TREATMENT OF BUNION.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—In sympathy with my unknown friend, "A Country Vicar," whose occupation appears to extend beyond the pale of the church, and exercises itself on the extremities of his friends and family, I beg to suggest a remedy for that opprobrium chirurgorum, a bunion. These little points in our art, I think, are sadly neglected; and if surgeons would take more pains to remove them, their patients would increase, and also their gratitude. It is not, as your worthy correspondent says, enough for the surgeon to "look wise," and apply a plaster. No; the *remedy*, the *remedy* is wanting.

I venture to suggest that the part affected be kept constantly covered with lint dipped in warm water, this being also *well defended* by oiled silk. The best mode of applying the latter is to cut a strip about half an inch in width, and three or four inches long, turning it round the affected member. The lint should be changed night and morning, and any hardened cuticle should be gradually peeled off. When matters are improved, the continued application of the lint will be unnecessary, but the oiled silk should be constantly worn, to prevent a return of the disturbance.

By a suitable alteration of shape in the lint and oiled silk, the plan is applicable to any part of the foot.

Yours very truly,
EDWARD HUMPAGE.

Bristol, Jan. 24, 1844.

THE SCHOOLMASTER ABROAD; OR, THE MOUNTAIN AND THE MOUSE.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—Your Number of last week, which has just reached me, offers some sarcastic remarks on the medical profession, in the shape of inquiries on the treatment of bunions, by a "Country Vicar," of Lincolnshire, who, after indulging in some complimentary allusions to the medical *friend* of the family, as he is pleased to term him, very modestly introduces his own pretensions to mechanical genius, but which, he confesses, disappointed him; and then he presents us with a contrivance from his lady, as he would persuade us, too modest to call it his own. We are further told that he had, with unwearied diligence, searched the "most ponderous dictionary without any satisfactory result," much of which time, I cannot help thinking, would have been better and more suitably employed in the administration of spiritual discourse and advice to his uninformed parishioners, the welfare of whose souls ought rather to be the study of that portion of the "black graces," the divines, than the tinkering of their persons.

But to return to the discovery. He had read and searched to no purpose, when the ingenuity of his lady, as he would have us believe, hit upon the plan detailed. Here he evidently had the advantage of his "*medical friend*." Now, if that gentleman had been so fortunate as to have his attention called—as no doubt the divine's was, because he admits he reads

your Journal—to your recommendation of that very useful little work of Mr. Druitt's, the "Surgeon's Vade-Mecum" (without reference to any more elaborate dictionaries), he would there have found, as every one else may, on the subject of bunions, the following instructions:—"Mr. Key recommends the great toe to be kept in its proper place by means of a partition in the stocking, like the finger of a glove!"—the plan this Lincolnshire parson would palm upon your readers as the discovery of his wife. Two such luminaries seldom exist in one hemisphere; truly, that portion of Lincolnshire must be blessed.

As you have readers unconnected with the medical profession, it is well they should know that if we cannot cure bunions, we can at least detect and expose piracy.

I am, Gentlemen,
Yours obediently,
A SUBSCRIBER.

Herefordshire, Jan. 25, 1844.

* * We must be excused if we express our belief that our reverend correspondent is no pirate, and if we reiterate our opinion that some easily applied and efficient contrivance for straightening the toe is a desideratum. We do not well see how the lady can be accused of copying Mr. Key's plan. His plan consists not merely of putting the toe into a separate partition in the stocking, which would be of no use at all, but of putting it also into a partition formed by strong cow's leather, fixed into the sole of the shoe. But if "A Subscriber" asks his own shoemaker, he will find that it is almost impossible to have it well done. We have ascertained, from a London bandage-maker, that he has long been in the habit of using a steel plate, similar to the vicar's brass plate, with slits in it, so that the toes may be confined in their places by tapes, but this is worn only at night. Some neat apparatus is wanted, which will allow the shoe to be worn over it, and not impede exercise.—Eds.

INQUIRY AS TO ONE OF THE CAUSES OF CARBUNCLE.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—It is well known that carbuncles are frequent consequences of the hydropathic system. The Germans call them *critical*; but I suppose the truth to be that the skin is so unnaturally taxed, in order to get rid of the immense loads of water with which the blood is deluged, that at last it loses its vitality, and portions of it slough, together with the subjacent cellular tissue. The object of my note is to ask whether any of the readers of your admirable periodical have ever observed the same affection of the skin to follow in other cases in which it is subjected repeatedly to the influence of warm moisture, and made to perspire profusely.

There is in London a vapor-bath establishment, kept by a cunning old Scotchman, who pretends that he made certain discoveries amongst the American Indians, who taught him the use of *yarbs*, wherewith, he says, he medicates his vapor-bath, and which, according to him, cure every malady under the sun. Strange to say, many persons of respectability, and, amongst others, the Speaker of the House of Com-