Digitalis, and Hyoscyanus, which had the effect of greatly increasing the secretion of urine, and diminishing the anasarous condition of the body. His bowels were kept regular by pills containing extract of Colocynth, Hyoscyanus, and Pil Hydarg. taken occasionally; and he had a large Belladonna plaster applied over the cardiac region. His diet consisted of milk, eggs, arrowroot, rice, beef tea, with two ounces of gin daily. This mode of treatment was continued throughout, with slight variation occasionally. At first he was much benefitted, but again became anasarous; his cough increased, with difficulty of breathing, and he died exhausted. Upon post mortem examination twelve hours after death, the lungs were found to be studded with miliary tubercle, and the lower lobes (especially on the right side) were congested, but not in a great degree. On the left side, beneath the clavicle, was a cavity capable of containing about two ounces of fluid; this was the only cavity found in the lungs of either side. The heart was natural in size. The pericardium was healthy, with the exception of some small patches of lymph of recent formation, which were deposited on it. Upon opening its cavities the walls were of natural thickness, and nothing abnormal was discernible. The mitral and bicuspidal valves were quite healthy, but upon opening up to the semilunar valves of the aorta they were found to be considerably thickened.

The ascending portion of the aorta, on its outer or right side, was dilated to the size of about a large walnut. The other viscera were healthy.

REPORTS OF MEDICAL & SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

MEDICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA.

Cancer and its Treatment. By W. Gillbee, Esq., Hon. Surgeon to the Melbourne Hospital.

[Read July 1857.]
ally, as it is one which is at present exciting much attention in the mother country, both in and out of the profession, and this interest has already extended to this colony. I allude to its alleged cure by Dr. Fell.

This, I must confess, was first brought under my notice by a patient of my own, a lady, upon whom I operated for Cancer of the breast two years ago, and in whom, as is too frequently the case, the disease had returned. A few months since, she again applied to me requesting a second operation. As the axillary glands, however, were enlarged, and as the case therefore was an extremely unfavorable one for operation, I advised her to abandon this wish on her part. She asked me if I had heard of the cure of cancer without the knife, and unaccompanied by pain, (mentioning the name of Dr. Fell.) I had to admit that I had not, upon which she expressed great surprise, and produced a recent London newspaper containing that which, to a person in her condition, must have proved a most exciting narrative, viz., a long account of Dr. Fell's wonderful discovery, and the almost miraculous cures which he had effected.

A few weeks afterwards, I learnt that this lady had left for England, with the intention of placing herself under Dr. Fell's care.

I have mentioned this circumstance, partly as an excuse for bringing before you a paper so hurriedly prepared, and also to show how necessary it is to keep ourselves well posted up in current scientific news relating to the profession; and there is this advantage in a society like ours, that the members, by meeting frequently together, communicate facts to each other which some one or more may not have had an opportunity of learning.

As the alleged infallible cure of Dr. Fell still remains a secret, of course we are scarcely in a position to criticise it. As far as I have been able to learn from the medical journals, in addition to external applications, Dr. F. proposes to administer the same remedy internally, with a view to destroy the cancerous diathesis. This is supposed by some to be a preparation of Bromine, which has lately been extensively tried upon the continent.

From statements of patients who have been under his treatment, the remedies he has applied appear to be powerful caustics, the use of which caused them most agonizing torture, extending over a period of from thirty to forty days. How the surgeons of the Middlesex Hospital could have been persuaded to countenance such proceedings in their institution, and thus to abet, or at least to sanction, that which, to use the mildest term, savors very much of quackery, is indeed difficult to account for, more especially as they must be well aware that such conduct not only compromises themselves and their Hospital, but the dignity of the whole profession.

Before proceeding to speak of the treatment of Cancer, it will
be necessary to speak of the nature and origin of this terrible
malady, a point involved, unfortunately, in much doubt and ob-
scurity. Many look upon it as a purely constitutional disease,
and its local manifestations simply as indications of the constitu-
tional vice; others view it as a local disease which has a tendency
to become generalized, and that we must first have the primitive
focus of the disease, and it is only subsequent to this that the rest
of the economy becomes infected. The arguments in support of
the former view are, that it may have its origin without any assign-
able cause; its development internally the same time as externally
in the most important organs without any previously existing
disease; the impossibility of its cure; and its reproduction through
the whole economy after its primary manifestations have been de-
stroyed. The arguments to support the latter view, however, are
equally numerous and strong, and what is of far more importance,
are borne out by facts, the result of actual practice, which must
necessarily have more weight than fine-spun theories. In view-
ing this question we must endeavour to avoid both extremes, for
that from its commencement to its termination it is a purely con-
stitutional disease is an assertion which, to a great extent, requires
proof; and that in the first instance, and throughout its whole
course, it is a purely local affection, is an assertion equally unre-
asonable. Sir Astley Cooper, I think, very properly stated that
the disease is the effect of a specific action in the part, preceded
by a disposition in the constitution to its production. On referring
to the exciting causes of Cancer, we find that a large proportion
are attributed to external violence, or to continual irritation of the
parts, and the organs generally affected are those most exposed to
injury or excitement. Sir Astley Cooper asserted that three-
fourths of such cases arise from grief and anxiety of mind, and
the experience of Mr. Cooke goes far to confirm this statement.
This, however, in my opinion is an overdrawn estimate of its
causation. Mr. Cooke, referring to this mental cause, also states
that material alterations in the blood are brought about under
these circumstances. "Atrophy of the red corpuscles, and in-
crease of the colorless globules may be observed, and the creative
power of the blood is deteriorated, and the tissues which this ill-
elaborated fluid forms show that defective organization which is
seen in Cancer;" whether the defect be a process of exudation or
of impaired nutrition, he admits is a speculation difficult of solu-
tion, but he is inclined to attribute it to deranged nutrition or
degeneration of the tissues, similar to fatty degeneration.
Mr. Paget has endeavoured to prove that Cancers are local
manifestations of certain specific morbid states of the blood, and
that in them are incorporated peculiar morbid materials which
accumulate in the blood, which their growth may tend to increase,
"This cancerous state of the blood," he observes, "is not a total change in it, but depends probably upon some definite material mingled with the natural constituents, and that this material is derived from a morbid transformation of one or more of the natural constituents of the blood, and is maintained as morbid structures are by the persistence of the same method of transformation, or by its own assimilative force.

Mr. Paget admits the impossibility of proving this condition of the blood, for, except in such cases as where the cancerous substance has been broken down to admit of its absorption, or where the growth may have extended through the veins into their walls, has there ever been observed in the blood of a cancerous person cancer cells, or in any form visible germs of Cancer?

Insufficient food, intemperance, and effects of climate have also been assigned as exciting causes of Cancer; though it would be difficult to prove that they are primary causes, no doubt that they merit attention in a high degree as predisposing agencies. From the evidence which Dr. Walsh has collected, the maximum amount of cancerous disease occurs in Europe, and it is very rare among the patients of the hospitals at Hobart Town and Calcutta, and also among the natives of Egypt, Algiers, and the tropical parts of America; and from my own experience I have found that in this, the Melbourne Hospital, it is comparatively a rare disease, more especially in the female wards, and from conversations which I have had with gentlemen of long standing and professional experience in the colony, I find that this is their opinion also.

The treatment of Cancer may be divided into local and constitutional. Amongst the former the knife is unquestionably the most important agent. I am perfectly aware that those who view Cancer as a purely constitutional disease, strongly deprecate its use, and they allege, that not only does it never cure the disease, but that all interference by it actually accelerates the death of the patient, and as proof of this argument they assert that, out of 113 cases upon which Macfarlane operated, he was unable to point out a single case of radical cure. This, however, does not agree with the results of the practice of our experienced surgeons. It is true the favourable cases are not so numerous as might be desirable, yet quite sufficient to warrant active interference; and on referring to Velpeau, we find that from the year 1824 to 1852 he had had 144 cases of scirrhus of the breast under treatment, 94 of which were extirpated, with the satisfactory result of 43 cures, and this author assures us that he had not enumerated among these any cases of innocent tumour; and the experience of all our best surgeons is such as to enable them to recommend the use of the knife in all cases where the disease is yet local, or before it
has had time to become generalized. At the same time the utmost judgment is required in the selection of cases upon which to operate, and it is not all which are taken at the early stages of the disease which will be benefitted by such measures; for there are some forms of Cancer which, though removed at any stage of their progress, are certain to recur with increased activity. Velpeau has pointed out these to be stony scirrhous en masse, diffused Lardaceous or Encephaloid Cancer, and the disseminated integumentary Cancer; also those that are rapidly developed, or which are lost in the tissues without limits; nor does any surgeon recommend an operation in the more advanced stage, where the axillary or other sympathetic glands are affected, or where the tumour is adherent to the ribs, or where we have reason to suspect a second Cancer to exist in any important organ. Indeed, in the more advanced stages of Cancer, there are few who use the knife except as a palliative remedy. There are cases, however, in which the removal of the local malady may be desirable, as in the advanced hemorrhagic stages, and in some cases of epithelial cases, where exposed parts, as the lips, &c., have been attacked, but, except in the last-mentioned variety, it must be looked upon rather as a palliative than as a remedial agent; one that may lessen suffering, prolong life, and add to the comfort of the patient both in body and mind, but it can hardly be expected to cure.

In respect of the desirability of operation or otherwise, the strumous and the cancerous patient appear to occupy a position of much similarity; for instance, in favourable cases a strumous elbow, knee, or ankle joint can often be removed to the great advantage and comfort of the patient, and with every prospect of a permanent cure. So in Cancer we operate early to prevent its becoming generalized; also when it is evident that the local disease is destroying life by pain, by profuse discharge, or by mental anguish, an operation may be equally advisable; but if in our strumous patient we find, besides the local manifestation of the disease in the joint, the lungs also seriously implicated, no prudent surgeon would feel himself justified in advocating its removal. So in Cancer, in which the cachexia, or evident constitutional disease, is more than proportionate to the local disease, or where we have reason to suspect internal Cancer, or the general health is in such a condition that the risk of an operation would be unusually great, it should most assuredly be declined.

Caustics, though far inferior as local agents to the knife, are still valuable auxiliaries, and are often useful in cases where a cutting operation would be improper. There is an innumerable variety, and they have been selected both from the vegetable and mineral kingdom. Caloric, both in its negative and positive form, from the actual cautery to the freezing mixture, has been exen-
sively employed. In referring to this class of applications, I shall mention only those of recent date, and which have gained the confidence of the profession, selecting those from the mineral kingdom first.

Mr. Stanley recommends a diluted solution of the Chloride of Zinc, the advantage of which he states is, that it is unaccompanied by pain, and does not necessitate the confinement of the patient; neither does it occasion deleterious effects from absorption into the system, nor its application erysipelatous inflammation. The strength he recommends is one ounce of Sir W. Burnett’s preparation to eight of water, to be applied on lint six or eight hours during the day. Chloride of Zinc paste has also been highly recommended, more especially for open or ulcerated Cancers, and for cancriform growths generally, where the knife is entirely out of the question.

Mr. Ure believes it to have a powerful action upon albumen, and that when it comes into contact with morbid albumen it gradually penetrates its substance so as to deprive it of vitality; it is used in the form of a thin paste, made by mixing three parts of flour or thin starch with one of the Chloride of Zinc. This is applied over the whole surface of the Cancer, and covered with cotton, and allowed to remain until next day; the dressing is next removed, an incision is made to the depth of the destroyed parts about one-eighth of an inch, and one-third of an inch apart from each other, and the Chloride of Zinc paste, spread upon strips of linen, are inserted in each incision and covered with cotton. In some cases the tumour has been destroyed in about thirteen dressings, and in about thirty days the whole may be expected to slough out.

Professor Simpson has recently introduced the Sulphate of Zinc, one ounce of which, highly dried, is mixed with a drachm of Glycerine, or the dry powder may be sprinkled over the affected part. Mr. Cooke, of the London Cancer Hospital, observes that of all the detergent remedies, Lead, in its pharmaceutical form, is the most efficient. Velpeau speaks highly of a preparation consisting of concentrated Sulphuric Acid, made into a paste with Saffron, but from the danger and difficulty of its application it has found but small favour with other surgeons.

The last mineral caustic to which I shall allude is that of M. Manec, of Paris. It consists of one part of Arsenious Acid to seven of Cinnabar, and four of burnt sponge, made into a paste, with a few drops of water; he advises that it should not be applied to a space of greater extent than the size of a halfcrown at each application; the quantity absorbed, he observes, from such a limited surface, never occasions unpleasant symptoms. He also remarks that the action of Arsenic is not like that of other caustics, merely local, but that it pervades the whole system. Its pre-
presence, when applied in this form of paste to destroy cancr oid
growth, may be detected in the urine about twelve hours after its
first application, and may be continued to be detected for eight or
ten days, and it is not till it has wholly disappeared from the urine
that the paste should be re-applied; also that the action of the arsenic
upon cancerous growths is not simply that of an escharotic, but that
it has a peculiarly destructive affinity for cancerous growths, and that
he has observed that this most powerful remedy, which has the effect
of destroying thick morbid growths of compact structure, when
applied in the same proportions to superficial corroding ulcers,
destroys the morbid growth only, and does not extend to the healthy
textures, and when absorbed into the blood its elective action for the
destruction of morbid tissues is still preserved; and by thus de com-
posing or destroying the ultimate molecules of the disease it places
the patient out of all fear of future relapse. This as a theory is
undoubtedly most interesting and important, and if it were possible
to establish it as a certain and indisputable doctrine in medical
science, it would place us in the position of being able not only to
remove all local records of the scirrhous principle, but to root out the
very origin and foundation of the disease; but we have yet to see
that it is so established by the experience of other surgeons as well
as by his own.

The external applications from the vegetable kingdom are also
numerous; but the only one to which I need allude is one of recent
introduction, viz., Tannic acid. It is used in the proportions of one
ounce of acid to half an ounce of water, and it may be applied with
a brush, or injected into the substance of the cancerous matter.

On referring to the list of internal remedies for the cure of Cancer,
or to alter the cancerous diathesis, we find them equally as numerous
as those for external application. Remedies brought forward by
their advocates as specifics have had their day, and have fallen into
obscurity, to be replaced by others of a reputation equally short-
lived. Indeed, those who have hitherto put their theories to a prac-
tical test, have met only with disappointment. Those remedies
which seem to have found most favor with the profession are Cod-
liver Oil, Hemlock, Quinine, Steel, Iodine, especially the Iodides of
Iron and of Arsenic, also Chlorine, given either singly or in combina-
tion with soda, the mineral acids and other tonics. Dr. Walsh
recommends the Iodide of Arsenic; it may be given in doses of the
12th of a grain combined with two grains of Hemlock. Mr. Weedon
Cooke states that of all the medicaments which experience or theory
have shown to influence the disease, Iron in its various forms is most
capable of effecting good. The Chlorinated Soda solution is highly
recommended by others in the dose of 15 minims three times a day.
But if it can be proved that a spontaneous cure of the disease some-
times takes place, and that there is a period at which its progress is
stopped by nature, if the powers of life are sufficient to bear with it for so long, our remedies should evidently be selected not as specifics but as agents to assist her in this great work. Accordingly we find that diet and moral management are powerful agents in such cases; the system requires generous support, at the same time the treatment of the mind is not of less importance, and if we can but dispossess it of the idea that the disease is incurable, it will greatly assist us in promoting a cure.

With these prefatory remarks allow me to direct your attention to a few brief cases, of which the pathological specimens on the table are representatives.

The first is one of Scirrhus of the Maxilla:—

William Parratt, a native of Hobart Town, stated that about four months ago he "took cold in his face," and that he suffered severe pain for several days without intermission. Not being near any medical man he removed an old stump of a tooth with his penknife, which operation afforded him instant relief. About a fortnight afterwards he felt a slight protrusion of the gum where the tooth had been extracted. This gradually increased in size, and became so painful that he was deprived of rest both night and day. He was admitted into the Hospital on the 30th of June. On the 9th of July he was placed under the influence of Chloroform, and I removed a portion of the inferior maxilla from its symphisis to its angle, around which the tumor was firmly adherent. The wound healed by the first intention, the operation entirely relieved the intense pain from which he suffered, and he was discharged on the 30th of July. From the rapidity with which this case progressed it is one from which I have but small hopes of the ultimate success of the operation. Portions of the diseased tissue were placed under the microscope by Dr. Macadam, and its fibrous nature and true Cancer cells were distinctly and clearly observable, affording, therefore, satisfactory evidence of the real character of the growth.

The other specimens are those of Epithelial Cancer, a form of the disease which, from the opportunities which have come under my notice, appears to be the predominant type in this colony.

The first is Cancer of the lip, in which the only remarkable circumstance is the extent to which the disease had extended,—from the angles of the lips to beneath the chin. It was taken from a man fifty-seven years of age, and its duration was nineteen months. It is some time since it was removed, and the case has done remarkably well.

The next is Epithelial Cancer of the hand. The following is the history:—Matthew Caxton, aged forty-five, a native of Ireland; five years in the colony; admitted into Hospital August 7, 1856. As you will observe, the growth involves the whole of the back of the hand. He dates its origin to the removal of a wart, which was
excised by ligature some months previous to his admission. On the 15th of August the forearm was amputated, and he was discharged on the 11th of September. Six months afterwards he again applied, complaining of hardness and pain around the elbow; there was also a number of small nodules indicative of a return of the disease. I advised a second operation, but to this he objected. On the 20th of July last he was again placed on the Hospital books. The elbow had much increased in size, the nodules had broken out into open Cancer, and the glands of the axilla were also involved. He now urgently entreated me to operate, a request to which I thought it prudent to decline acceding.

The last case is that of James Richardson, aged 37 years, a native of England, 4 years resident in the colony. This patient is still under treatment; but I have been able to present to you a tolerably correct representation of the case by means of the well-executed cast now before you. It consists, as you observe, of a large cauliflower excrescence occupying the whole of one side of the face, extending from the angle of the mouth to the ear, and as high up as the orbital process. The history is as follows:—Four years ago, on the patient's voyage to this colony, he had very indifferent provisions, which somewhat impaired his general health; but after his arrival here he recovered, and continued for some time well. Eighteen months ago he noticed a small pimple upon the cheek. As it caused him no pain nor inconvenience, he paid no attention to it. Thirteen months subsequently he consulted a medical practitioner of this city in consequence of the pimple having increased in size, and having become inconvenient by being in a state of ulceration. This gentleman applied a ligature to the tumor several times. In three months the whole mass was by this means removed, with the exception of a small portion the size of a pea. This began rapidly to enlarge, accompanied by great pain, which has continued up to the present time. The health is now manifestly suffering from the cancerous cachexia, which is so strongly marked, that I think it unadvisable to adopt any measures beyond those which are palliative. I find the most relief obtainable from the use of a lotion composed of Hydrocyanic Acid, Morphia, and the Acetate of Lead; at the same time, he takes light tonics and the diet is nutritious. There is one remarkable circumstance connected with this case, viz., that his wife, who is a young woman of about 26 years of age, is also affected with scirrhous of the breast, which was removed about two years ago. After its removal, the surgeon residing at some distance, the husband was in the habit of dressing the wound, and it was not till after this that he perceived any symptoms of the disease in himself; and so strongly is he impressed with the idea that his own malady is the result of contagion, that it has been the cause of their separation. I
have made a point of seeing her, and I find that the disease in her case has returned.

Though not offering this as a proof of the contagiousness of the disease, I think it may suggest interesting speculations as to whether it may not be so, and as such I commend it to your attention. It is at least a remarkable coincidence; nor less worthy of note is the early age at which the disease appeared in the female.

I may also state that I had, two years ago, under treatment in this Hospital, a young girl with cancrum ulcer in the thigh. This was destroyed by caustic, but the disease returned in the inguinal glands some months afterwards, and she subsequently died.

Fortunately, Epithelial Cancer is that form of the disease in which we may hope for the most successful results to remedial agencies. A large majority of such cases occur in males. Paget found that in 105 cases, in parts common to both sexes, 86 were in men and 19 in women; that the average duration of life, when the disease was not removed, was about 4 years.

The whole subject of Cancer being one upon which we are unfortunately possessed of no certain opinion, I have not ventured to give you any hypothesis of my own. I have preferred gathering together some of the theories of the eminent men who have devoted much time to its consideration, and presenting you with such cases and morbid specimens as seem likely to be illustrative of these opinions. I hoped by this means to promote discussion and to evoke the expression of your own views upon the subject. If I have added anything to your own stock of information, I shall be but too glad, and I have no doubt that I shall myself learn something from you in return.

[Since Mr. Gillbee's paper was read, Dr. Fell's celebrated remedy for the cure of Cancer has exploded, and we think his fame along with it. This affords an additional instance of the hollowness of Yankee vapouring. His chief agents, it appears, were "Sanguinaria" and Chloride of Zinc.—Editors.]

EDITORIAL ARTICLES.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

It is a deeply interesting subject of observation to bring before the mind the rational, and consequently more humane, treatment of the insane which is at present exhibiting itself throughout the continent of Europe and in Great Britain.

Any amelioration in the condition of suffering humanity causes, if not a happy, at least a consoling feeling of satisfaction;