of co-ordination of muscular force, and not entirely to loss of power, is further evidenced by the fact, that if the patient use the dynamometer without looking, the pressure indicated is much less than if he be permitted to follow the operation with his eyes. In the same way, on walking, if the patient pay attention to his gait and watch his feet, he progresses fairly well; but let his attention be taken away, let the light be shut off, or let him close his eyes, and at once the inco-ordination becomes apparent. The muscular sense is in anæsthesia also impaired or destroyed, the patient being unable to tell the position of his limbs or to appreciate the distinction of different weights.

4. Although certain forms of anæsthesia are permanent, there are others which are characterised by extreme instability and changeableness. It is common to meet with nervous women who complain of numbness and total or partial insensibility of a part, accompanied with pallor and coldness of the skin, coming on at intervals. After remaining for variable periods, this state disappears, leaving the skin in its normal condition. Frequently, no obvious cause can be found for such sudden and well marked changes; at others, impaired general health, emotional disturbances, such as fright, grief, and other psychical derangements, may be assigned as predisposing or exciting causes. The mere direction of the attention to a part, or a suggestive idea, may totally alter the sensibility of the whole or any portion of the body in nervous subjects. Without instancing the witches and martyrs of old, the religious and other epidemics of past and present times, this cannot be better illustrated than by mesmerism, where in certain nervous constitutions the mind may be so impressed by suggestions from another, and the attention so forcibly directed to a part, that almost any change of increase, diminution, or perversion of sensibility may take place in apparently healthy persons. I have frequently observed that patients being asked if any portion of their skin were numb, and a negative answer obtained, which was found to be correct, that, on a subsequent occasion, they declared that there was a loss of sensibility, which was ascertained to be the case. The idea suggested by the question of the physician makes an impression on the mind, this influences the centres and through them the local nervous system, the circulation is modified, and anæsthesia induced. Thus an objective symptom is produced by a subjective impression. I have myself had recently under my care a girl whose leg I could render completely anæsthetic at will by simply tying a handkerchief round it, she believing that some application was being made for a definite purpose. Cases are too numerous to require detailing, where anæsthesia has been removed by almost as simple a process.

5. After the foregoing remarks, the result of metallic treatment in this case need scarcely be commented on. That these results were genuine I and those who witnessed them can testify, and that they were not due to any specific effects of the metallic treatment is apparent. The sequence of events is briefly as follows. A woman with anæsthesia is blindfolded and so conditioned that she has no clue to the treatment to which she is subjected. Different metals are applied in turn to the skin without the slightest effect. Her mind having been gradually directed to the parts on a certain occasion when, a number of persons being present, she doubtless overheard remarks about her case and what might possibly occur, discs are applied and sensibility is restored. This excites astonishment and interest, and the phenomena subsequently always recur, no matter what substance is applied, whether it be metal, wood, bone, or even simply a handkerchief. After a prolonged series of trials, no permanent benefit resulting, the patient becomes tired of the constant pinching, pricking, and electricity, which are painful, and then the phenomena become irregular and uncertain, and applications which were at first effective were afterwards followed by negative results. This seems to me to establish the fact that all these phenomena are due, not to any special virtues, electrical or otherwise, derived from the metals, as then their effects would be constant, but rather to the influence which the mind exerts over the body. I have conducted, in this and other cases, a large series of experiments, which a desire to be brief forbids my describing in detail, all tending to the same conclusion, and further reflections on which have been published elsewhere. (*Brain: a Journal of Neurology*, October 1878.) That such a theory is not impossible or improbable there is abundant evidence in the history of medicine to show. It is doubtless a remarkable fact, and of influence of explanation, that the influence of the mind should not only restore sensibility, but should also augment the muscular power and increase the vascularity and temperature. But it has been already pointed out that these last are a natural accompaniment of altered sensibility, and may be accounted for by the well known influence of the imagination over the vaso-motor system. The recent researches of Charcot and others have shown that these and other still more astounding effects are produced by magnets, solenoids, and homœopathic doses of galvanism, and a demonstration of these has

lately been most graphically described by Professor Gamgee. (*BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL*, October 12th, 1878.) These observations would lead us to infer, although they do not profess to explain why, that there is some direct and special relation between the cause and the effect. The case before us seems to me alone to completely upset this doctrine, as has already been insisted on in a most excellent critical discussion on this question by my friend and colleague Dr. Horatio Donkin. (*BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL*, October 28th, 1878.) In a thesis recently published (*Comparaison des Effets de divers Traitements dans l'Hystérie*, Paris, 1878), Dr. Oscar Jennings comes to similar conclusions with myself. There are always those who, either from an involuntary bias of mind, or from a natural credulity in what appears marvellous, seem to think that what is difficult of explanation must of necessity be true. Thus does the spiritualist and electro-biologist pledge his faith to what his reason cannot comprehend, and what he perhaps honestly believes to be genuine. As well might one credit the reality of the trick of a conjuror because it baffled all our efforts to appreciate the steps by which he deceives us. In all these hypotheses, the more we eliminate sources of error, the more that unprejudiced observers investigate the subject, and the more that stringent tests are applied, the more easy and simple do we find these "inexplicable" phenomena become. It may be that metallotherapy, the most recent doctrine which has fluttered the psychological world, will be before long, like all its predecessors, doomed to an early grave, to be resuscitated in the future in some other novel and more attractive form.

CASE OF POLYPUS OF THE OESOPHAGUS SUCCESSFULLY REMOVED.

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IN February last, I was asked by Professor MacLagan to see with him the Rev. Mr. C., who was seventy-six years of age. The history of our patient was that, about five years before our visit, he noticed for the first time, during a fit of coughing, "a lump come out of his throat on to his tongue". When the coughing ceased, the tumour disappeared; but, after this, the growth constantly protruded from the throat whenever he coughed or was sick, so that he became quite accustomed to its appearance. The tumour never caused him any inconvenience, except by its protrusion; and, when it did not pass back into the throat spontaneously, he could easily return it by pushing it down with his fingers. During the last year, the protrusion was not so frequent; but the tumour had increased in size and length, and, when it did protrude, it could be drawn out through the mouth and examined. There was no interference with swallowing or with respiration.

Before visiting our patient, it was arranged that I should bring with me the necessary instruments, in case the removal of the tumour was decided upon; but a difficulty was encountered at the very commencement of our meeting, for the tumour declined to protrude, notwithstanding the administration of a strong emetic by my colleague in the case. A second dose of the emetic succeeded, and the growth showed itself, and was at once seized and drawn out of the mouth. When examined, it was found to be a fibrous polypus, measuring four inches in length and about one and a half in breadth, gradually tapering to its peduncle, which was fully two inches in length and about the thickness of an ordinary lead-pencil. On passing the finger along the peduncle, it was felt to be attached to the left side of the oesophageal tube, at a point immediately below the commencement of the canal. The tumour having been drawn out of the mouth to its full extent, and a gag inserted to keep the jaws separated, I passed round the peduncle the chain of an *érasoir*, and slowly divided it, as low down as possible. The peduncle was divided in this way about an inch from its attachment to the oesophageal wall, so that the whole length of the tumour removed was five inches.

The structure of the growth was fibrous, resembling in appearance that of the dense fibrous polypus which grows in connection with the nasal cavities and base of the skull. Its external surface was covered by mucous membrane. There was a slight oozing of blood from the stump of the peduncle for a few hours after the operation; but this soon ceased, and the patient suffered no further inconvenience, and was able to return home in a fortnight.

REMARKS.—Cases of polypus growing in this situation are rare, and therefore I have considered a note of my case worthy of record. The fact that the growth gave rise to no inconvenience, notwithstanding its size, is an interesting feature in the case. The operation was of the simplest nature, and requires no special reference.