poultice, the oiled silk over all retains the moisture," &c. Can it be possible that Dr. Billing was not aware the Germans had no more claim to this said water-dressing than his great-grandfather? He must surely have been reading "Faust," or the "*Fables of Grimm*," when he was about to pen that sentence. We shall now let him hear what Dr. Macartney, to whom the merit really attaches, says with regard to the propriety of substituting water-dressing for poultice. "Some persons," says Dr. M., "now profess to use water-dressing as a substitute for poultice, by which they show their ignorance of the nature and operation of the remedy," &c.

Mr. Syme of Edinburgh is another claimant on this score; he inculcates the doctrines of Macartney in his lectures, and in his works on surgery, as emanating from himself; and we are not a little surprised to find the following loose statement in defence of his conduct, in the pages of the *British and Foreign Medical Review*. "It has been insinuated," says that journal, "that Mr. Syme's *Principles of Surgery* contains the major part of Dr. Macartney's peculiar ideas upon inflammation, taken without acknowledgment from Dr. Macartney's Lectures. We consider this accusation altogether unjust. Mr. Syme's paper on the union of wounds was published in 1825; not so very long, therefore, after Dr. Macartney was appointed to the Dublin professorship." There are two assumptions involved in the latter part of this sentence: first, that a period of several years which elapsed from Dr. Macartney's accession to the chair of anatomy in Trinity College, and the publication of Mr. Syme's book, is not sufficient to establish the disputed point of priority; and second, that Dr. Macartney knew nothing of water-dressing, or of the views of inflammation he now promulgates, prior to the date of his university appointment. We are sure that if the writer in question took time to reflect before writing the above, he never would have allowed such vague and illogical phraseology to emanate from his pen. Mr. Syme had annual opportunities of being made acquainted with Dr. Macartney's views, through the medium of the pupils of the latter, who graduated at Edinburgh, and many of whom wrote their theses on water-dressing and the doctrines of inflammation expounded in the discourses of the veteran professor of the Dublin University.

We now take leave of the *Treatise on Inflammation*, and from the great fund of important and original matter that it contains, as well as from the pleasing and simple style in which it is written, we know of no other work we could so earnestly recommend to the attention of our readers. It is

not, like modern works on the same subject, a compilation of matter familiar to every one. Dr. Macartney's treatise, on the contrary, abounds with original ideas from beginning to end.

ON THE ADVANTAGES OF COUNTER-IRRITATION.

BY JONATHAN TOOGOOD, ESQ.

SENIOR SURGEON TO THE BRIDGEWATER INFIRMARY.

THE efficacy of counter-irritation in arresting the progress and promoting the cure of disease is well known, but I do not think the extent to which it may be advantageously carried is so well understood. I would not advocate its rash and dangerous use as practised by some, although experience has convinced me that a more free employment of this powerful remedy often leads to successful results. The following cases will illustrate the benefits derived from large issues in diseases of formidable character. I prefer this mode of keeping up counter-irritation to setons, blisters, or moxas, and believe it to be more manageable, more effectual, and less painful. I am not sure that the actual cautery (barbarous as it may appear) should be entirely abandoned, and have sometimes employed it in diseases of bone with manifest advantage.

CASE I.—A young lady of twenty consulted me many years since on account of a swelling in the groin, which was supposed to be a hernia, and for which she had been wearing a truss, under the advice of a medical practitioner. There was a curvature and disease of the lumbar vertebræ, and it became evident that the tumor in the groin, which had been mistaken for inguinal hernia, was occasioned by the pointing of an abscess. I accompanied her to London, and consulted the late Mr. Cline and Sir Astley Cooper, who both confirmed the opinion, but held out no hope of recovery. Under the direction of my estimable preceptor, Mr. Abernethy, (to whose kindness and instruction I am mainly indebted for my success in life,) she was encouraged to strike at the root of the disease by counter-irritation, and to maintain her general health by diet and regimen. I made an issue on either side of the curvature, large enough to contain, in each, forty small horse-beans, which was attended to daily, and kept open for upwards of two years. During this long period she was not entirely confined to the house, or to a horizontal posture. By day she rested on a couch which was fitted to a small four-wheeled carriage, on which she took exercise, and had the benefit of air. A screw, placed at the upper part, raised the head and shoulders at pleasure, so that she could work, draw, and amuse herself in a variety of ways, and, by pushing the lower part of the carriage under a table, she was able to join her family at meals, all of which rendered her confinement less irksome. Under this treatment her general health gradually improved, the swelling diminished until the contents of the abscess were absorbed without any external opening, and she obtained a complete and lasting cure. She was married shortly afterwards, and has since enjoyed uninterrupted good health for more than twenty-five years.

Numerous cases of this kind have fallen under my observation, but this is the only one of permanent recovery I have ever known; and although the maintenance of the general strength of the system may have assisted much in the cure, yet I attribute it chiefly to the local remedy so extensively employed and assiduously kept up.

CASE II.—A woman thirty years of age, who had been suffering from a disease of the leg, of considerable standing, which had resisted all the ordinary means of cure, and was condemned for amputation, consulted me on the propriety of having the operation performed. The limb measured twenty-two inches in its smallest circumference, and was become useless; there were sinuses on the inside, some of which were supposed to lead to diseased bone. I could not detect any with a probe which passed into diseased cellular substance; in fact, it appeared that the disease was confined to that and the integuments, which were hard, unyielding, and much resembling brawn. Baynton's plan of plaster and bandage was tried fairly without success, after which I made a large issue, containing between twenty and thirty peas on the outside of the limb, which in a month reduced it greatly, and, at the expiration of another, all the sinuses were healed, the leg had regained its original size, and the cure was completed.

CASE III.—A boy, eleven years old, was brought to my house, a distance of twelve miles, in a cart, with enlargement of the thigh-bone, and a small wound on the inner side of the limb, just above the condyle, which was suspected to communicate with a lumbar abscess. The disease had been of long standing, and the patient was much emaciated. To the great surprise of the friends, the femur was discovered on examination to be broken, and this was most probably occasioned by his removal; having been seen by the surgeon under whose care he had been the day before, who had not observed it. The diseased state of the bone explained all the symptoms, and as there was no evidence of any affection of the vertebrae, I directed a large issue to be made on each side of the fracture, and kept open for many months. The bone united firmly, and the boy recovered perfectly.

CASE IV.—A delicate lady, who had suffered so much from an affection of the chest as to make her friends apprehensive that her case might terminate in consumption, had an acute attack of inflammation of the lungs, from the effects of which she recovered so slowly, that the former fears of her family were considerably increased. She was advised to try the effect of counter-irritation as a precautionary measure, for which purpose an issue of the size of a crown-piece was made on the sternum, the good effects of which soon became apparent, and, by keeping it open for a year, the pulmonic symptoms gradually disappeared, and she regained her strength. Five years have now elapsed since the attack, during which time she has enjoyed excellent health, and appears free from disease. In this case a piece of Indian rubber was used instead of peas, and found less troublesome and more convenient.

Dr. Prichard coincides in opinion with me, that large issues are decidedly more beneficial in intense diseases than any other mode of keeping up counter-irritation, and recommends, in certain states of the brain, issues made by a long incision

in the scalp, over the sagittal suture. He says, "This remedy is not found in experience to be more painful than the more usual application of setons, and it is incomparably more efficacious."

In affections of the chest and trachea, and generally in all cases in which moderate counter-irritation is necessary, I have been in the habit of employing the following liniment with marked benefit:

Croton oil, one drachm;
Tartarized antimony, two scruples;
Rectified spirits, two ounces.

It is more effectual and less painful than the ointment of tartarized antimony, or any other counter-irritant with which I am acquainted.

September 1841.

FATAL CASE

OF

FREQUENTLY-RECURRING CONVULSIONS

IN

AN ADULT FEMALE,

COMPLICATED WITH INFLAMMATION OF THE
RIGHT OVARY, FALLOPIAN TUBES,

AND OF THE

UTERO-VAGINAL MUCOUS MEMBRANE.

By MARTIN HAMILTON LYNCH, M.D.

LATELY LECTURER ON THE PRACTICE OF PHYSIC IN THE NEWCASTLE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE.

Miss —, aged 23, and resident in the northern suburbs of Newcastle, although of the leucophlegmatic aspect, and very soft muscular fibre, had enjoyed good health until two months ago, when the menstrual discharge did not appear, and has been since absent. During these two months, she has laboured under various hysterical symptoms, globus, borborygmi, and hysterical laughter, sobbing generally succeeding seizures of hysterical syncope. She had been much better for some days, when (yesterday, 24th of June, 1838) she was attacked by convulsions, having the appearance of epilepsy, and recurring every five or ten minutes, from their invasion up to the time of my first visit, when I met in consultation Mr. William Dawson. The indisposition of the last two months was ascribed to intense mental anxiety.

June 25.—Having prolonged my visit for half an hour, I witnessed during that time five attacks of convulsions, very like the epileptic; the tongue was protruded and bitten, the mouth distorted, consciousness was lost, saliva was copiously discharged, but coma (even of the briefest duration) did not follow the paroxysms, and intelligence and memory returned the moment the convulsions ceased. Each paroxysm lasted from half a minute to a minute, and the interval between them varied from four to eight minutes. Immediately after the paroxysm, the pulse was 90, soft and compressible, and gradually fell to 84, until again quickened by a return of the paroxysm. Head rather hot, feet cold, rest of the surface moist, and of natural heat; pale urine was passed in considerable