accompanying their careless use, and then proceeds to comment on the vaginal supporter of Professor Kiliau (of Berne), who considers that the uterus need not be cared for, and that the support should be applied to the upper wall of the vagina alone. It was this instrument which originated the idea of that which Dr. Reid submitted to the notice of the Society, and of which there are two illustrative woodcuts, that are, indeed, essential to the clear comprehension of this piece of mechanism. Before describing the instrument, we may remark that the principle on which it acts may be illustrated, as the author observes, by its resemblance "to the easy introduction of two *closed* fingers within the vulva, which, after passing through it, are *separated*, and applied to either side of the cervix uteri, so as to hold it up in its proper position." There are two forms of the instrument; and when complete, each has very much the appearance of a long pair of castanets connected at their narrow extremities. Each instrument consists of two steel springs, narrow at the ends where they are joined together, and one inch and three quarters broad at their free extremities, being convex externally, and concave within, and protected with cork covered by elastic gum: the open extremities of these springs are separate about two inches from each other. When pressed together, these broad extremities allow of ready introduction within the vulva, and are then permitted to expand, and are applied on either side of the cervix uteri. In the more complex instrument of the two, there is an additional arrangement for facilitating the introduction and removal of the support. Dr. Reid seems to have been most successful in his treatment of prolapsus with this simple and ingenious apparatus: its merits, we cannot doubt, will recommend it to general use.

Here for the present we must pause; as the number and interest of the remaining papers necessitate the postponement of our notice of them until another opportunity.

ART. XI.

On Bandaging and other Operations of Minor Surgery. By F. H. SARGENT, M.D.—*Philadelphia*, 1848. 12mo, pp. 380.

THIS little book, clearly and intelligibly written, evidences great personal experience in the subjects to which it relates.

Its chief merits, for it does not profess originality, are a judicious selection from the writings of others, and an air of sterling good sense and honesty, which on the one hand makes it very readable, and on the other claims our respect for its author as a candid and judicious compiler. He has made no attempt to gain credit for improvements at the expense of others; but, on the contrary, shows an evident desire to state everything fairly, and to give references wherever they are required.

The book is printed in a type, and on a paper, superior to those of most of the productions of the American press; and it abounds in illustrations, which, albeit mostly copies, are not always felicitous.

It is not, however, on these accounts that we are anxious to bring it under the notice of our readers; these are characteristics common to

many works of a higher scientific value, and in other respects more worthy their attention; but we do so because we recognise in it a step towards supplying a want in a particular kind of instruction, that is felt by many a student of surgery at the outset of his career—a want unsupplied by systematic treatises, and inadequately cared for by lecturers on surgery.

Some experience amongst students has convinced us that the simpler matters of practical surgery are too much neglected in the present day, and that there is a craving for the purely *theoretical* at the expense of the *useful*. The fashion truly has changed since Abernethy taught “the Big Wigs at the College” how to make a poultice; but we question if, in all respects, it has changed to a better or a more efficient one.

The object of all professional education should be, to fit a man for that situation in life which he is hereafter to occupy. One individual may be destined to cultivate, almost exclusively, the more scientific parts of the profession, and to him it may be a matter of little consequence whether he be or not a good *dresser*; but to the vast majority it is, and necessarily must be, otherwise. That knowledge and those acquirements which go to constitute the skilful dresser, are not the *minor* matters they are so often considered. A clumsily-adjusted bandage has been the knell of many a man's success.

We think it would be well if some of those manipulations which are commonly intrusted to sisters and nurses were undertaken by students, who would feel the benefit of practising what may seem easy enough of performance until experience has taught otherwise. Few of the students in London would hesitate in describing how to strap and bandage an ulcerated leg, or would fail in correctly stating the rationale of the process; but we are much mistaken if a large proportion of them could carry the measure into execution with any degree of neatness. So it is with many other things: description is but a small step in the process; without repeated practice they cannot be learned, and the opportunity, if neglected, never returns.

These few observations, with which we preface our notice of Dr. Sargent's book, relate to a subject of great importance, and are made in a spirit of sincere love for the best interests of the profession. We might easily extend them, but we prefer not to do so, confiding in our belief that what has been said will find an echo in the breasts of a number of Hospital Surgeons, who do not see unmixed good in a system of scientific cramming which excludes these *minor* details as beneath its notice.

Dr. Sargent divides his subject into five sections.

The first seventy pages are devoted to an account of the more common surgical instruments and surgical dressings; to bathing, fumigation, and the use of disinfecting agents.

In the second part there is a full description of bandages and their application.

The third speaks of the mechanical treatment of fractures; the fourth of dislocations; and the fifth section includes the minor operations of surgery, such as bleeding and the use of the catheter. A short chapter on the means of diminishing pain during operations, a list of useful formulæ, and a copious index, conclude the volume.

A work like the one before us, whose data are facts obtained by ob-

servation, and acknowledged by all, presents but small food for criticism, and requires no detailed notice from us.

Our observations must be few, and confined to those points which have struck us most in the course of its perusal.

In the first division of the subject there is a detailed account of the *douche*, which is a mode of using water that is hardly sufficiently estimated in England. In hysterical contractions of the limbs, its value is well known to surgeons; and as a means of producing counter-irritation, it is extensively employed on the continent. We remember being present at a painful spectacle, witnessed doubtless by many of our readers also, in the madhouse at Berlin, when a number of wretched imbeciles were undergoing the application of the cold *douche* to the spine. The sufferers described the sensation as of a fiery ball rolling along the spine, and producing a burning pain, proportioned in intensity to the length of the application, until at last, as we witnessed, the torment becomes intolerable. Who that has once seen will ever forget the poor, shivering maniacs; or the doctor smoking his cigar; or the dark, unwholesome cellar, its walls covered with the green vegetation of damp; or the crazy tub in which the patients sat; or the brutal men at the forcing-pump?

No remarks occur to us in reading the chapter on bandages, we can only concur with Dr. Sargent, that "there are few of the ends ordinarily to be attained by bandaging, which may not be gained by a skilful dresser with the simple roller." Every individual case requires some modification in the adjustment of its bandage; and this circumstance, while it detracts from the value of systematic treatises on bandaging, proportionally increases the necessity of constant practice in their application.

It appears to us that our author is a little too mechanical in his treatment of fractures. There are few facts of which the generality of modern surgeons are more convinced, than of the superiority of treating fractures with a simple apparatus, and a sparing application of bandages. Most of them, too, join in condemning weights and pulleys as something worse than useless, except in very rare cases.

The notion is a very strange one that regards muscles as analogous to cords pulling against each other—the strongest having the advantage; and we think we can trace the germ of many an evil in practice to the expressions *extension* and *counter-extension*.

The reader will find some excellent observations on the treatment of fracture of the clavicle, which is an injury so frequently followed by deformity, that is especially to be lamented among females, as to require the most serious attention on the part of the practitioner. The clavicle is so immediately subcutaneous, as to be readily acted upon by direct pressure, with strong plaster and dossils of lint; and this treatment, together with the figure-of-eight bandage, has appeared to us to afford more satisfactory results than any other.

We are glad to meet with Dr. Sargent's views on the occurrence of fracture of the lower end of the radius, simulating dislocation of the wrist; and the more so, because we have been surprised to find Mr. Lizars speaking of the latter accident as a common one, an opinion in which few practical surgeons will coincide.

Dr. Sargent makes no mention of his countryman Dr. Jarvis, who was here, a year or two ago, with an ingenious apparatus for reducing dislocations of all kinds.

The chapter on bleeding presents nothing calling for remark; we cannot agree, however, in any commendation of the spring lancet, an instrument, we believe, wholly discarded from practice in this country.

There is a very proper caution inculcated by our author, on the subsequent employment of leeches that have been used to abstract blood from persons suffering under infectious or malignant diseases. At an institution in which leeches were twice used, we are informed that several serious cases of infection occurred; resulting in the formation of abscesses and other troublesome symptoms.

Dr. Sargent, on the authority of Dr. Buschenberger, speaks highly of Matico, both as a local, and also as an internal remedy in the form of infusion, in cases of obstinate bleeding. We have recently had reason to think it very serviceable, in a case of recurring and uncontrollable hemorrhage from a wounded vein.

The chapter on the use of the catheter is very meagre, and not commensurate with the importance of the subject. It is the least satisfactory of any in the volume.

The brief observations on the means of diminishing pain during operations contain nothing new, and might as well have been omitted.

On the whole, then, we have been much pleased with Dr. Sargent's little book. It is methodically arranged, and simply written; two points especially important in an elementary work, and calculated very greatly to increase its value.

ART. XII.

1. *A Treatise on the Practice of Medicine.* By GEORGE B. WOOD, M.D., Professor of Materia Medica and Pharmacy in the University of Pennsylvania, one of the Physicians of the Pennsylvania Hospital, &c. In Two Vols.—*Philadelphia*, 1847. Royal 8vo, pp. 792, 840.
2. *Clinical Lectures on the Practice of Medicine.* By ROBERT J. GRAVES, M.D., M.R.I.A., &c. &c. Second Edition, edited by J. MOORE NELIGAN, M.D., M.R.I.A., Physician to Jervis Street Hospital, Lecturer on the Practice of Medicine, &c. In Two Vols.—*Dublin*, 1848.
3. *Clinical Lectures, delivered in the Theatre of Mercer's Hospital during the Session of 1847-8.* By JAMES F. DUNCAN, M.D. T.C.D., Assistant Physician to the Hospital, Fellow of the King's and Queen's College of Physicians, &c. &c.—*Dublin*, 1849. 8vo, pp. 122.

THERE is a demand for a species of literature which, we think, has never been fully comprehended and provided for. The freedom of inquiry and discussion enjoyed by the cultivators of medical science, causes the press to teem with new views, new theories, new facts; and with compilations and amalgamations of the old and the new in science. The latter arise, of course, out of the former, and are intended to satisfy the demand alluded to. To those who are acquainted with the details of professional life, and who therefore know how little the majority of practitioners study the new or current literature of the day, it can be no matter of surprise that a brief condensation or compilation of its main results is a desideratum in the profession, and that works professing to attain this object enjoy a