

ART. III.

On the Discovery of the Laryngoscope. By THOMAS WINDSOR,
Surgeon to the Manchester Eye Hospital, &c.

It is of some little importance, that to each man, if not during his life, at all events in the history of medicine, there should be assigned his due; and for this reason it may be well to correct an error into which I believe all recent writers have fallen.

Since the publication of Czermak's work in 1860, the credit of having been the first to employ a speculum for examining the glottis has generally been ascribed to Liston.* It has been also claimed for the late Mr. Avery, who made some such an instrument about 1850.†

In France, so early as 1838, Baumès of Lyon had exhibited a similar instrument to the medical society of that town, for in the "Compte-Rendu des Travaux de la Société de Médecine de Lyon, depuis le 1^{er} Juillet 1836, jusqu'au 30 Juin 1838, sous la Présidence de M. Janson, par L. A. Rougier," Lyon, 1840, I find, at p. 62, this interesting passage:—

"Speculum pour l'exploration de la gorge, par M. Baumès—A l'extrémité d'une tige de bois ou de baleine cylindrique est placé un miroir de la largeur d'une pièce de deux francs, dont on peut faire varier l'inclinaison à l'aide d'une vis de rappel. Par ce moyen on peut reconnaître facilement les inflammations, engorgements ou ulcérations que l'on ne pouvait que soupçonner, à l'extrémité postérieure des fosses nasales, au larynx, et dans quelques parties du pharynx. L'usage de cet instrument, très facile d'ailleurs, est d'une utilité incontestable."

The real discoverer, however, appears to have been Dr. Benjamin Babington, who, on the 18th of March, 1829, showed his instrument at a meeting of the Hunterian Society. In the report of this Society‡ it may be read, that

"Dr. Benjamin Babington submitted to the meeting an ingenious instrument for the examination of parts within the fauces not admitting of inspection by unaided sight. It consisted of an oblong piece of looking-glass set in silver wire, with a long shank. The reflecting portion is placed against the palate, whilst the tongue is held down by a spatula, when the epiglottis and upper part of the larynx become visible in the glass. A strong light is required, and the instrument should be dipped in water so as to have a film of the fluid upon it when used, or the halitus of the breath renders it cloudy. The doctor proposed to call it the *glottiscope*."

Before concluding, I may notice that towards the beginning of the present century, Bozzini, a medical practitioner at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, published a folio pamphlet,§ in which he pointed out the great importance of seeing into the cavities of the living body, and described an apparatus with which this might be performed. From his descrip-

* Liston's Practical Surgery, third edition, p. 417. 1840.

† Medical Times and Gazette, vol. ii. 1860, p. 111.

‡ London Medical Gazette, vol. iii. p. 555. London, 1829.

§ Der Lichtleiter oder Beschreibung einer einfachen Vorrichtung und ihrer Anwendung zur Erleuchtung innerer Höhlen und Zwischen-räume des lebenden animalischen Körpers. von Philipp Bozzini, pp. vi. and 23, plates 4. Weimar, 1807.

tion, however, it appears that, unfortunately, his instrument must have been cumbersome and difficult to employ; probably for these reasons* it was soon forgotten. It appeared worthy of notice here, because Bozzini was the first to conceive the idea of illuminating almost every cavity, perhaps the only exception being the glottis; and because he describes and figures a reflector with which he states the posterior nares may be seen.

Lastly, in 1844, Dr. A. Warden† invented a prismatic speculum, with which he succeeded in seeing in two cases of disease the glottis. He states that "the epiglottis was immediately seen, but it was only when efforts to swallow were made, that the arytenoid cartilages and glottis were raised out of concealment, and brought brilliantly to show their picture in the reflecting face of the prism."

It may I think be now admitted—

1. That Bozzini first attracted attention to the importance of seeing into different cavities of the living body, and to some extent succeeded in overcoming the difficulties inherent in the undertaking.

2. That Dr. Benjamin Babington was the discoverer of the laryngoscope.

3. That Baumès, Liston, Warden, Avery, made apparently independent efforts to examine the larynx. At the same time it must not be forgotten that

4. To Garcia is due the merit of having first made an extended series of examinations of the healthy larynx; but specially,

5. That to Czermak must be awarded the praise of having diffused the knowledge of the instrument and shown its value in disease.

ART. IV.

Notes on Hospitals in Northern Italy, and on Pellagra. By THOMAS B. PEACOCK, M.D., F.R.C.P.; Physician to St. Thomas's Hospital, and to the Hospital for Diseases of the Chest, Victoria Park.

THE following observations are compiled from notes made during a short tour in the North of Italy in the month of September last.

The Hospital of San Servolo at Venice is situated on an island in the Lagune, near the Armenian Convent of San Lazare, and midway in the channel between Malamocco and Lido. It is appropriated to the reception of lunatics of the male sex, and is under the charge of monks of the order of San Giovanni di Dio. The superintendent and some of the brethren are medical men, and receive their educa-

* I have been unable to refer to the following articles on Bozzini's invention:—Salzb. Med. Chir. Zeit. 1807, p. 273 (rev. ?); Bozzini in Hufeland's Journal der pract. Heilk. xxiv. B. 1 St. p. 107; and in Salzb. Med. Chir. Zeit. 1806, iii. B. pp. 317, 319; 1807, i. 271; Siebold, Lucina, iv. B. p. 167; Journal der Erfindungen, 3 St. p. 89—the last article is to the effect that the instrument is of no use.

† Various articles in the London and Edinburgh Monthly Journal of Medical Science, vols. iv. v., 1844-1845, more especially vol. v. p. 552. The first account of this invention was published in the London Medical Gazette, vol. xxxiv. p. 256, May 24, 1844.