from the decomposition of glucose by alkalies, and particularly by the formic acid.

5. The formic acid and the other deoxidating bodies produced, according to my views, during the ingestion of amylaceous and saccharine substances, exercise a salutary reducing effect, the genuine counterpart of respiration, or, in other words, of respiratory oxygenation; thus, the absence of these compounds in the blood of diabetic patients, produces a noxious disturbance in their circulation, arising from an oxygenation over and above that of the protein elements which this fluid contains.

6. Finally, formic acid combined with soda has been detected by MM. Bouchardat and Sandras in the blood of man and of animals three hours after they had eaten sugar in considerable quantity.

(To be continued.)

SUGGESTIONS TOWARDS THE ADOPTION OF A PLAN FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF PRACTICAL MEDICINE AND SURGERY.

By THOMAS HUNT, Esq., Herne Bay.

(Read at the first Anniversary Meeting of the South-Eastern Branch of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association, held at Ashford, Wednesday, June 24, 1846.)

The first avowed object of our Association is the collection of useful information, tending to the advancement of medical and surgical science. This end we have hitherto been endeavouring to accomplish, chiefly by the publication of original essays, hospital reports, and cases occurring in private practice. Much has been done in this way, but perhaps much more may be accomplished by enlisting the services of *men who do not write*; but like their modest prototypes in the wilderness, are content to—

“Waste their fragrance in the desert air.”

Many of our best provincial surgeons are unfortunately *not* writers, yet, nevertheless, men of observation and reflection; and their experience, however valuable, is liable to be lost to the world at their decease. There is no calculating how many important discoveries have been already buried beneath the clouds of the valley. Men, who by their talent, character, and influence, have moulded the opinions and guided the practice of large rural districts, have too often been removed from the sphere of their labours, leaving behind them nothing but traditional recollections—vague and vanishing—of the principles and practice which made them ornaments to their profession and blessings to society. It is with difficulty I can resist the temptation of naming one or two individuals, as illustrations of this remark; but I feel assured that the memories of all who are present, will readily suggest some respected names of men, the memorials of departed worth, known little beyond their respective localities, whose reputation still lingers over the scenes of their former labours; but who have left behind them no other monuments of their greatness. And, doubtless, there are living men (and I know that this room will furnish specimens,) of equal power and attainments, who would at least willingly and promptly respond to direct and definite enquiries on any

question of experience, addressed to them from a respected source, who yet, in the absence of such a motive, may never record their views. Many are too busy, some too diffident, a few perhaps too indolent, while others are deterred by a positive inaptitude to the use of the pen. John Hunter himself, whom but to name is to revere, was *no writer*; and who shall tell how much we have lost by this misfortune?

It has occurred to me, that our weekly periodical might be made the medium of certain definite enquiries, addressed to all our members on any given question, and the statistical results of their replies might be published in our annual volume of “Transactions,” and there collated and compared with whatever practical information on the same subject might be gleaned from the periodicals during the last year or seven years; and thus we might settle some disputed point, or discover some new principle. This would be a beginning, and by degrees, the system might be extended over the whole profession, through the National Association or any other respected medium.

Success in one department would soon encourage the attempt in others, and the time might come, when by this simple arrangement, many of the important practical questions which now agitate and vex the profession, might be quietly and permanently settled. I am aware of the formidable difficulties which must present themselves on the very threshold of such an undertaking; but, if only the majority of my brethren who are now present will consent to put their hands to the work, I do not despair of something important being accomplished.

The details I leave for future discussion. My present object is to sound the feelings of this Branch of the Association, and collect the opinions of the Members of the South-Eastern District, on the practicability of the plan; and I will trespass no longer on your valuable time.

CASES IN THE HOSPITAL PRACTICE OF T. M. GREENHOW, ESQ., SENIOR SURGEON TO THE NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE INFIRMARY.

(Reported by Mr. C. J. GIBB, House Pupil.)

SECONDARY SYPHILIS.

CASE I.

Patrick Lagay, aged 36, a labourer, admitted May 22nd, with a foul ulceration of the throat; a copious eruption of syphilitic acne and lepra over the back and shoulders; an extensive crop of condylomata over and between the nates, and severe nocturnal pains, of the shins particularly; health affected, but no great loss of flesh. Had indurated chancres four months ago, healed by mercury, and became affected with secondary symptoms by the help of uncleanness a few weeks ago.

To use the warm bath frequently, and to have the lead lotion with laudanum to the nates, with a nitric acid gargle to the throat; to take ten grains each of Dover's powder and rhubarb every night, and drink a pint of the compound decoction of sarsaparilla, with fifteen grains of the iodide of potassium daily; and to have mild diet.

28th. Improving in every respect.

June 6th. Health good again; sleeps well; eruption