

analyze and arrange his knowledge, and at the same time learn how to handle those six divine remedies—mercury, iodine, quinine, opium, tartar-emetic, and Epsom salts.

If he has passed his apprenticeship in town, he will do well to take an assistantship in the country, and *vice versa*. The more preferable plan is, to make an engagement for some definite time, for instance, one or two years, or perhaps what is still better, make two such engagements for one year, each with different parties, thus witnessing a more diversified range of practice. During this time how much valuable knowledge may be obtained! He must now act for himself, and, perhaps, feel for the first time in his life the real responsibility of his calling; his talents will be constantly put into requisition; his powers of observation will be taxed, and by the exercise of these, the aid of books, and professional conversation, he will largely benefit. In surgery, he will learn the time to be heroic; when it is necessary to be radical; how to be conservative. In practice of medicine, he will form some definite ideas as to what really is and is not fever; witness an instance or so of that terrific disease, puerperal convulsions; will learn how to distinguish between some forms of pneumonia and common continued fever; become acquainted possibly with the fatal and mysterious connexion that exists between erysipelas and puerperal fever; and have a case or two of operative midwifery; or, to say the least, will learn a valuable lesson in seeing how rarely instrumental aid is really required at all. Such are a few of the more important points of practice, amongst a thousand others, with which he will become acquainted; and, sir, I ask, is it not far better that he should become familiar with these serious matters, while another party shares the anxiety and is responsible for their issue, rather than at once embark in practice, wanting that confidence such experience supplies.

It was customary for the late Mr. Key to observe, that in case of illness he would at all times freely place his life in the hands of a young surgeon fresh from the hospitals. The observation was good as regards the eye and the hand; but where accurate diagnosis is concerned, some head-work, the result of experience, is absolutely required. The remark may appear singular, but I have actually known more than one instance where a surgeon has walked out of Lincoln's-inn fields with flying colours, who has never so much as opened a vein, or extracted a tooth. It should be remembered, also, that all doctors make mistakes; and since the young make more than the old, now is the best time to commit a few. The larger the practice, the better for the assistant, such as have union appointments being preferred; especially where there is an infirmary attached. Here the young surgeon can do much: for instance, he can follow disease into the dead-house; obtain frequent post-mortem examinations; and can at such times go through nearly all the operations, from the extraction of a tooth to the capital operation of lithotomy; taking care, in the first instance, to replace the tooth in its socket, and in the latter, to repair the incision through the skin. Then, again, the parts of hernia can be now and then examined; the surgical arteries repeatedly tied; and the amputations performed, with the exception of dividing bone. I do not advise that all these operations be performed on one and the same subject; but opportunities for post-mortem inspection are so frequent, that a mere incision or two, provided they are neatly sewn up again, are never objected to; for with the uninitiated all this passes for what they harmlessly suppose to be orthodox examination.

Some unhappy comparisons have been made respecting the salary of medical assistants: it is true the remuneration is not very large, but then the majority of practices are by no means extensive; neither are they profitable, especially where there is a numerous pauper population, and the aid of an assistant most required. I should say, that from thirty to forty pounds per annum is a fair consideration, especially for a first engagement; and in after-life, when the assistant in his turn requires assistance, he will think the same. It will be seen throughout, that the future practitioner of medicine has been considered: on the part of the principal it should be remembered, that his assistant is a sojourner in the land, a stranger among strangers, but also a brother practitioner; his equal in all things, perhaps his superior in some; and it behoves all those who require the aid of these gentlemen to treat them as such, in thought, word, and deed; and then, on the other hand, the courtesy and respect due from a junior to a senior, will be cheerfully accorded. It will tend to mutual confidence, if a contract be entered into on the part of the assistant; agreeing not to practise within a given distance for a certain time. I am persuaded this is the most satisfactory plan, and decidedly recommend it, for it sets aside all misconstruction of each other's acts. It would come with the better grace from the assistant in the shape of his own proposal, and the following is a legal form:—

I, A. B., being this day engaged to Y. Z., of _____, in the

county of _____, as his professional assistant, at a salary of _____, in consideration of this said engagement do covenant, promise, and agree, with and to the said Y. Z., that I will not practise medicine or surgery within _____ miles of _____; and for the due observance of this promise and agreement, I bind myself unto the said Y. Z., in the sum of _____, hereby declared to be designed, not as a penalty, but as and for liquidated damages.

Witness my hand and seal this _____ day of _____, 185 _____.
Signed, sealed, and delivered,
in the presence of J. K.

Perhaps it is as well to observe, that a legal seal is simply a legal fiction, and that a mark of any shape made with a pen answers all intents and purposes. Half a sheet of paper suffices for the above; and if, unhappily, any difference should arise, rendering it necessary to put it in force, the same must be stamped, and it forthwith becomes a legal instrument.

It has been shown, Sir, that the assistant enjoys many advantages; a year or two can be passed in this way, both agreeably and profitably; it forms a good transition stage from the freedom of hospital life to the restraints of private practice; it affords some wholesome lessons touching the duties of practitioners towards their patients; and in respect of moral conduct, it teaches that, to succeed in this honourable profession, a medical man must be like Caesar's wife, namely—beyond suspicion.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Faversham, 1851. _____ W. N. SPONG.

THE NECESSITY FOR A COLLEGE OF DENTAL SURGERY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As the numerous London medical schools are about uniting all that talent can desire, as far as medicine, surgery, and physiology are concerned, and as most specific maladies will be especially attended to, is it not desirable to appoint in every hospital a qualified dentist, to lecture upon the first and second dentition? the maladies incidental to the teeth and gums, in a word, the hygiene of the mouth, ought to be made a specific study, as much as the diseases of the eye, ear, or stomach; and many symptoms arise of toothache derivable from sympathy with the above organs, requiring discrimination, and care in treating. I consider, by insisting upon the formation of chairs of dental surgery in each hospital, that our present degraded profession will be brought to its proper position, and by the instrumentality of such lectureships we shall secure to our branch men of science, and be the means, I expect, of founding a Dental College, where dentists must pass an examination to become respected members of our rising and important profession. Why such men as Messrs. Bell, Saunders, Robinson, Clendon, Tomes, and other authors, do not moot this subject, I am at a loss to know, as they could so ably edit a monthly dental periodical that would be extremely useful, and benefit our cause essentially, and probably be the means of forcing the aspiring dentists to become better educated and more valuable members of our present homogeneous class.

Hoping these few remarks will stimulate the above scientific authors to fresh exertions in behalf of dental science, I shall leave the affair in their hands, trusting that I may have aroused them from their present lethargy, and that I shall soon hear of something to the advantage of our numerous body.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
JAMES I. KEENE, Dentist,
Formerly Assistant House-Surgeon
at St. George's Hospital.
Boulogne-sur-Mer, Sept. 1851.

P.S.—I am aware that two or three metropolitan hospitals have surgeon-dentists attached, but all of them ought to have lectures given to the medical students. I am also aware, that in America there are valuable dental journals, but I think England ought not to be behind-hand, especially as they have a Dental College, and we have not! *O! mirabile dictu.*

A PISTON-ARMED CATHETER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your review of "Adams on the Prostate Gland," you allude to the ingenuity and novelty of a catheter armed with a piston; it is not, however, exactly new. Seven or eight years ago, I was the dresser to a case of hæmaturia in Guy's Hospital, and used, for nearly a fortnight, a similar instrument, which Mr. Cock had had made for him, I believe, some years before, and it answered well. It was a No. 10 silver catheter, with the orifice at the end (not side), so large as merely to prevent the piston,

terminated by a silver knobbed end, from passing out of the catheter; the simple withdrawal of the stilet with its piston extremity was frequently followed by large strings of coagulum. Mr. Cock, I believe, possesses it now, and uses it occasionally.

Yours obediently,

W. T. ILIFF, Jun.

Newington-place, Sept. 1851.

Medical News.

APOTHECARIES' HALL.—Names of gentlemen who passed their examination in the science and practice of medicine, and received certificates to practise, on

Thursday, Sept. 4th, 1851.

BRERETON, JOHN LE GAY, Doncaster.

HULME, CHARLES DENTON, Leicester.

ROLSTON, JOHN, Devonport.

SOMERVILLE, THOMAS HENDERSON, Sedburgh, Yorkshire.

THE CHOLERA IN AFRICA.—The Gibraltar Board of Health has decreed that all vessels or boats coming from, or having touched at, or having had communication with any vessel from any port in Algeria, the Spanish settlements on the Rif coast, and the Chafarenas Islands, shall be ordered to quit the port. On the 12th ult. the Board of Health at Cadiz, considering the rapid progress of cholera in Africa, ordered that all vessels arriving at the ports of the said province from those of the African coast, that is to say, from Algeria to Magadore (Ceut alone excepted for the present) should be sent to the Lazarettoes of Vigo or Mahon, as well as all vessels which, coming from the same African ports, may have put into a Spanish one without performing the quarantine at the said Lazarettoes.

BALLOON DESCENT AT A LUNATIC ASYLUM.—The veteran Green, having made his 485th ascent from Vauxhall-gardens in the Nassau balloon, on Monday evening, accompanied by a party of gentlemen, effected a safe descent on the lawn in front of the Surrey County Lunatic Asylum. Many of the patients, who were enjoying their evening amusements, immediately assisted him in securing the balloon, and rendering him the required assistance. It being the intention of the company, which consisted of a party of military officers, again to embark at dawn of day on an aerial voyage, the descent was accomplished with scarcely any loss of gas. Balloon ascents being now of so frequent occurrence, they scarcely deserve any notice in a public journal, but it is with much pleasure that we record this, being a practical illustration of the great improvement which has been effected by Dr. Conolly, and others following his humane views, in the treatment of the insane in this country. Here a large quantity of afflicted persons immediately rendered the required assistance; and, although the extensive grounds soon became visited by neighbours from all directions, with whom they mixed, they cheerfully returned to the wards of the building, without any mischievous excitement from the event. Mr. Green and his friends having been received and made welcome by Dr. Diamond, they again ascended early in the morning, Mr. Green observing, it had never been his lot to alight in a more suitable or cheerful spot; his companions, some of whom had travelled much in foreign countries, expressing in very strong language the "immense humanity" now here displayed in the treatment of lunatics compared to similar establishments they had visited.—*The Times*, Sept. 10.

OBITUARY.—**THE LATE G. TURTON, Esq.**—On the 5th inst. were committed to the grave, in our cemetery, the remains of the late George Turton, whose character has been sustained for a very lengthened period, in his profession not only as a general practitioner, but especially as a surgeon-accoucheur in this now vast and populous town and district, in a manner most creditable and exemplary. He laboured assiduously for more than thirty years in the various vocations of a dignified, though oftentimes ill-rewarded profession; his efforts were mainly exerted in its most trying and harassing department, that of midwifery, not merely in the lying-in room, at the sick-bed side, but as a teacher in the science of obstetrics. Many years ago, when the Sheffield medical school was instituted, Mr. Turton was selected, and deservedly so, as lecturer on this, we regret to add, most neglected, yet all-important part of the medical practitioner's education. Mr. Turton was so convinced of the general want of knowledge in this respect, that during his studentship in Edinburgh, he became the clinical practising pupil of the late Dr. Hamilton, professor in that university, thus qualifying himself in a pre-eminent degree for the office of lecturer, which he so ably filled in the Sheffield school. His lectures were remarkable for their practical

bearing. The book of nature was ever in his presence; with him, "facts were stubborn things." He would often repeat, "Gentlemen, meddling midwifery is always bad; these are my obstetrical instruments; observe their rusty state, for want of use, though I have had more than 11,000 cases." (speaking nearly 20 years ago.) From Mr. Turton's mind being so thoroughly and profoundly experienced, he was seldom led away by innovations, or in common parlance, 'isms', which too often prevail and endanger the sobriety and steadiness of those in pursuit of medical science. On the introduction of ether and chloroform, Mr. Turton predicted their gradual disuse, as we believe is the fact. In the lying-in room he was ever humane and patient, and his success great, and we believe that he was frequently called into consultation, in difficult and dangerous cases, by his professional brethren. For several years Mr. Turton acted as surgeon-accoucheur to the Dispensary, and when he relinquished that office, owing to failing health, he was elected consulting surgeon-accoucheur for life. Mr. Turton was a devoted member of the Wesleyan association, and did not permit the harassing and exhausting duties of his profession to prevent him from discharging the duties of a lay preacher, to which he attended with regularity and ability. In politics, Mr. Turton was a warm friend of the liberal cause, earnestly promoting its advancement, and uniting moderation and zeal. He was one of the first members of the Town Council, and until last spring, was one of the aldermen of the borough. His kindly disposition, his readiness to be useful, his unobtrusive modesty, and his unwearied industry, gained for Mr. Turton universal esteem.—*Sheffield Independent*.

MORTALITY OF THE METROPOLIS FOR THE WEEK ENDING SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6.—The health of London in the week ending Saturday, September 6th, exhibits some improvement. The deaths, which in the previous week were 1061, fell to 967. Of persons who died at stated ages, only 144 had attained the age of 60 and upwards; 518 were children under the age of 15; 303 were men and women under the age of 60. Convulsions, small-pox, measles, scarlatina, and whooping-cough, tabes, hydrocephalus (water on the head) destroyed many children; but diarrhoea in this week was more fatal than all these diseases together. Consumption was fatal to 105, typhus to 25, heart disease to 14, bronchitis to 11, injuries and violence to 12—adults under the age of 60. The deaths from diarrhoea increased from 23 in the first week of July, and 143 in the first week of August, to 192 in the first week of September. The deaths from cholera also increased, but in the last week they amounted to 17, while the number in the previous week was 28. Summer cholera prevails all over Europe in the hot season of the year; its symptoms often resemble those of Asiatic cholera, from which, however, it differs in this respect, that the course of the fatal cases is much less rapid. This is the anniversary of the most fatal week of the great cholera epidemic of 1849, when 3183 of the inhabitants of London died; and the contrast between the health of the great city then and at the present time is gratifying, particularly as it is now the abode of so many thousands of strangers. It would be still more gratifying if the danger of the recurrence of cholera was, as it might be, diminished by the removal of a thousand nuisances still existing, and laying the population open to the invasion of every epidemic.

The births of 777 boys and 723 girls, in all 1500 children, were registered in the week. The average of six corresponding weeks in 1845-50 was 1334.

At the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, the mean height of the barometer in the week was 30.028 in. The mean temperature of the week was 60.5°, about 1° above the average of corresponding weeks in ten years. The temperature was highest on Tuesday, when the mean was 65.0°; and lowest on Sunday, when the mean was 54.3° or 5.5° below the average of the same day in ten years. The wind generally blew from the north-west during the first three days, and then from the north-east to the end of the week.

PORTRAITS AND BIOGRAPHIES

OF

Members of the Medical & Surgical Profession.

The subject of the next Portrait & Biography will be

C. J. B. WILLIAMS, M.D., F.R.S.,

CONSULTING PHYSICIAN TO THE HOSPITAL FOR CONSUMPTION,
AND LATE PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE IN, AND PHYSICIAN AT, UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE HOSPITAL,