

the mouth and was swallowed during some of the efforts which the child made to cough, when the tube was accidentally or intentionally closed. The impending suffocation was obviously removed by the operation, but the natural efforts were sufficient to expectorate the obstruction.

Salem, August 3d, 1848.

A. L. PEIRSON.

THE BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, AUGUST 9, 1848.

The Water-Cure Journal.—The first number of the sixth volume of this Journal, under the editorial supervision of Joel Shew, M.D., of New York, has been published, showing that the subject of which it perpetually treats, viz., water, and its sovereignty over diseases, possesses an untiring charm to the patrons of the Journal. It is a maxim with politicians, that people with but one idea can know but little of human affairs; and, moreover, that they are both to be pitied and laughed at for their persistence in an effort to centralize the attention of the whole world upon the one great thought occupying their minds. In that field of observation, it may be so; but in medicine, alas, a long course of observation demonstrates the fact, that the one-idea champions—at least those who join the ranks in season—invariably succeed in the accomplishment of their object,—first, in benefiting themselves, and next in favorably impressing a certain portion of the public with a belief in their doctrines, whether true or not. An adventurer starts off with a miraculous pill, for example, making such monstrous pretensions in respect to its efficacy, that the fellow at once becomes the butt of ridicule, and the source of unmeasured merriment. With a single eye, however, to the accomplishment of an original design of making a fortune out of nothing, he is indomitable and unrelaxing in his efforts to reach every ear with the marvels of his new medicine, and, to the surprise of every body, he succeeds, and not only enriches himself even beyond his own aspirations, but, through the assistance of fools, who are always in the majority where patent medicines are patronized, creates a reputation for disinterested benevolence. This is a specimen of the one-ideaism in medicine with which the world now abounds.

Is not the hydropathic mania of the same class and character? By a perseverance that never acknowledges fatigue, and by operating on those who are ready to seize upon straws, either from absolute necessity to keep off that worst of distempers, ennui, or for amusement, the water-cure physicians, with their one idea, have introduced themselves, almost unperceived, and, with a modesty and simplicity of manner, have captivated an order of intellect that will by and by recoil with surprise, if not with indignation, from the fascinations of the system. What is more innocent than water? is the oft-repeated question; and who shall dare deny its potency over the thousands of maladies which prey upon humanity? All the while, water is water still,—pure, harmless, and forever the same excellent necessary of life; while the active imaginations of those who live in wet sheets, and fancy that their days have been prolonged by a skilful appli-

cation of the douche and the plunge, do more for the hydropathic cause than the unconscious fluid, which receives all the credit of so many wonderful cures. Is not this, therefore, an instance of the successful practice of the one-idea system in medicine? and does not the title-page of the Water-Cure Journal demonstrate the truth of the preceding observations? It reads as follows:—"The Water-Cure Journal, and Herald of Reforms; devoted to the philosophy and practice of the hydropathic system of curing and preventing disease: embracing the true principles of health and longevity, together with directions for the application of water to the various diseases by which mankind are afflicted," &c.

Medical Chemistry.—Whatever tends to the advancement of medical chemistry, inspires us with new hopes. To prescribe medicines without knowing their chemical character, has invariably been condemned by those who acknowledge the responsibility of their profession; and yet this ignorance has been winked at so long, that some may inquire the utility of the study.

Messrs. Lea & Blanchard are the publishers of a thoroughly-prepared system of medical chemistry, designed expressly for the use of students in the profession, under the unobtrusive title of a Manual of the Science, with its application to toxicology, physiology, therapeutics, hygiene, &c., by D. P. Gardner, M.D., formerly professor in the Philadelphia College. The author says that, "he does not lay claim to originality, but is more ambitious to be useful; and his highest satisfaction will be found in having contributed something towards the introduction of chemical science into medicine." On a cursory examination of the interior illustrations, the various topics and propositions, to say nothing of the lucid, instructive method running through the whole of the 396 pages, we are impressed with the idea that the labor of Dr. Gardner will be appreciated, and that a deep sense of the neglect in which medical chemistry has apparently, if not in reality, been held, in medical institutions, may be thereby brought about, and be the means of restoring it to its legitimate position.

Professor T. R. Beck.—Dr. T. Romeyn Beck, of Albany, universally known to the profession for his researches in medical jurisprudence, has been laboriously engaged as principal of an academy in that city, during a period which, on the first of the ensuing September, will have extended to thirty-one years. While pursuing the fatiguing and responsible labor of the institution from day to day, during this while, he has so economized his time as to have established a reputation as an author, that is honorable to the country. Few if any names have a higher place as authority in courts of law than those of the distinguished brothers, Drs. T. R. and John Beck, the authors of a system of medical jurisprudence. It is understood that on retiring from the post so industriously occupied, Prof. B.'s time will for the present be principally devoted, at proper periods of leisure, to preparing a new edition of the Elements of Medical Jurisprudence, which in due time may be expected, improved and enriched by the accumulations of years since the publication of the last.

Lead Diseases.—A treatise from the French of L. Tanquerel Des Planches, with notes and additions, on the use of lead pipe and its substitutes,

by Samuel L. Dana, M.D., LL.D., from the press of Messrs. Bixby & Co., Lowell, has just appeared at the book stores. It is an octavo, containing 441 pages. By another week we shall have had time for an examination of the work.

Dr. Bernard's Discoveries respecting the Function of the Pancreatic Juice.—The only notice we have seen of the discoveries of Dr. Bernard, of Paris, since the first announcement of them by Prof. March, of Albany, in a letter published in this Journal for June 21, is contained in a letter from the European correspondent of the Southern Medical and Surgical Journal, and published in the August number of that Journal. He is quite as sanguine as was Professor March of the importance of this discovery, which the reader will recollect consists in ascertaining that the pancreatic fluid acts on the fatty substances of our food, which the gastric juice is incapable of doing, and dissolves them in the duodenum with astonishing rapidity. The subject is well worthy the attention and further experiment of physiologists—as, if the new theory be fully established, the question respecting the use of adipose and oily matters as part of the proper food of man, if not already settled, will, we should think, now become so. The doubt respecting the real use of the pancreas will also in such case be fully cleared up.

Boylston Prize Essay.—It will be seen by the Journal of to-day, that Dr. John H. Dix, of this city, who has for many years been known to the readers of this Journal by his valuable papers on diseases of the eye, has been awarded the annual prize of the Boylston Medical Committee for the best dissertation on one of the questions proposed for the present year.

Sickness at the Sing Sing Prison.—There are said to be some sixty convicts now on the sick list in this institution, and the chapel has been converted into a temporary hospital for the accommodation of the sick. The complaint by which the convicts are attacked is a species of cholera morbus, which runs into the common dysentery. Some four or five have already died of this complaint, and as many more are not expected to survive. There have not been so many on the sick list at one and the same time for many years past in that prison.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Cases at the Hospital on Blackwell's Island, New York, by Claudian, have been received.

The article proposed by Dr. B., of Michigan, will be cheerfully received, and we doubt not will prove worthy of publication.

DIED.—In Boston, Dr. Samuel Hamlin, 25.—At Barnstead, N. H., Dr. John P. Elkins, 57.—At Dover, N. H., Dr. James W. Cowan, 34.

MARRIED.—At Middletown, Conn., Dr. Albert B. Worthington to Miss Mary E. Selden.—John L. Gardner, M.D., of Bridgeport, Conn., to Miss M. E. Osborn.—At Hartford, Conn., Geo. B. Hawley, M.D., to Miss S. D. Boardman.

Report of Deaths in Boston—for the week ending Aug. 5th, 92—Males, 51—females, 41.—Stillborn, 10. Of consumption, 11—disease of the bowels, 30—dysentery, 3—cholera morbus, 2—diarrhœa, 3—cholera infantum, 5—inflammation of the bowels, 2—typhus fever, 3—scarlet fever, 1—croup, 1—infantile, 3—convulsions, 1—dropsy, 1—dropsy on the brain, 5—burns, 1—accidental, 2—paralysis, 3—debility, 1—drowned, 1—teething, 2—tumor, 1—marasmus, 3—hooping cough, 1—old age, 1.

Under 5 years, 54—between 5 and 20 years, 6—between 20 and 40 years, 15—between 40 and 60 years, 8—over 60 years, 9.

Medical Miscellany.—Dr. John A. Bowker, of Roxbury, a city adjoining Boston, has been missing since July 4th, under circumstances that alarm his friends.—Dr. Thomas Turpin, of Powhattan, Virginia, was shot in the right side by a neighbor, and it is feared mortally wounded.—The Hagerstown News says that Dr. Frederick Dorsey, of that place, is probably the oldest practising physician in the Union. He has been in active practice for more than fifty-eight years, and yet pursues the profession with a degree of vigor, activity and endurance, which, in a man of his years, is truly astonishing. He usually visits his patients on horseback, often riding from thirty to fifty miles daily, for many days in succession, and without regard to "wind or weather."—A female Mexican dwarf, twenty-five years old, measuring twenty-five inches in height, and weighing only eighteen pounds, is living at Matamoros. She is the nineteenth child of her parents.—Dr. Edward Spaulding, of Nashua, is said to have cured a most obstinate case of lockjaw, a short time since, by the use of chloroform. The attack was caused by the running of the head of a needle into the wrist.—Dr. Hamilton has resigned the chair of surgery in Geneva College, N. Y.—An able course of lectures will be given in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, in New York, the coming term, where students will have instruction of an elevated order.—A new edition of Dr. Bartlett's scientific work on fevers, may be expected soon.—Dysentery and smallpox lurk upon the borders of several towns at the north. Unripe fruit is the imputed cause of one, and neglect to vaccinate of the other.

Surgery at a Discount.—The following case came before one of the city magistrates a few days since. The son of a man whose income is, say \$25,000 a year, received a wound about three-fourths of an inch long on the upper lip. The wound extended obliquely upwards and backwards from the free border of the lip, which was entirely divided for the space of a quarter of an inch. A young physician brought the edges together by means of the twisted suture, and adhesion took place immediately. The reparation is almost perfect, scarcely a mark being left in the line of the wound. After the lapse of a proper time, a bill of *ten dollars* was sent to the boy's father; payment was refused, and suit was brought to enforce payment. One of the editors of this Journal swore (and does yet for that matter) that the service was well worth ten dollars; another physician swore that it was worth just three dollars; and a student of medicine (!) swore that it was worth just three dollars. The doctors' testimony being as 1½ to 1, the court decided that the cure of accidental harelip is worth just three dollars! The plaintiff, not satisfied with the judgment, took an appeal. He says he wants the value of such a piece of surgery fixed and settled indubitably; wants it placed on record, so that in future there may be no litigation. We shall give notice of the result.—*Western Jour. of Med. and Surg.*

Paris—the late Insurrection.—The *Siècle* gives the following account of the number of wounded persons conveyed to the hospitals in consequence of the late events. There are 120 at La Charité; 190 at the Val de Grace; 400 at the Hotel Dieu: a far greater number were received at the latter hospital, but many died within a few hours. There are 90 wounded at the Maison Dubois; 78 at La Clinique; 63 at St. Lazare; 500 at St. Louis. Gen. Damesme, who is at Val de Grace, has undergone amputation of the thigh.