has extraordinary powers for detecting errors before they are discovered. We are still impressed, as we were at first, with the intrinsic excellence of Dr. Gallup's researches—and we still believe that his name will be transmitted to posterity in the pages of the "Outlines of the Institutes of Medicine," when those who are always ready to put out a light, are forgotten in the lumber of accumulating centuries.

Thomsonian Students.—A communication will be noticed in to-day's Journal, from the president of the Albany Medical College, explanatory of the invitation of the faculty, to the quacks assembled at Albany, some months since, to examine the College. We are well satisfied, from this letter, that the idea of coalescing with the Thomsonians, or incorporating them with their own scholars, by way of increasing the professional emoluments, was not thought of—and it is therefore exceedingly to be lamented that some of the medical journals have put a wrong construction, rather indirectly, upon the motives of those professors who were only civil to a number of ignoramuses in medicine, who happened to be engaged in the ridiculous farce of a Thomsonian convention. Now if these Ishmaelites in medicine would attend the lectures of the colleges, it would be the happiest circumstance imaginable, for it would be the very means of overthrowing themselves. Only let them be taught, and well taught, and it would be a death-blow to the whole lobelia fraternity. Instead of condemning the college, therefore, for an indiscreet act, thus far Dr. March is deserving of commendation for his philanthropy—for it could be nothing short of it, to propose to instruct Thomsonian pupils.

Worcester District Medical Society.—Officers for 1839. Edward Flint, M.D., Leicester, *President*; Benj. Hayward, M.D., Worcester, *Vice President*; John S. Butler, M.D., Worcester, *Secretary and Librarian*; W. Workman, M.D., Worcester, *Treasurer*. Meetings are held the 1st Wednesday of October, and the 2d Wednesday of January, for the purpose of hearing reports of cases or receiving communications on medical and scientific subjects. Dr. Woodward, of the State Lunatic Asylum, will deliver a dissertation on the next anniversary meeting, the 3d Monday in June, 1840. The present number of fellows is fifty. There is a respectable and increasing library, the meetings are well attended, and the influence and interest of the Society are constantly increasing. It is exceedingly honorable to the practitioners of the beautiful and enterprising county of Worcester, that they have successfully organized and fully sustained the character of the association.

Lowell Medical Association.—By the rules and regulations of the associated practitioners of the city of Lowell, organized in March last, a stated meeting is to be held annually on the first Monday of January. The system of government adopted is similar in character to the Boston Medical Police, and if the members live up to its requisitions, they will have peace and good fellowship as long as the society exists. It strikes us that the fee-table should have higher rates of charging. A physician must necessarily pay about as much for his living in Lowell as in Boston, and the compensation for his professional services should there, as well as here, be proportioned to his expenses.

Extraordinary Power of Memory.—A boy, whose name is Gustave Adolphe Bassle, born at the Hague in 1826, has very much astonished the learned in London, by the strength of his memory. In the presence of many persons, the present season, he answered extremely difficult and perplexing questions in history, geography, mythology, and natural history, besides various other departments of knowledge, embracing the sciences. He then correctly repeated 155 figures—and without hesitation told which was the 46th of these figures, which the 28th, 115th, and so on. A table of 40 figures was then speedily drawn up and presented to him; in less than five minutes he repeated the whole series, from first to last, without making a single error.

It is pretended that a system has been discovered by which any one may acquire this great power of memory, by a few simple lessons of only one hour each. What is still more singular, it is represented that the rules may be applied with facility for the acquisition of languages. Some manipulating phrenologist will, by-and-by, show us that the thing is impossible, without a cerebral organization equal in all respects to the brain of Gustave.

M. Ricord's Practice in Phimosis.—He marks out with ink upon the skin of the prepuce, the situation of the dorsum of the corona glandis; a little in front of this mark he draws two other lines, diverging as in the figure of the letter >, reversed, and meeting below the frenum; laying hold of the prepuce with a pair of forceps behind these lines, he, with one sweep of the bistoury, removes the whole; the mucous membrane is then cut as far back as the edges of the retracted incision in the

skin. In the next place he divides the frenum of the prepuce, and either ties or cauterizes with the nitrate of silver the wounded artery.

M. Ricord is very anxious to impress upon the minds of his audience the necessity of securing the artery of the frenum, either by a ligature or by torsion. If it is attempted to do so by caustic, the surgeon should take care to wipe the end of the vessel quite dry before he applies the caustic, preventing the bleeding by compressing the posterior part with his fingers.—*London Lancet*.

Division of Tendons.—The following exceedingly curious passage from an ancient diary recently published, shows that the operation of dividing the tendons of contracted muscles was performed nearly two centuries ago in England.

“The mountebank that cutt wry necks, cutt three tendons in one child’s neck, and hee did itt thus: first by making a small orifice with his launcet, and lifting upp the tendon, for fear of the jugular veins, then by putting in his incision knife, and cutting them upwards; they give a great snapp when cutt. The orifices of his wounds are small, and scarce any blood follows; some are wry neckt from the womb, they only lay on a melilot plaister to heal the wound, the plaister must bee a fresh one every day. As for the symptoms of this cutting, they are only these: that about a day or two after, the child will be sickish, some humour falling on the stomach of itt, as the mountebank says. When hee hath cutt itt, he bends the child’s neck the other way, and putts on a capp, and a fillet tied to the capp, and so ties itt under the arme pitts, and so by constant bending the head that way, itt becomes straight and upright.”

Belladonna Plaster in Nervous Palpitations, Irritable Bladder, &c.—Dr. Simpson, of the York County Hospital, uses a belladonna plaster over the region of the heart, to quiet violent palpitation; and Dr. Laycock says that he has found the application very successful, especially in nervous palpitation. Dr. L. states also that the belladonna plaster will relieve irritable bladder and neuralgia or irritability of the rectum. The plaster should be made with the pure extract spread on lint or leather, and applied moist to the sacrum or perineum. Dr. L. thinks that an opiate plaster made with powdered opium and soap cerate, is more efficacious than belladonna, especially in irritable bladder; it will, sometimes, enable a person to rest undisturbed during a whole night.—*London Med. Gaz.*

Convention for the Revision of the Pharmacopœia.—We are informed that Delegates have been already appointed to the Medical Convention for the Revision of the Pharmacopœia, which is to meet in Washington in January next, by the Medical Society of New Jersey, the University of Maryland, the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, and the Rhode Island Medical Society.—*American Jour. Med. Sciences*.

Memorial to Congress to Enact a Law for the Transmission of Vaccine Virus by Mail free of Postage.—We have received a letter from Dr. Jas. Magoffin, Jr., of Mercer, Mercer County, Pennsylvania, in which the writer states that he has obtained the signatures of a number of the phy-

sicians in his neighborhood to a memorial to Congress, praying the enactment of a law for the conveyance of vaccine matter by mail free of postage; and he urges the making of a corresponding effort by the physicians of this city and elsewhere. The object is certainly a useful one and deserves the active co-operation of the profession throughout the country.—*Ibid.*

Yellow Fever at Charleston.—Up to the 20th ult. 71 cases of yellow fever had been admitted to the Marine Hospital at Charleston, 16 of which terminated in death, and 55 in recovery. Either from superior treatment, or some other cause, the number of deaths in Charleston, by yellow fever, in proportion to the number of cases, is but little more than half that of New Orleans.

Health of New York.—Week before last the report of the City Inspector recorded 203 interments—28 men, 32 women, 68 boys, 75 girls. The aggregate exhibits a degree of general health in the city, which is highly gratifying; while, at the same time, the number of deaths of females exceeds those of males. Cholera infantum carried off 39, dysentery 15, diarrhœa 15, consumption 22. Of the whole number, 162 were natives of the United States, and 26 of Ireland.

Medical Miscellany.—A lady, of Kensington, on the 17th ult., had four sons at a birth, who are all doing well.—David D. Owen, of Indiana, has been appointed Geologist to the United States.—There were sixty students the last term of the medical department of the University of Virginia; and forty-eight at Hampden Sidney, Richmond, Virg.—The editor of the American Medical Library cautions his readers against the 3d edition, or any edition now published, of Dr. Ryan's Formulary, which is full of inaccuracies.—Obstinate cases of bilious fever are prevalent in many parts of Virginia.—A violent kind of dysentery, says a country paper, has very much alarmed the inhabitants of Springfield, Vt. It is represented to be somewhat like the Asiatic cholera. Several deaths had occurred at the last accounts.—On the 15th ult. 24 cases of yellow fever were admitted at the Charity Hospital, New Orleans, of which 5 died. The day before, there were 10 deaths.—Only 5 prisoners died the last year in the House of Correction, at South Boston, out of the great number of over six hundred persons sent there by different courts—which is certainly complimentary to the Board of Overseers, who are both vigilant and humane, and to the physician who has the care of the hospital.—Young surgeons are receiving peculiar encouragement in the government service of Egypt. In Turkey, too, the English surgeons are well paid, both in the army and naval service.—Dysentery, produced by crude fruits, is now quite common in many parts of New England, and particularly among small children.—Drs. Geo. Capron and H. W. Rivers have opened an institution at Providence, R. I., for giving gratuitous advice in diseases of the eye and ear. Every institution of the kind should have Dr. Dix's apparatus for cleansing the Eustachian tube—an admirable contrivance. His office is in Court street, Boston.—A fatal dysentery has carried off 22 persons in the parish of Point Clare, island of Montreal.—The British government furnish their navy with 235,000 gallons of rum and 40,000 pounds of tobacco, annually. The navy consists of 20,000 men.—The

medical department of the Cincinnati College is to be suspended. The professors have resigned, and the faculty, it is said, will not recommend successors.—A colored woman, named Marie Geanne Robin, died in New Orleans, on the 14th ult., at the very advanced age of 107 years and 5 months. She never took medicine of any kind.—Mr. Malcom says that the custom of blacking teeth in Burmah is almost universal. It is done generally about the age of puberty. The person first chews alum, or sour vegetables, several hours, after which a mixture of oil, lampblack, and perhaps other ingredients, is applied with a hot iron. When done by the regular professors of the art, it is indelible.—In a recent case of extirpation of the eye, M. Velpeau operated without removing the lachrymal gland with the eye.—A calculus, weighing 3 ounces, was lately removed from a female in Paris by M. Velpeau, by the vesico-vaginal section, being the first time this operation has been performed in Paris, though not the first time in France.—Dr. Griscom's Treatise on Animal Mechanism and Physiology has been published at New York, by the Messrs. Harpers, making the 85th volume of the Family Library.—Dr. Parker, in the Medical School of the city of New York, recently placed in the chair of surgery, will also lecture on pathological anatomy.—Dr. Gross's new work on pathological anatomy is looked for with anxiety. Messrs. Marsh, Capen & Co., the publishers, are driving it through the press, we understand, with all possible despatch.—Dr. Griffith, of the University of Virginia, will soon resign his professorship in consequence of ill health. He expects to visit the West Indies.

Whole number of deaths in Boston for the week ending August 31, 39. Males, 22—females, 17.

Of consumption, 4—drowned, 1—old age, 1—typhous fever, 1—inflammation of the bowels, 3—dropsy on the brain, 2—sudden, 1—fits, 2—disease of the heart, 1—child-bed fever, 1—bowel complaint, 1—cholera infantum, 3—dysentery, 4—infantile, 2—casualty, 2—scarlet fever, 1—murdered, 1—hooping cough, 1—canker in the bowels, 1—delirium tremens, 1—billous fever, 1—debility, 1—stoppage in the bowels, 1—lung fever, 1—stillborn, 4.

SURGEON'S TRUSS.—DR. M. R. FLETCHER'S PATENT.

For the radical cure of Hernia. This instrument was recently introduced to the medical profession, and favorably noticed in the "Boston Medical and Surgical Journal." Since that time specimens have been examined and tried by most of the surgeons in the New England States, from whom certificates have been received, expressing their confidence in its superiority over every other truss now in use. Its construction is neat, small, and the spring very light. It may be made longer or shorter, and will suit equally well Inguinal, Vento-inguinal, or Femoral Hernia; the difference being in the form of the pad. The pad may be located at any desired spot, and the pressure increased as gradually and as much as requisite. This facility of adaptation will be of great convenience to physicians who may adjust them, as well as to the individuals who may wish to vary the pressure. I have the liberty of referring to a large number of the profession in the city and country, only a few of whom it will be expedient to mention, viz., Drs. J. C. Warren, G. Hayward, W. Ingalls, S. D. Townsend, J. Jeffries, J. V. C. Smith, G. B. Doane, W. Lewis, Boston; W. J. Walker, Charlestown; A. L. Peterson, Salem; J. C. Dalton, Lowell; D. Crosby, Professor of Anatomy and Surgery, Dartmouth College; E. Hoyt, President, and J. B. Abbott, Secretary of N. H. Medical Society; T. Haynes, Concord, N. H.; J. Roby, Professor of Anatomy and Surgery, Bowdoin College. Price from \$1 50 to \$4 00, according to size and finish. To physicians those of men's sizes will be sold at \$2, 2 25, 2 50, 2 75, and \$3 00. Those sending for them will mention right or left side, the kind of hernia, and the number of inches around the pelvis. Specimens may be seen at Metcalf's, 33 Tremont Row, and at Carter's, corner of Hanover and Portland streets, druggists. They may be obtained at No. 9 Howard street.

Arrangements have been made with Mrs. H. Williams (lecturer on anatomy to females) to wait on ladies from 9 A. M. to 1 P. M., on Mondays and Saturdays, at her residence, No. 29 Friend street.

Aug 21—

M. R. FLETCHER.

MEDICATED VAPOR BATHS.

PHYSICIANS are informed that they can have administered to their patients the Whitlow Vapor Baths, medicated to meet a variety of indications.

The following are the kind usually given.—Anti-inflammatory, anti-spasmodic, anti-syphilitic, antacid, anti-hæmorrhagic. These baths have given evidence of their efficacy in pulmonary affections, and other diseases of the lungs, in prostration of the nervous system, in constitutional scrofula, in chronic diseases of liver, in ulcers and cutaneous eruptions on any part of the body, in neuralgia and all painful affections of the nerves. In every kind of rheumatism they have proved very beneficial. In erysipelas the vapor bath is attended with most excellent effect. One single bath will sometimes remove all the heat, swelling and itching.

Given under the superintendence of Dr. A. Gerrish, No. 14 Franklin Place, Boston.

Aug 21—tf

MEDICAL LECTURES IN BOSTON.

THE Medical Lectures in Harvard University will begin in the Medical College, Mason street, Boston, the first Wednesday in November next, at 9 o'clock, A. M., and continue sixteen weeks.

Anatomy, and Operations of Surgery, by	JOHN C. WARREN, M.D.
Chemistry, by	JOHN W. WEBSTER, M.D.
Midwifery and Medical Jurisprudence, by	WALTER CHANNING, M.D.
Materia Medica and Clinical Medicine, by	JACOB BIGELOW, M.D.
Principles of Surgery and Clinical Surgery, by	GEORGE HAYWARD, M.D.
Theory and Practice of Physic, by	JOHN WARE, M.D.

At a meeting of the Faculty, it was

Voted, "That no two courses of Lectures shall be admitted to qualify students for gratuitous admission to Lectures in this School which have not been attended in separate years, or at least six months from each other.

WALTER CHANNING, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine.

Boston, July 10, 1839.

Jy 17—tN

MEDICAL INSTITUTION OF YALE COLLEGE.

THE Lectures in this Institution will commence on Thursday, October 3, 1839, and continue sixteen weeks.

BENJAMIN SILLIMAN, M.D. LL.D., Professor of Chemistry, Pharmacy, Mineralogy and Geology.
ELI IVES, M.D., Professor of the Theory and Practice of Physic.
WILLIAM TULLY, M.D., Professor of Materia Medica and Therapeutics.
JONATHAN KNIGHT, M.D., Professor of the Principles and Practice of Surgery.
TIMOTHY P. BEERS, M.D., Professor of Obstetrics.
CHARLES HOOKER, M.D., Professor of Anatomy and Physiology.

The fees, which are required in advance, are \$12 50 for each course, except that on obstetrics, which is \$6. The matriculation fee is \$5, and the contingent bill for the course on chemistry, \$2 50. The expense of a full course, therefore, is \$76. There is no expense for dissection fee, and for a reasonable price students are furnished with as many subjects as they may require. The lecture and dissection rooms are spacious and commodious, and the various cabinets are richly supplied. The graduation fee is \$15.

CHARLES HOOKER, Secretary.

Yale College, August 1, 1839.

Aug 7—6t

BOYLSTON MEDICAL PRIZE QUESTIONS.

THE Boylston Medical Committee, appointed by the President and Fellows of Harvard University, consists of the following physicians, viz.:

JOHN C. WARREN, M.D.	JACOB BIGELOW, M.D.	JOHN RANDALL, M.D.
RUFUS WYMAN, M.D.	WALTER CHANNING, M.D.	ENOCH HALE, M.D.
GEORGE C. SHATTUCK, M.D.	GEORGE HAYWARD, M.D.	JOHN WARE, M.D.

At the annual meeting of the Committee, on Wednesday, Aug. 7, 1839, the premium of fifty dollars, or a gold medal of that value, was awarded to the author of a dissertation on "the pathology and treatment of Rheumatism," with the motto "Frustra fatigamus remedia ægrorum;" and a premium of the same value to the author of a dissertation on Scrofula, with the motto "Kunst macht Gunst." On opening the accompanying sealed packets, EDWARD WARREN, M.D., of Boston, was found to be the author of both dissertations.

The following prize questions for the year 1840 are already before the public, viz.:

1st. "The pathology and treatment of Typhus, and Typhoid, Fever."

2d. "The pathology and treatment of Medullary Sarcoma."

Dissertations on these subjects must be transmitted, post paid, to John C. Warren, M.D., Boston, on or before the first Wednesday of April, 1840.

The following questions are now offered for the year 1841, viz.:

1st. "To what extent is disease the effect of changes in the chemical or vital properties of the blood?"

2d. "The structure and diseases of the Teeth; with a numerical solution of the question, can caries of the teeth be retarded by mechanical processes?"

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The author of the best dissertation on either of the above subjects will be entitled to a premium of fifty dollars, or a gold medal of that value, at his option.

Each dissertation must be accompanied by a sealed packet, on which shall be written some device or sentence, and within shall be enclosed the author's name and place of residence. The same device or sentence is to be written on the dissertation to which the packet is attached.

All unsuccessful dissertations are deposited with the Secretary, from whom they may be obtained, if called for within one year after they have been received.

By an order adopted in the year 1828, the Secretary was directed to publish annually the following votes, viz.:

1st. That the Board do not consider themselves as approving the doctrines contained in any of the dissertations to which the premiums may be adjudged.

2d. That in case of the publication of a successful dissertation, the author be considered as bound to print the above vote in connection therewith.

ENOCH HALE, Secretary.

Publishers of Newspapers and Medical Journals, throughout the United States, are respectfully requested to give the above an insertion.

Boston, August 7, 1837.

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