

such a contraction if it did exist, may produce congestion of the brain, and thus indirectly cause convulsion.

But though his claims to priority, in regard of the theory of convulsion, may appear doubtful to some, yet we cannot think that any will deny him the credit of having suggested the same remedy, as that which has of late been proposed by Dr. Marshall Hall. For we find the following very distinct statement in the pamphlet before us:—

“Admitting the truth of these propositions, it naturally follows that, as a palliative measure in the treatment of hydrophobia, the operation of bronchotomy might be expected to ward off, or at least abate, the violence of the convulsive paroxysm. And there are other consequences (afterwards to be noticed) equally, or still more injurious, which this measure would tend directly to obviate.”

But, it is quite obvious, from the tenor of the whole essay, that he contemplated the application of this measure to all convulsive diseases—seeing that he considers that feature of these diseases to depend on one and the same prominent cause, viz. cerebral congestion. He even mentions epilepsy, the very disease for which Dr. Hall has proposed tracheotomy, as a means of alleviating the seizures, and, indeed, Dr. Dalziel uses very much the same arguments as does his “rival writer.” For he says:—

“The whole history of hysteria, indeed, and especially its occasional termination in *epilepsy*, goes to prove that cerebral congestion is the immediate cause of the paroxysm. Flushing of the face is a common symptom, and its occasional absence, with paleness in its room, may readily be accounted for by admitting that the disease is combined, or alternates with syncope, or a partial cessation of the action of the heart.”

We cannot now afford space for even a peep at Dr. Dalziel's *Glance at Mesmerism*, the omission of which would not, in our opinion, have detracted from the value of his essay. We have only room for the concluding remark, that while we are not convinced of the necessity for tracheotomy in hydrophobia, without better proof of the occurrence of laryngismus in that disease than we at present possess, and while the cases of epilepsy are rare, and those of hysteria still rarer, in which the operation would be warrantable, yet we consider the proposal of that measure in *certain cases* of convulsion as an important addition to the available resources of rational medicine.

By E. Watson

IV. *Chemistry. Tables Introductory to a Course of Testing in Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis.* By JOHN MACADAM, F.R.S.S.A., Lecturer on Chemistry, &c.

THESE tables have been compiled chiefly, the author says, for the use of students attending his own laboratory, being intended as a guide to them during the earlier periods of their study. In their compilation, he has availed himself freely of the suggestions

and experience of various eminent chemists of our own and other countries, and is principally indebted to the Geissen School, and the works of Fresenius; while in the selection of the materials and the rendering and arrangement of them, he adds, he has been chiefly guided by his own experience of what is most suitable and convenient to the student.

Bearing in mind the long list of text-books, hand-books, and introductions to chemistry, which have of late years issued from the press, all of which have their excellencies, and one or other of which, we believe, is the favourite directory for study in every class-room and laboratory, we were scarcely prepared to believe that another, either larger or smaller, was wanted. In these days, however, every teacher seems to strive after another, and what he thinks, a better mode of instruction than others follow; and resting on his own experience of what is convenient or useful, he arranges, in some new order, things perhaps previously familiar to the pupil. In former times, to do so—to depart from the beaten tract—would be to imperil the reputation and hazard the success of the teacher. But that this is not now the case in chemistry, as in other class-rooms, we have abundant evidence in the different manuals made use of. Though much of the ardour with which chemistry is now pursued is to be traced to the greater importance it is every day assuming in the investigation and treatment of disease, and to the daily improvement it is the means of achieving in manufacturing processes, still we believe that not a little of it may with justice be referred, to that stimulating influence upon the beginner, which arises from the novel and attractive forms in which everything is brought before him. We regard, therefore, with favour every attempt to facilitate the acquirements of a knowledge of a science and of an art so important, and, despite our previous observation on the differences which are made in class manuals—too often for the mere sake of variety—we commend Mr. Macadam's production for the method, the clearness of description, and succinctness of expression which mark the compilation.

B. W. Richardson

SELECTIONS FROM MEDICAL JOURNALS.

I. MR. BENJAMIN W. RICHARDSON ON A NEW ANÆSTHETIC AGENT.

At a meeting of the London Medical Society on the 20th May, Mr. Richardson read a very interesting paper on the anæsthetic properties of the *Lycoperdon Proteus*, or common puff-ball.

“A few months since, I had a conversation with my friend Mr. Henry Hudson, a Leicestershire surgeon, on the management of bees; and was particularly interested in his description of an old, and, as I now find, very prevalent custom, of stupifying these insects with the smoke of the fungus known under the name of puff-ball, before