

could apply at once, without skilled assistance, and on which we could rely with confidence to restrain the bleeding.

It was in the hope that some of your readers would come forward to suggest some such instrument that I trespassed on your space before, and I put forward my idea, not as necessarily the right one, but as one that perhaps might be improved upon. I hope, then, that I shall see in your next number more communications on this subject. Meanwhile I beg to forward to you a modification of the plan contained in my first communication, not that I think it would be more efficient, but that the instrument would be more easily applied.

Take a tube five or six inches long; at one end let an elastic bag be adapted, at the other a stop-cock. Before introduction the bag should be invaginated into the tube; this, I think, would be best done by means of a string attached to the fundus of the bag, and passing through the tube, the tube might now be easily pushed along the floor of the nasal fossa. A condensing air syringe would first blow out the bag, and then expand it; let this be drawn well forward into the posterior nares; next let a perforated anterior plug be pushed along the tube well into the anterior nares. Any simple stop placed on the tube would now keep both plugs in position.

Believe me to be yours obediently,

Fulham-road, West Brompton.

A. GODRICH.

P.S.—I have not yet had an opportunity of inspecting Dr. Taafe's instrument, but shall do so as soon as possible. I should feel much obliged if he would state what experience he has had with his plugs, and what amount of success he has met with, as he has omitted to do so in his letter. I have submitted both my plans to Messrs. Louis Blaise and Co., of 67, St. James's-street, who, I trust, will before long be able to produce an instrument that, if not perfect, will in a great measure meet the necessities of the case.—A. G.

OUT-PATIENTS AT OPHTHALMIC INSTITUTIONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—An article in your impression of Saturday, on "Out-patients," imputes to the medical staff of the Royal London Ophthalmic Hospital an arrangement so contrary to the unwritten but well-understood code which regulates the limits of hospital and private practice that, as one of the surgeons to the hospital, I ask you in justice to insert in your next number my emphatic denial, as regards myself, of anything of the kind. From my first connexion with this hospital, I have always declined to see private patients within its walls.

I have not a doubt of the correctness of your statement that many persons obtain relief there who are well able to pay for the advice they require, but I think that reasonable care is taken to exclude such improper applicants. To such persons, not of the indigent class, who may come on my days, the porter has always been instructed by me to refer them, without bias, to a list of the entire staff, if they should ask whom they had better consult.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Old Burlington-street, 13th January, 1873.

J. W. HULKE.

** We insert Mr. Hulke's disclaimer with much pleasure, and only regret that it would be impossible for the whole of his colleagues to join in it.—ED. L.

"CAIRO AND ITS CLIMATE."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Dr. Moritz Furstenberg, in his article on "Cairo and its Climate," which appeared in THE LANCET of January 11th, has thrown out many hints regarding certain forms of disease most benefited by a winter residence in that town. He has, however, left out some important diseases, which, if not cured, are materially relieved by a sojourn at Cairo. Yearly may be seen asthmatic patients at Cairo who are surprised as well as rejoiced that their enemy has entirely left them, and so completely as they have never before experienced, though they have been wintering in

the southern parts of Europe years previously. A few inveterate cases do not get so completely cured in the town itself, but a ride or drive to the Pyramids so convinces them of the power of desert air in its purity to cure their malady, that they have recourse to living at Ismailia or Suez, where they can combine hotel comforts with pure desert air. In passing, Dr. Moritz Furstenberg mentions the almost entire absence of acute rheumatism amongst the natives, but has omitted to mention the great curative influence of the climate in cases of subacute and chronic rheumatism. Patients sent to winter in the south of Spain, France, and Italy, suffering from this disease, have received an immense amount of relief from their complaint; but when rain falls, or the temperature is in any way reduced, the disease returns upon them; and I have known of patients who, after remaining a short time in the south of Europe, have been driven further south to Cairo, where in a very short time they get rid of the disease and experience no relapse; and this is brought about by the genial climate—baths, medicines, and diet sharing but little in the cure. Lastly, many forms of mental disease are influenced for good to a greater extent than perhaps by any other climate. We are indebted to a French physician for first pointing to the fact of the absence of any amount of mental disease amongst the modern Egyptians. The air seems to have a peculiar soothing effect on the mind—melancholia, homicidal mania and suicidal, are perhaps the forms most benefited. To the overworked brain, either by excessive literary pursuit or in the race for wealth and position, no town combines so many advantages as Cairo, where the entire change in the people, customs, usages, &c., afford amusement and thought, giving at the same time rest to the brain.

I am, &c.,

Ladbroke-grove-road, Jan. 1873. A. DUNBAR WALKER, M.D.

DREAMS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In those dissertations which have appeared from time to time on the subject of dreams, their authors seem to have limited their researches to the elucidation of the cause and nature of these phenomena, but have, as far as I am aware, left untouched a point on which I venture now shortly to theorise—that is, their utility. We all know that Nature does nothing in vain, and whatever be the channel through which she may choose to convey a particular influence, we must assume that this influence is exerted for a salutary purpose. It must be conceded also that many persons who enjoy undisputed soundness both of mind and body are also subject to dreaming.

The question then arises, as I have before implied, "what useful purpose do dreams subserve?" I think that they may be regarded as constituting a salutary provision of nature, operating through an instinctive and unconscious effort of the mind, at a time when the body, from its comparative inertness, both nervous and muscular, can least influence volition, to bring to the surface half-formed impressions or ideas, which, in our waking hours, through interruptions or distractions of various kinds, the mind has failed to bring to maturity, and which might otherwise form an unhealthy reservoir of crude and undigested thoughts. Such half-hatched notions, it may not be too much to assume, would constantly crop up unbidden in a man's busy hours to his surprise and distress; and, if productive of no more serious results, would alarm him, from his inability to trace them to any previous parentage of thought. In a word, although the comparison is hardly admissible, I might liken the operation of dreaming to the use of the safety-valve in a material engine.

I may here ask, Is it ascertained whether lunatics have the power of dreaming; or, if they have not while their disease is at its height, whether the gift is restored as they approach convalescence?

Many of us in our maturer life are not unfamiliar with an awful vision, "founded on facts" (so to speak), from the memory of which the lapse of years has not had power to release the bearded victim—of Dr. Swicthail with up-lifted birch proceeding to take vengeance for a false concord; or, it may be, when the sport of a fancy no less vivid, we conceive ourselves, if confirmed bachelors, the present