

APPENDIX. No. III.

OF THE STATE OF MEDICINE, &c. &c. IN FRANCE.

Ne apud hos quidem, a primâ origine
Sed paucis ante nos seculis.

CÆLIUS.

A COMPARATIVE view of the progress and condition of medicine, in England and in France, if executed on an enlarged or comprehensive scale, would form a work of no mean interest. In the hands of the professor, it would become a means of enlarging the bounds, and rectifying the classification of the healing arts, while, to the philosopher, it would reflect a strong light on the general march of science, and would furnish a good practical chapter on the mechanism of the human intellect. For purposes, however, like these, the subject would require a development incompatible with the space, to which these observations must be confined, and with the still more limited research and abilities, which are brought to the discussion.

The same marked opposition, which the two nations have ever exhibited in their modes of thinking, on points of taste, literature, and politics, may be traced also in their pursuit of science, and in their manner of handling (if the metaphor be allowable) a philosophical question. Perhaps there is no particular, in the history of human nature, sufficiently remote from the influence of political institutions, to remain altogether unaffected by the good or evil they entail upon society.

In surgery, the French are confessedly our predecessors and masters. The long wars of Louis XIV. rendered the improvement of this art an object of vast political importance, at the same time that they afforded abundant opportunity for observation and instruction; and royal favour, and individual industry, went hand in hand in the cultivation of this branch of scientific investigation.

The visible and palpable nature of the subjects of surgical inquiry has given to that science a more decidedly experimental

character; and the contempt which physicians affected to throw upon its practitioners, by emancipating it from the trammels in which the learned professions in France were held, became the fortunate means of a happier mode of investigation, and a more vigorous research. In England, however, the impulse towards improvement once given, was followed up with that ardent love of knowledge, and daring boldness of inquiry, which for a long while characterized almost exclusively the British nation: and while the English surgeons borrowed and improved the mechanical inventions of their rivals and neighbours, they brought to the science itself a peculiar fund of physiological knowledge, derived from the advanced condition of general philosophy and of medicine, in their own country. At the period of the French revolution, there seems good ground for believing that the English surgeons were in advance of the French. But since that epoch, there have been unfortunately such ample means of investigation afforded, *Iliacos intra muros et extra*; and there has been so great a demand for surgical talent, that in both countries the science has advanced nearly *pari passu*; and it would be difficult for an unbiassed umpire to determine, on which side the palm of merit should be adjudged. In those particular instances of improvement, which have been commenced in England, the French surgeons are, for the most part in arrear; and some prejudices, derived from obsolete medical doctrines, still obscure the field of their intellectual vision. But, in the general conduct of their profession, in promptitude and decision during operations, in ingenuity and facility in the adaptation of means to ends, they have obtained to a degree of excellence, not easily to be surpassed.

With respect to medicine, circumstances are altogether different. There is not only much room for comparison, as to its progress in England and in France, but there exists in the two countries a total and a fundamental difference in the modes of considering the subject, and consequently in the curative intentions of their respective physicians. To the establishment of this difference many circumstances have contributed. The natural variations of the English climate, the still greater extremes of temperature, to which a large part of its inhabitants are, by their mercantile pursuits, exposed, and their comparative intemperance as to food and drink, have necessarily rendered them the victims of a variety and a severity of disease, to which the French, from their geographical position, and agricultural pursuits, are to a great degree exempted. The fact is exemplified not less in the happy constitution of the people, than in the advanced age at which the majority of those persons in France die, whose influence on society renders it an object to record in history the

period of their decease.* But a still more influential source of difference lies in the independent and manly tone, which philosophy in general assumed at an early period in England; and which, while it circumscribed the domination of authority, gave confidence to individual exertion, and multiplied and invigorated our methods of cure.

From the earliest times there have subsisted two methods of contemplating disease, which have each had their supporters and panegyrists. The one considers its symptoms as produced by a constitutional effort to expel or to overcome a noxious cause; and consequently as indicating a natural tendency towards recovery: the other views them as the necessary consequences of the injury received, and believes them to be regulated in their tendency towards death or recovery by the ratio which the violence done to the system bears to its powers of resistance. The first theory sees in the morbid movements the result of an inherent principle of preservation, and regards them as the most natural and best means of cure. The second considers them as essentially diseased; as the consequences, rather than the causes, of the progress of the malady; and as being neither the best means of recovery, nor even, in many cases; at all connected with convalescence. The duty of the physician, according to the first system, is to watch the progress of the symptoms, to predict their consequences, and occasionally to interfere, when circumstances occur, which exaggerate, or suspend the curative actions. According to the opposite hypothesis, it is his business to interfere from the beginning, to remove if possible the noxious cause, and to cut short at once the actions which it has occasioned; and which, however likely to terminate in a spontaneous cure, are still accompanied by a waste of the powers of life, and by a strain on the constitution. The former, or expectant plan, which relies so confidently on the powers of nature, and which presumes so seldom to interfere, belongs to the infancy of art, and manifestly tends to impede its amplification; while the operative or active plan presumes a considerable knowledge of the laws of organised existence, and of the agency of foreign substances upon the living machine. The expectant theory prevails very generally among the French physicians, and is taught in their schools: the operative influences universally the methods of the English practitioners.

* Il n'avoit que cinquante six, ou que soixante ans, [he was only fifty-six or sixty] is a common formula of French biography. The Cardinal de Fleuri died at ninety; the President d'Henault at ninety-six; Crebillon Fils at seventy; Condamiere at seventy-four; Voltaire at eighty-four; the Marquise du Deffant at eighty-four. Men of seventy and eighty have usually as much life and playfulness, in France, as their grand-children.

If a judgment could be formed of the state of medicine in France, from its several medical institutions, we should be compelled to believe that it had reached to perfection, or that the French physicians were at least on a par with the best and most learned of their European brethren. All the subordinate and associated sciences, anatomy, both human and comparative, physiology, botany, chemistry, &c. are cultivated with enthusiasm and success; and in their schools of medicine, besides the ordinary routine of instruction, courses of lectures are delivered gratis, on subjects, which, in England, are conceived to be but remotely connected with the pursuits of mere students, as the ornaments, rather than necessary acquirements, of active practitioners. Such, particularly, is the erudite course on medical literature, by Moreau de la Sarthe, in which sound criticism is mingled with profound philosophical views, and delivered with an elegance and polish of style, that partakes more of belles lettres than of dry medical disquisition.

If to these considerations it be added, that surgery and medicine are taught in common, that the hospitals for clinical instruction are immense, well ordered, well attended, well ventilated, clean, and abundantly supplied with whatever is necessary to the health and comfort of the patients, the system of medical education will appear little short of absolute perfection. There seems, however, to exist an intrinsic and fundamental difference in the bent of the French and English intellect, which, if an *ex parte* judgment may be trusted, has given a superiority to the English in the pursuit of science; or at least has driven the two nations into opposite roads of investigation. The restraint, which the peculiar character of the French government had imposed upon political and theological discussion, from the earliest periods of inquiry, extended, by a natural consequence, to general philosophy; and while, by its abhorrence of innovation, it imposed a chain on the inventive faculty, it directed the national intellect towards a dialectic subtlety. The operation also of this cause, by depressing whatever was not attached to the court, drove the sciences under the paralysing protection of patronage; and introduced the formation of corporate bodies, whose united influence was calculated to raise their members to an *état* in society, and to give them a consequence, to which, singly, they would in vain have attempted to reach; and the influence of these bodies was always paramount in the professions. The French, therefore, with the greatest aptitude for persevering and protracted study, can boast of but few inventors; and for the most part rest their claims of superiority upon order and analysis in scientific works, and upon pushing to their remotest consequences the discoveries of others.

The same subserviency to established forms, the same dread of departure from ancient usage, which tie down their theatre to a cold and unnatural declamation, and fill their poetry and their paintings with the mythology of Greece, confining them to the few hacknied images which fall within the compass of the national idea of "*the noble*," has operated in the sciences, to confine their efforts to the improvement of already acquired knowledge, and has diverted them from the path of original inquiry. Of the numberless inventions, which distinguish the modern from the ancient world, few, if any, are derived from France. Gunpowder, printing, drill-husbandry, the air-pump, the electric machine, pneumatic chemistry, the telescope, the Galvanic apparatus, are still vindicated by foreign nations, and to the names of Galileo, Harvey, Newton, Franklin, and Jenner, they have not any thing, *aut simile, aut secundum*, to oppose. There is, on the contrary, impressed upon the philosophical *esprit* of the nation a marked love of system, and a disposition to contemplate things, as they ought to be, rather than as they exist, to consider them in their abstract, rather than in their practical points of view. Hence their numerous perfect but inapplicable theories of government, their treatises on agriculture, written and conceived within the walls of Paris.*

In applying these remarks to the French *medicine*, we are naturally led to recal the low ebb from which it has been raised, and the obstinacy with which its practitioners clung, for centuries to Galen and the schools, thereby justly meriting the poignant ridicule, with which Moliere covered their studies and profession. The contrast between these men, and the French faculty of the present day is extreme; and the improvement which has been given to the art, within the last hundred years, is highly creditable to the talents and perseverance of the nation. The peculiar merits and defects of the French medical writers, may easily be anticipated from the preliminary remarks already hazarded. Obedient to the dictates of the expectant plan, and abstaining from active interference with the natural processes of disease, the whole powers and application of the French physician are concentrated in an accurate observation of its phenomena. Their works, therefore, on the art of Hippocrates and of Sydenham, are among their happiest productions. The wri-

* The invigorating stimulation, which accompanied the revolution, has given a vast increase of energy to scientific pursuit. The establishment of the Institute has concentrated the talent of the country, and caused a prolific co-operation of the different sciences. The taste for experimental investigation has rapidly spread itself through every branch of inquiry; and medicine, though at all times destined to follow in the train of the other arts, already begins to partake of the beneficial influence.

tings of Sauvages, Lieutaud, and, in modern times, of Pinel, Corvissat, &c. are replete with close observation and accurate discrimination. In the "nosographical arrangement" of Pinel, however, these merits are largely mixed with the vice of system.

The analysis of diseases, according to the texture of parts, in which they occur, though a beautiful generalization, and pregnant with important results, is far from being sufficiently practical, to become the basis of nosology; and it necessarily embraces views altogether hypothetical. Thus, in internal inflammations, it rarely happens that the disease is confined to one order of parts; that the pleura, for instance, is inflamed, without some affection of the parenchyma, or mucous membrane of the lungs. Notwithstanding this defect, the work has obtained an almost exclusive pre-eminence in the French medical schools, and ranks very highly among the continental practitioners. In physiology, the works of Bichat,* upon which Pinel's system is founded, are of inestimable value; not more for the new and important remarks with which they abound, and for the merit of his peculiar analysis of the animal structure, than for that true spirit of experimental investigation, which, both by precept and by example, they perpetually inculcate. Wherever indeed the French surgeons have crossed the path of physic, they have largely contributed to its advancement; and the most considerable steps that have been made in the art, were taken since the branches have been taught in common.

In profound and comprehensive views the French must be considered as superior to ourselves: we have absolutely no work in the *genre* of the "*anatomie générale*" of Bichat, of his treatise "*on life and death*," or of the writings of Cabanis, if we except the *Zoonomia* of Darwin, which, maugre its originality, and many valuable practical hints, is inferior in patient investigation, and in luminous arrangement of idea, to the writings of the former of these authors. The spirit of the French philosophy, which dictated the logic of Condillac, and presided over their works of mathematical analysis, has diffused itself into many of the later medical productions of this nation, and has given them a decided excellence in those parts of the science, which are purely ideal. In all that is more particular and practical, the works of the English physicians are by very many degrees superior and more valuable.

To those who are not aware of the great extent to which the practice of medicine, even in the present advanced state of the natural sciences, is empirical, and are ignorant of the small con-

* As the present observations are confined chiefly to medicine, any detailed account of the anatomical writers of France would be to a certain degree displaced; and their known and acknowledged excellence renders the attempt wholly unnecessary.

nexion which subsists between our knowledge of the phenomena of disease, and our acquaintance with sound curative intentions, it will appear strange that the French, thus distinguished as physiologists, would not be esteemed by their professional brethren in England as good physicians. It is, however, in physic, as in the other natural sciences; theory, however ornamental, however calculated to impose, by the air which it gives of connected and perfect knowledge, has done, and will do, little towards the enlargement of its domain. Very few, indeed, of the successful modes of combating disease are deductions, made *a priori*, from scientific data, but have been struck off by hazard, or delivered down by tradition. Mercury, bark, and sulphur, the remedies best entitled to the appellation of specifics, are, in their discoveries and application, the most independent of preconceived notions, and of theoretical science.

In theory, the French are, for the most part, attached to the Brunonian doctrines, which they mix up and assimilate with no inconsiderable relics of the humoral pathology. They are either wholly ignorant, or eminently fearful, of the modern practice introduced by Dr. Hamilton. It occurred to the author of these observations, to see two patients of one of the most celebrated of the Parisian physicians, who were labouring under serious and alarming symptoms of low fevers, *De alvi statu nulla fuit inquisitio, ne enema quidem, consuetissimum aliis remedium, hæc ægrotis adhibitum.*

Purgantibus uti, quæ alvum acrius movent, Parisiis, religio est; nec in officinis pharmacopolarum servatur medicamentum quod Extractum Colocynthis audit; usque adeo in despectu est apud medicos. Quæ verò alvum lenius ducant, nec temerè nec sine apparatu quodam adjuvantium, vel in re minime accipiti dantur. Jusculum, manè sumptum, causa fuit, quo minus meridiè adhiberentur ægroto, quem ipse curavi.

With respect to calomel, the practice of England is ridiculed by the French, as to the last degree empirical: no authority can induce them to administer it as a cathartic in fever, nor as an alterative in many of the diseases, in which it is advantageously employed with us. In this respect, however, it would not be just to place their dislike wholly to the account of prejudice and obstinacy. The very trifling abuse of spirituous liquors, which occurs in France, and the little intercourse which subsists between that country and the East and West Indies, very much exempt the inhabitants from that class of liver complaints, which are so abundant in England, and which, masked under various insidious forms, extend the efficacy of mercurials to a vast many different complications of disease. The same cause also operates to simplify fever; and to render its connexion with visceral obstruction less common and less violent. Possibly it may

also contribute to preserve a greater sensibility of the intestinal canal, which may render the employment of drastic medicines less safe and less necessary.

But with every possible deduction on these accounts, it must be confessed, that the apprehensions thus entertained are excessive and unwarranted. The cutting short of fever, by the administration of a dose of calomel, followed by senna, &c. &c. forms no part of their practice, nor enters apparently into their minds as a desideratum. The theory of expectoration, indeed, which considers the febrile movements as essential to the return of health, forbids such an interference, as disturbing the course of nature, and (by a strange prejudice) as originating those visceral congestions, which we find to be averted by the practice in question.

The prevalence of this doctrine, conspiring with the currency of the Brunonian theory, leads also to a more sparing employment of the lancet, than is usual with us. The temperance of the natives, the facility of perspiration which their climate produces, will doubtless enable them to throw off inflammation, with much less depletion than is necessary in treating the same cases in England. But from the frequency of consumption among the French, there seems to be great danger in their suffering even slight pleurisies and peripneumonies to run their natural career, when they can be cut short at once by a slight blood-letting; not to mention the protraction of the disease, and the fatigue of a long continued expectoration.

By the dread which prevails of powerful remedies, and by a strong remaining tincture of Galenical practice, there exists among the French physicians considerable confidence in drugs, which English practice has consigned to oblivion, as insignificant and inert. Their patients are still drenched with pint draughts, "*pour adoucir, lénifier tempérer et rafraichir le sang,*" and "*pour amollir, humecter et rafraichir les entrailles;*" [to sweeten, lenify, temper and refresh the blood, and to soften, moisten and refresh the bowels;] in the efficacy of all which, both physician and patient, "most potently believe."

It is no very flattering result for the art; but it is most unquestionably true, that the proportion of deaths to recoveries in disease, is, with a very few exceptions, the same under every plan of treatment. The number of those, who must inevitably die from the violence of the malady, and of those, who, from the opposite cause, must necessarily recover, is so great, in comparison with that of the persons who owe their life or death to the skill or ignorance of the physician, that it is rarely possible to appreciate the merit of remedial treatment, by this test.

It was not, therefore, without much surprise, that the author of these pages found the average loss, in the Parisian hospitals,

to be much greater than usually occurs in those of the British metropolis. In the report made to the French government on the charitable institutions of Paris, in the year 1808, it appears that there were received, during the year 1806, into the hospital called "*La Charité*," the best, though not the most extensive in Paris, three thousand two hundred sick. Of these were

Discharged	-	-	-	-	-	2571
Died	-	-	-	-	-	385
Remained in the hospital	-	-	-	-	-	244
						3200

The mortality, therefore, was as one to 6.67.

The *Hôtel Dieu*, on the first of January, 1806, contained one thousand two hundred and seventy-four sick. The mortality on the whole number taken in during the year, was, for the men, as one in 5.38, and for the women, as one in 4.36.

But, in order to arrive at a greater degree of accuracy, the reporters take into consideration that many patients die on the first days of admission, whose decease is not chargeable against the practice of the hospital. On this account they state, that of one thousand and eighty-seven males deceased, five hundred and thirty-six died in the first ten days; and these being deducted, the mortality becomes reduced to one in seven; and the same rule being applied to the deaths among the women, the average is rendered one in 5.46.

By the applications of this method to the deaths and recoveries at *La Charité*, the mortality of the men becomes one in 8.38, and that of the women one in 5.82, giving a total average of $\frac{8.38 + 5.82}{2} = 7.10$.

The average duration of the cases, excluding those who died or left the hospital during the first ten days, was at *L'Hôtel Dieu*, thirty-seven days; and at *La Charité* thirty days; the female cases being in both the most protracted.

The vast number of desperate accidents and of severe disease, which such a city as Paris must produce, renders some deduction from the sum total of mortalities absolutely necessary, for the justification of the medical practice; but in taking so long a time as ten days for the standard, in distinguishing curable from incurable maladies, there must necessarily be excluded the great majority of deaths by fever; and the physician must consequently be relieved from a greater *onus* than he is entitled to. The mortality which remains seems therefore enormous, and it greatly exceeds the average number of deaths in those even of our hos-

pitals, which are destined exclusively to the reception of fever cases. The average mortality in that fatal endemic, the Walcheren fever, where the patients had to struggle under every disadvantage of military vicissitudes and privations, did not much exceed one-tenth.

The great difference observable between the institutions of France and England, subsists also in their public charities. In England, these are the fruits of individual benevolence, and are separately governed, according to the will of their respective founders and contributors. In France, they are under the management of the government, and are all regulated by a common police.

It is not easy to state, with becoming accuracy, all the consequences resulting from each of these methods. It appears, however, that a more comprehensive view is taken of the wants of the French metropolis, and that considerable advantage results in the arrangement and distribution of the sick. On the other hand, there is a manifest inconvenience, if not danger, in bringing the sick from the remotest part of the city to a central bureau, for the purposes of preliminary inspection.

The largest hospital in Paris is the *Hôtel Dieu*, which was designed to contain two thousand beds for constant occupation, and two hundred, kept as a reserve for accidents. It does not, however, contain at present so great a number. Its situation is by no means well chosen, being in the very centre of the city; but as it is placed on an island in the middle of the river, the current of air occasioned by the stream must be favourable to ventilation. The wards are spacious and perfectly well aired; and the patients are attended by a society of nuns of the order of St. Augustin, with the utmost humanity, and with a zeal that passed the fiery ordeal of the revolution unabated and unsullied.

La Charité contains only two hundred and thirty beds, of which one hundred and twenty are set apart for medical cases, and one hundred and four for those requiring surgical treatment.

The hospital of *St. Antoine* contained on the first of January, 1806, one hundred and seventy-two, and it received during the year two thousand two hundred and sixteen. Total mortality one in 5,74, or, with the former abatement, one in 7,42.

L'Hôpital Beaujon contained on the first of January, 1806, ninety-eight sick, and received during the year one thousand four hundred and forty-six.

Gross mortality one in 5,96.

L'Hôpital Necker contained, at the commencement of the year, one hundred and thirty sick: received during twelve months one thousand and thirty nine. Mortality one in 5,59.

L'Hôpital Cochin has provision for one hundred sick. Mortality in 1806, one in 6,96.

L'Hôpital de St. Louis contains nine hundred beds, and was designed to receive infectious cutaneous diseases, also scrophula and scurvy.

L'Hôpital des Vénériens has five hundred beds. It received in 1806, two thousand six hundred and sixty sick, of whom one thousand three hundred and forty were men, and one thousand three hundred and twenty women; an equality of numbers that appears worthy of remark, if moral causes be taken into consideration. The mean duration of the cases was sixty-two days, and the mortality as one in 22,54.

Before the revolution such cases were principally taken to the *Bicêtre*: but the whole number received there amounted only to six hundred annually, while that of the applicants was more than two thousand; and these are said to have formed scarcely a fourth of the number requiring assistance: for the majority were withheld by their hopelessness of obtaining admission, and by the horrible condition of the sick when admitted. Each ward contained several ranges of beds; the floors also were strewn with them; yet notwithstanding that three or four sick were sometimes placed in each bed, they were obliged to rise in the middle of the night, to make room for others to take a turn of repose. If to these considerations it be added, that the names of the applicants were often placed on the list for admission eighteen months before they could be received, some notion may be formed of the sort of disease, and of the treatment which that hospital exhibited.

L'Hôpital des Enfants Malades [the Hospital for sick children] contains five hundred beds. In 1806, two thousand one hundred and sixty-one sick were admitted. The mean duration of the cases was seventy days. The mortality of the boys was one in 3,81; that of the girls one in four. They were admitted from two years to fifteen.

The lunatic hospitals are, one at Charenton, in which forty beds for men and twenty for women are maintained, at the charge of the hospitals of Paris. The *Bicêtre* has accommodations for above one hundred persons: at la *Salpêtrière* there are from seven hundred and fifty to eight hundred females: some of these are incurables; others, deemed curable, are selected from such as have not obtained admission at Charenton. They are placed in five separate departments or wards: one an hospital for incidental disease, one for incurables, one for furious maniacs, a fourth for those not dangerous, and a fifth for convalescents. The two last contain a spacious walk, shaded with trees. In the practice of this hospital, which is under the su-

perintendence of Pinel, great stress is laid upon the tepid bath, as a remedy for mania, to which is added when the patient is riotous, a douche [a pumping of cold water] of cold water, falling several feet on the head: this practice seems to operate, not less as a moral, than as a physical remedy. Various local means are also occasionally applied, such as cauteries, leeches, blisters; but in general little reliance is placed upon the exhibition of drugs, while much confidence is placed in moral means, especially in occupation. In the physicians' private room, there are accumulated numerous casts of the heads of lunatics, forming a most hideous and fearful portrait of humanity. The sum total of information which they afforded, was decidedly unfavourable to the physiognomical doctrines of Gall. Such at least was the opinion of Mons. Pinel on the subject, to whose politeness and urbanity the philosophic traveller, who visits this hospital, will always find himself largely indebted. To those, who are unacquainted with the writings of this eminent physician, it will be consoling to know, that the utmost humanity and skill prevail in the treatment of maniacs in France: chains and whips are absolutely forbidden; and the most furious maniacs are restrained by a well-applied waistcoat. Another point also, in which morality and good feeling are cultivated, is in the seclusion of these unhappy patients. In no hospital are they made a public exhibition, to gratify the curiosity or the malignity of idle holiday-makers. Besides these hospitals, there are very many others, of a miscellaneous description. The foundling hospital, hospitals for incurable diseases, for the blind, several military hospitals, and an excellent one attached to the *ecole de la médecine* [the medical school], &c. &c.; and the *bureau de bienfaisance* [the benevolent office] distributes advice and relief to poor room-keepers at home. The funds for this charity are drawn, by an happy association, from a tax on the places of public amusement.

Besides the hospitals in which patients are gratuitously received, the delicacy of moral tact among Frenchmen has given birth to establishments, termed "*maisons de santé*" [houses of health], in which those, whose fortunes have not reduced them to the necessity of receiving charity, but who are yet unequal to the expense of home attendance, may procure an apartment, the services of a nurse, physician, surgeon, and apothecary, upon the extraordinarily moderate terms of three francs per day, paid a fortnight in advance, or of two francs only, when the invalid chooses to sleep in a common dormitory. Besides the establishment in the Rue de Faubourg St. Martin, which belongs to the government of the *bureau de bienfaisance*, there are others belonging to individuals, who apparently render these institutions a means of introduction to general practice. It may very well

be doubted, whether establishments like these could be introduced into England, where provisions are so expensive, and where civility, and the numberless inexpressible attentions which the sick require, must be purchased of the nurse by clandestine gratuities, and where there subsists so large a portion of petty pride and ostentation, to prevent small tradesmen and room-keepers from accepting an advantage, which would so publicly mark their circumstances in life. The spirit however in which the *maisons de santé* are conceived, might be adopted at home with benefit to the national character, to counteract the depressing influence of that system, which has placed nearly a quarter of the male population upon the parish lists, and bowed down the "bold peasantry, their country's pride," to pauperism and servility.

In the general management of the French hospitals, all the advantages of order and arrangement are attained, which might be expected from the military precision that the revolution has introduced into every branch of the public service. By six o'clock in the morning, nurse, physicians, surgeons, and pupils, are assembled; and before twelve every patient is visited; half a dozen or more great operations, perhaps, performed, clinical lectures given, and advice administered to a crowd of external patients. The advantages resulting from these early hours, are, first, that the diet for the day is directed according to the actual wants of the patients; while in hospitals where this regulation does not subsist, any changes which the physician may make in the food and drink of the sick, can only be put into execution on the following day, when their situation and necessities may become very different. There is, besides, a great increase of comfort to those whose wounds, &c. require dressing, and who are thus at an earlier hour put at rest for the remainder of the day. But the principal benefit which ensues from this practice, is in the case of great operations. Very often in the English hospitals, a patient knows that he is condemned to an amputation, &c. &c. for some days before it is to take place: by operating every day, this interval is, in France, not extended beyond four-and-twenty hours; and by the early attendance of the surgeons, the immediate expectation is much diminished. It is in human nature so contrived, that those events which are separated by the death of each day's life, do not impress the mind so strongly, as those which are to be performed in the current day: the agony of expectation, therefore, in these cases, is the most distressing, from the period of waking in the morning, until the hour at which the operation is to be performed. During this time, every moment is counted: and the arrival of the surgeon is alternately desired and deprecated, as patience or apprehension assume the control; and thus, much of that courage which should be re-

served for the moment of suffering, is expended in horrible anticipations and unavailing regret. There can be no hesitation as to the propriety of adopting, in our English hospitals, this merciful custom of early attendance.

In the conduct of their operations, and, indeed, in their general intercourse with the sick, the French medical men are tender and kind-hearted; and at once an honour to their profession and to human nature. Their address is soothing, consolatory, eminently calculated to win confidence, and to quiet alarm. In action, they are prompt, dexterous, and alert. Every thing is previously calculated, and every step of the process clearly foreseen and arranged in the mind, before any part of it is commenced. No time is thus spent in previous handling of the part; no interval is allowed to elapse between the different stages of the operation. After a moment's self-concentration, the surgeon approaches the patient with some cheering and encouraging observation: he takes the knife; the incisions are made; the saw is instantly handed; the assistant is ready with his ligatures; the arteries are tied; and the wound closed in the shortest possible interval. The utmost silence and decorum are observed by the pupils during the whole time; and thus, both the moral and physical suffering, attendant upon these horrible necessities of humanity, are reduced nearly to an absolute minimum. In all these particulars, the constitutional kindness of the French character, the activity of their sympathies, and the warmth of their feelings, display themselves to the greatest advantage. There is no cant of sentimentality, no insincerity of compliment; their virtues are exhibited in positive result; and let those who are virulent in their abuse of the national character, blush, when they talk of degraded morals and egotistical indifference.

Of the medical education in France, there has been already occasion to speak with praise: the subject is peculiarly interesting at the present moment, from the disputes to which it has given occasion in our country.

There are in France three universities, having power to confer medical degrees; that of Paris, of Montpellier, and of Strasbourg; and the graduates of these places are at liberty to practise in Paris, or elsewhere in France, upon registering their name at the municipality of the arrondissement; a formality which is, however, often neglected, without drawing any serious consequences on the offender.

The different ranks acknowledged in practice, are those of doctor of medicine, doctor of surgery, and *officier de santé* (a rank answering somewhat to that of surgeon apothecary in London,) and lastly that of apothecary, whose functions are strictly confined to the compounding of drugs.

Before the establishment of this order, the practice of physic, like every other institution, had fallen into excessive abuses. The picture, which the reporters of the new law have drawn, is sufficiently similar to that which might be sketched of the present state of practice in England, to warrant a short extract. They state that, "in spite of the apparent order which subsisted, time had introduced abuses and irregularities, against which all persons of intelligence had exclaimed for the last thirty years. Such particularly were the difference of qualifications for doctors, *intra muros et extra muros*; the differences of privileges of bachelors, licentiates, regent and non-regent doctors. Opposed to some advantages, were to be seen the passions and jealousies assuming the pretext of order, and the dignity of the profession, to torment those, who, either by novelty of doctrine or successful practice, had arisen to distinction and notoriety. Its two universities (those of Paris and of Montpellier) preserved the severity and dignity of their examinations, all the others nearly had become culpably facile in their admissions, so that the title of doctor was conferred on absentees, and letters of reception were expedited by the post." To remedy these evils, the three universities were, by a law, equalized both as to privileges and to qualifications; and a degree from either is now alike available in all parts of the empire. There exists, therefore, in France, no corporate bodies, independent of the universities, to regulate locally, or generally, the practice of physic; and infringements of the law are pursued, like any other penal offences, by the officers of the police. The time of study requisite for obtaining a doctor's degree in physic or surgery is four years; the examinations to be passed, are one in anatomy and physiology, a second in pathology and nosology, a third in *materia medica*, chemistry and pharmacy, a fourth in *l'hygiène* and forensic medicine, and a fifth on internal or external clinical examination, according as the candidate determines for physic or surgery. These examinations are public, and two of them are directed to be held in Latin. After they have passed, the candidate has yet to write and to maintain others, either in French or Latin. The whole expense of study, and for the degree, is fixed at a maximum of one thousand francs, about forty pounds.

The qualifications for an *officier de santé* are six years' study under a doctor, or five years' attendance on the practice of a civil or military hospital, or lastly, three years passed in a school of medicine. He is examined by a jury composed of two physicians, domiciliated in the department, and a *commissaire*, who is taken from among the professors of the several schools of medicine: this jury assembles once a year. The examinations are three; one in anatomy, one on the elements of medi-

cine, and the third in surgery and the most common parts of pharmacy. The whole expense is limited to two hundred francs. The duty of these persons is defined, by the reporters of the law to be the general care of the sick, in remote country places, and the superintendence every where of such slight diseases as do not require the advice of the physician, or surgeon.

Very particular pains seem to have been taken, respecting the education of apothecaries. Courses of botany, natural history, chemistry, &c. are directed to be given in the schools of pharmacy; and no one is suffered to practise, without being first examined, either in the schools, or before a departmental jury. The examinations are, one on natural history, one on the theory of pharmacy, and another on its manipulations and processes. The last of these examinations must last for four days, and must consist of at least, nine chemical or pharmaceutic operations, in which the candidate is to describe his materials, to explain his method of procedure, and declare the nature of their expected results. The candidate must be twenty-five years of age. The expense of his examination, in the schools, is fixed at nine hundred francs; or before the jury, at two hundred.

Officiers de santé, where there are no apothecaries, may supply their own patients with medicine, but they are not permitted to keep open shop. Apothecaries' shops are subject to visitation, by the professors of the schools of medicine, within a circuit of ten leagues from the place in which they are held. In all other places, this duty is performed by the jury of physicians.

The sale of quack medicines is utterly forbidden, and druggists are subject to a penalty of five hundred francs, if they presume to compound medicines. Both druggists and apothecaries are bound, under a heavy penalty, to keep a book, in which the names, residence, &c. are inserted of all persons, to whom they shall sell poisonous drugs; as also the nature of the drug, and the usage for which it is intended.

In the instruction of midwives, it is directed that an annual and gratuitous course of midwifery be given, in the largest hospital of the department. Before any person can be admitted to an examination, she must have attended two courses of lectures, have been present for nine months at deliveries, or have operated herself in the hospital, for six months. Women are not allowed to deliver with instruments, unless sanctioned by the presence of a physician, or surgeon.

Such are the principal enactments of the law, which regulates the practice of physic. As far as could be gathered from gene-

ral inquiries, it appears that the doctors in the two faculties practise indifferently in each, without jealousy and without disagreement; and that even persons, having no legal title, practise in Paris, &c. without drawing upon themselves the infliction of the appointed penalty.

Apothecaries universally prescribe for the poor, and for such persons as ask their advice in their shops. The advertisements of quacks also figure upon the columns of the *Palais Royal*, no less than upon the walls of the Royal Exchange, in London. The new institutions of medical police in France are not therefore more effectual in regulating the practice of physic, than the obsolete enactments of the English law. It should seem that the most which can be effected by such legislative interference, is a general influence upon the profession; and that great forbearance and indulgence must ever be granted to individuals. For it is in the natural order of things, that society should break through the artificial distinction of ranks created in colleges and academies; and that having the purse in its own hands, it should distribute its favours, wherever caprice or judgment directs. There ever must exist some few apothecaries, better skilled to practise physic, than the ordinary mass of routine physicians; for genius is not confined to any rank: surgeons likewise will often be found, the bent of whose ability lies rather towards physic than surgery; and it is a manifest injury to society, and an injustice towards individuals, to deprive such persons of the exercise of their peculiar talent. It is besides a natural and an inevitable consequence, that mothers, indebted for their own and their childrens' lives, to the skill of an *accouch-eur*, should extend their confidence in him through the other branches of the art, and call upon him to attend in the general diseases of the family; nor can any penal statute prevent her from preferring a tried friend, to making a confidence of the secrets of her family to a stranger. The poorer class of persons also will always apply for the cheapest advice, and will seek it among the compounders of medicine; notwithstanding any statute that may be made to the contrary. The apothecary will, indeed, be the small shopkeeper's physician, not more on the score of expense, than on account of the distance, which education and habits of life place between such persons, and the graduated doctors.

Two great difficulties oppose themselves to any regulation, susceptible of a rigid practical adoption. Either other qualifications must be expected, than mere examinations, or that test must be taken alone. In the first case, individuals entitled by their knowledge to practise, will be excluded, when their fortunes have placed them out of the reach of university instruction;

a decision, with which the public will never comply. In the second, the entire object of legislative interference will be defeated, since no test is more undecisive or more capable of evasion, than the power of answering a few questions; a power which may be acquired by the short and summary method, well known to those whom it may concern, under the technical appellation of *grinding*. It should therefore become an established principle with all corporate bodies, to administer their powers according to the spirit of their institution, and not in the dead letter of monopoly; for, in proportion as their utility is circumscribed, individual oppression becomes offensive and intolerable.

From the whole that could be gathered from inquiries, not always very directly answered, the medical police, as far as it concerns the regulation of practice, seems to have become, in Paris, a dead letter, without producing many cases of flagrant imposition, or exciting any jealousies or ill-will amongst the practitioners.

The school of physic in Paris is numerous attended. The faculty are in possession of a building of great convenience, and of beautiful architecture. But its amphitheatres, though of immense size, are not larger than is necessary for containing the crowded audiences, which consists not only of medical students, but persons attracted by the general love of knowledge. During the continuance of war, the demand for surgeons alone maintained a numerous class in the schools. Cuvier, in a desultory conversation with which he honoured the author of these sheets, stated the annual consumption of medical officers, under Napoleon, at an average of five hundred.

The faculty of physic possess an extensive and valuable library, like all other Parisian libraries, of most easy access and much frequented. They have also a collection of preparations, inferior in many respects to those of the anatomy schools in London; a collection of surgical instruments, and another of models. These last are beautifully executed, and represent recent dissections with a perfection, which no art can preserve in the parts themselves.

The faculty assemble at certain intervals, to read papers and to discuss practical points; for which purpose the members also bring patients for illustration and for example. At the sitting at which the author was present, a member exhibited some cases of very extensive suppurating tumours, which were absorbed and dissipated by the repeated application of the *maza*. One of these tumours had occupied the whole of one side of the back, and must, from the appearance of the part, have contained nearly half a gallon of fluid. In the same sitting, a paper was read, recommending the exhibition of large doses of opium in cholera:

the difference in the state of French physic and of surgery could scarcely be better illustrated.

Though abounding in scientific journals, France is not possessed of any periodical work on the healing arts, comparable with the Edinburgh Medical Journal, or the transactions of the London Medico-Chirurgical Society. The practice of giving detached observations to the public has not yet commenced in France, or is confined exclusively to the verbal communications made at the Institute, and other learned societies. Individual vanity has not taken this route to gratification, and authorship in general is not made a professional stepping stone, but is confined to a few individuals, who rarely deign to make their appearance in a less imposing manner, than by an entire system, or in a smaller shape, than a series of comely octavos. The practice also of the country *officiers de santé*, &c. is in all probability, too closely subjected to the law and the gospel of authority, to admit of those novelties, which pour in from all parts of the British dominions, upon the editors of periodical works: and which, if they subject the reader to the task of wading through much nonsense, still contain, among the chaff, a considerable portion of valuable grain, which, if not thus gleaned, would be lost to the service of humanity.

The "Bibliothèque Médicale" [the Medical Library], consists entirely of extracts from published works and criticism.

The "Journal Général de Médecine," [the Journal General of Medicine], commenced by Corvisart, Boyer, and Roux, has passed into other hands.

The "Journal Universel des Sciences Médicales" [the Journal Universal of the Medical Sciences], is an entire new work, and has yet its reputation to establish.

"La Gazette de Santé" [the Gazette of Health], is a single sheet, published every ten days, containing principally facts, with but a small portion of critical matter. It is valuable for its list of the cases, which are from time to time admitted into the hospitals of Paris; and it contains also a series of articles upon the history of medical opinions. This work is edited by Dr. Montégre, a gentleman of great talent, information, and zeal for science; and it is conducted in a spirit purely philosophical. Of these works, some have been recently silenced, by the operation of the new stamp duty, *Usque adeo obtusa*, &c. Such is the spirit of the present government.

It has been the fate of physic, from the very first revival of letters, to creep slowly behind the other sciences, and to adopt their methods only at considerable intervals after their establishment and success. This has arisen partly perhaps from the culpable influence of authority, and partly also from a headable

hesitation at innovating, where so great an interest is at stake. This remark will explain the present state of the science in France, which is still very greatly in arrear of its associate arts; and is commencing only that career, in which the other natural sciences have made such considerable progress. There is, however, good cause to believe, that the impetus which it has received, will lead to speedy and important improvements, and that the spirit of Bichat, Gaulois, and Majendie, will be carried to practical discussions. To the habit of observation, on which the French physicians so justly pride themselves, there will then be added, a greater degree of enterprise in the employment of curative means, and thus they will become entitled to take a lead in forming the medical opinions of Europe; and will have weight enough to induce our own countrymen to set bounds to their empirical tendencies, if, as the French suppose, they are indeed verging to a vicious excess, and tend to a partial degradation of the science itself.

At the time when the father of physic wrote, the observation of symptoms was the only road open to investigation. Chemistry, anatomy, physiology, did not exist, nor had natural philosophy explained any of the external causes which generate disease. But the leading reason which impelled Hippocrates into his peculiar line of inquiry, was the almost entire want of all really powerful remedies. Without bark, mercury, antimony, and opium, his means of operating upon disease were limited within very narrow bounds. His functions, as a physician, were reduced nearly to a vain and useless augury, while his views, as a philosopher, were necessarily directed to the subject itself, for the means of curing disease, by his ignorance of the resources of the external world. The present state of knowledge justifies and demands a different line of inquiry. It is no longer sufficient to know disease; the physician must cure it. He must wield with courage and dexterity the weighty weapons, which modern discoveries have placed in his hands; and in this branch the French have yet much to learn. Their literature is eminently deficient in those monographic works, which in England have so powerfully contributed to the progress of medicine; and it is absolutely without names, to place in the same line of those of Hamilton, Currie, Saunders, Pemberton, Blackall, and Watts. They have, however, but a small barrier to pass, a few prejudices to cast aside, and the zeal with which natural science is so universally pursued, will lead them rapidly forward in the right path. In the mean while it is to be hoped, that the horrible and barbarous system of insulation and seclusion, which for thirty years has cramped the energies and checked the progress of the sciences, will give place to a peaceful intercourse be-

tween nations; or, at least, that war will be conducted upon a more humanized plan. Whatever may be the political relations of independent states, it belongs to the illumination of the present age to determine, that the lettered and scientific world shall be considered as universally at peace; that it shall at all times be permitted, by a freedom of intercourse and a liberal interchange of knowledge, to promote the great work of human happiness; and, like pity, following in the train of slaughter, to heal up those wounds, which the madness of ambition inflicts on the prosperity and civilization of the European republic.