

Cases and observations illustrating the history and pathological relations of two kinds of hydatids, hitherto undescribed / by Dr. Gairdner and Mr. Lee ; with microscopical observations by Mr. H. Goodsir.

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From the Authors



CASES AND OBSERVATIONS

ILLUSTRATING THE

HISTORY AND PATHOLOGICAL RELATIONS OF TWO KINDS OF HYDATIDS, HITHERTO UNDESCRIBED.

By Dr GAIRDNER and Mr LEE,

WITH

MICROSCOPICAL OBSERVATIONS

By Mr H. GOODSIR.

(*From the Edin. Med. and Surg. Journal*, No. 161.)

1. *Case of Abdominal Disease, in which the substance of various viscera was destroyed by an entozoon, not hitherto described.* Read before the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Edinburgh, on the 1st of May 1844. By JOHN GAIRDNER, M. D. F. R. C. S. E.

EARLY in 1843 I was consulted by a respectable tradesman, then in his 69th year. He complained of a deficiency of power in his lower limbs, affecting both of them equally; and also of some slight pain or uneasy feeling in his back, about the region of the lower dorsal or upper lumbar vertebræ. These, so far as I remember, were his only complaints. I was, at the time, of opinion that the loss of muscular power might be owing to some disorder, functional or organic, of that part of the spinal cord which corresponded with the seat of his uneasiness; and, in the hope that it was only functional, prescribed that he should apply towels dipped in very cold water to that part of the spine, evening and morning, for some minutes each time, and that he should afterwards

rub the part with a rough dry cloth, till it was brought into a state of warmth and of vascular reaction. For reasons which will appear in the sequel, I greatly doubt the accuracy of the notions I then entertained of the theory of the morbid symptoms just detailed; but the patient decidedly improved under the treatment, the sluggishness of the limbs went entirely away, and with it the spinal uneasiness, and he repeatedly expressed himself much satisfied with the results of this very simple management.

In the month of July following, he again consulted me; and had then a new symptom, a considerable tumefaction of the abdomen, with obvious fluctuation.* No induration of the liver, nor any hard tumour could be detected in any part of the cavity. He complained of his bodily strength being a little impaired, and was quite obviously thinner than formerly. He was also somewhat sallower than usual, though not remarkably so, for he had naturally very little colour when in his best health. His urine amounted in twenty-four hours to about a quart; in colour and appearance it was little different from what it ought to be; when boiled, it presented no trace of albumen. He was remarkably free from pain.

The symptoms just detailed gradually increased. Diuretics of various sorts, and more especially squill, digitalis, mercury, acetate of potass, and nitrate of potass, were perseveringly employed, and excited only occasional and very inadequate diuresis. At first he was able to attend to his business and to go about the streets as usual, but towards the end of the year he became more and more debilitated, and very seriously incommoded by the great distension of his abdomen. His food was frequently returned, apparently in consequence of the pressure exerted on the stomach by the abdominal contents. I proposed to relieve him by paracentesis, which, after some delay, occasioned by his own reluctance to the proceeding, I performed on the last day of the year. The puncture was made in the *linea alba*. On withdrawing the trocar, not a drop of fluid followed it for some seconds. I passed a director through the canula, and a few particles of gelatinous-looking matter came away, followed by some drops of liquid. I adapted a syringe to the canula for the purpose of suction, with the aid of which I withdrew nearly a pound and a half of similar matter, and was then forced to give up, in consequence of the great difficulty of the proceeding, and of the probability of inflammation if it had been longer protracted. The diminution of the distension made a very considerable difference, for some days, in

* The fluctuation, when carefully attended to, was somewhat peculiar in its character, approximating to that which is experienced on tapping with the finger one side of a vessel of animal jelly, while the other hand is applied to the opposite side of the vessel. The reason of this will be apparent from the history of the case.

the poor man's comfort, and in his capability of receiving food; but he gradually became as bad as ever. I was therefore tempted to make a second effort to relieve him, with the hope that I might possibly be enabled to do so more effectually. I had not been prepared, on the 31st of December, to expect the difficulty which then occurred, and my apparatus for suction was consequently less perfect than I could have wished. When I repeated the paracentesis on the 13th of January last, I was provided with an excellent syringe for this purpose, and was therefore much disappointed to find that I was unable to get away more than ten ounces of the gelatinous matter. He was again greatly relieved for a short time, but again became gradually worse and worse. His death happened on the 14th February last.

I was permitted to examine the body the following day, about thirty-five hours after death.

The cavity of the peritonæum was found to be entirely filled with the same kind of matter which had been withdrawn by operation. It consisted of a number of masses, mostly of a globular or ovoid form, attached by pedicles (Plate V. Fig. 7,) to the inner surface of the peritonæum lining the abdominal parietes, and also to the peritonæal surface of the intestines and other abdominal viscera. The entire quantity of these masses amounted to about twenty-four imperial pints. Across the epigastric region extended a massy tumour of a dense consistence, which had been concealed during life by the great distension of the abdominal walls. Innumerable masses of the gelatinous-looking matter were attached to this tumour like bunches of grapes, (Plate V. Fig. 5.) When these were artificially separated from it, the surface from which they had been removed presented an appearance like honey-comb. It was at first difficult to say in what organ this dense tumour had been developed; but its connections with the surrounding parts proved it to be the omentum. The tumour was from two to three inches thick, very hard throughout, and, in some parts of it, almost of cartilaginous density. On cutting through it the stomach and colon were found imbedded in it, and firmly fixed together by it. The place usually filled by the right lobe of the liver was completely occupied by the gelatinous bodies. The lobe itself had entirely disappeared. The gall-bladder and biliary ducts still existed, and contained some bile. The common duct was traced to its usual termination in the duodenum. The left lobe of the liver was greatly diminished in size, but a portion of it remained in a tolerably sound state. The textures of the pancreas and of the spleen, though enveloped in the tumour already described, were not nearly so much invaded by the disease as those of the liver. The intestines had a very dark colour, resembling that of melanosis; they were much compressed by the distension of the belly, and had

many of the gelatinous bodies attached to them. Besides those which were attached to the peritonæal surface there were others of small size in the subserous tissue in various situations, and more especially in the immediate neighbourhood of the bladder. The right kidney was natural; the left had a considerable tubercle within it, occupying that position in the organ where the secerning part of it passes into the uriniferous. The thoracic viscera were perfectly sound; the lungs rather unusually dark in colour.

The remarkable substances above mentioned deserve to be more particularly described. It is impossible to doubt that they were real entozoa of a peculiar kind, but they differed in many particulars from ordinary hydatids. They were contained in the general cavity of the peritonæum, instead of being developed, as hydatids are, within a peculiar sac. The fluid which they contained, and that in which they floated, were highly coagulable by heat, forming a firm curd resembling in all respects the white of a boiled egg, and, no doubt, of the same composition. The fluid of common hydatids, as we know from Dr Marcet, (*London Med. Ch. Trans.* Vol. ii. p. 376,) and from Dr Bostock, (*Guy's Hospital Reports*, No. V. p. 468-9,) is not coagulable by heat "except after very considerable concentration." (Marcet.) Ordinary hydatids are mere cysts or vesicles containing fluid; but the fluid of these bodies did not flow out when they were cut into, being retained, like the fluid part of the vitreous humour of the eye, and that with much more tenacity, by a multitude of septa, which were seen passing through them in various directions, and which, besides parting them into lobules, appeared to enter by innumerable minor subdivisions into the composition of these lobules, giving the whole a reticulated appearance. In colour and transparency they very exactly resembled masses of calf's-foot jelly. Their fluid was of a glutinous or mucilaginous consistence. A portion of it, subjected to the microscope, displayed a number of small cysts floating in it, obviously the germs of the large ones. The larger bodies, or hydatids, if they may be so denominated, were in some instances almost of the size of a hen's egg; and they were of all sizes, from that to the minute volume of the microscopic ones already mentioned. I have said that they affected the globular or ovoid form; but, either from compression, or other unknown causes, they were often very irregular and unshapely, and some of them were evidently broken and disintegrated. Many of the more dense among them had a degree of opalescence. The fluid in which they floated bore a very small proportion to the aggregate mass of these bodies themselves, and I have a suspicion that it was chiefly derived from the rupture of the larger ones. Their exterior surface was roughish, in consequence of the existence, at pretty regular intervals, of a great number

of small points, which proved, under the microscope, to be so many minute discs, having in their circumference apertures or *stomata*, communicating with little tubes which ran from them in different directions in the outer coat of the hydatid. (Plate V. Fig. 8.) The external surface of these bodies was less obviously rough in proportion as they decreased in size, but even the smaller ones, under the microscope, shewed similar roughness. Almost all those which were not of merely microscopic magnitude were attached to some part of the textures. Many of them had short thick pedicles; some had pedicles resembling narrow tapes. A very inconsiderable force was generally sufficient to detach them. The few which seemed altogether free had probably been detached by some such slight cause. The adhesion of others was more tenacious, and many of them appeared to be generated between the peritonæum and the textures immediately exterior to it. I have said *appeared*, because the peritonæum was in very many places so altered as to make it difficult to say whether it really existed there any longer or not.

Those who examine the records of such cases cannot fail to remark, that very many histories are given of supposed hydatids, which were not hydatids at all, but merely such cysts as Dr Hodgkin has described under the title of "Adventitious serous cysts." (London Medico-Chirurgical Transactions, Vol. xv. p. 267.) These are developed in the ovary, mamma, testis, and many other textures and organs, with which they have a vascular connection; and such is the want of discrimination with which the term hydatid has been applied to them, that much attention is necessary to distinguish true cases of hydatids from false ones. There is also to be remarked in those narratives of real hydatids, which are to be found in the writings of physicians, a considerable want of perspicuousness, arising from the application of the term cyst sometimes to the hydatids themselves, and more especially the parent hydatids, within which the young ones are generally developed; and sometimes to those *vascular* capsules within which we usually observe the parent hydatids to be contained, much in the same way as a kernel is contained within a shell.* These vascular capsules, which are adventitious formations from the textures of the several organs in which hydatids are imbedded, I shall, to avoid confusion, term the *nidi* of the hydatids.

I shall now endeavour to discover how far the more distinctive points in this case resemble those of similar cases to be found in the records of past experience.

1st, The absence of *nidi* in the case related was one of its re-

* For a very accurate account of this appearance, I refer the reader to Mr Howship in Edin. Med. and Surg. Journal, vol. xliii. pp. 15-16.

markable features. If the narratives of cases of true hydatids are read with care, it will be found that these nidi have been almost universally present. Among the fifteen cases of hydatids detailed by Dr Bright in the fifth No. of Guy's Hospital Reports, there are apparently none that were not contained in nidi. In his second case, nidi were found in the omentum, the liver, and the spleen. The excellent representation of the parasitic entozoa which accompanies his description, recalls strongly the appearance of those I lately saw. But they must have been essentially different; for they are described as mere vesicles containing a fluid "as pure as distilled water."

2d. Extensive invasion of the textures of the liver by hydatids is by no means uncommon; but I cannot find many cases of *equally* extensive destruction of these textures with that which I have related. In Mr Howship's case, communicated to the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Edinburgh, (Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal, Vol. xliii. p. 13-22,) "the liver was diminished in thickness almost to the peritonæal coat; not more than about half an inch of its parenchymatous substance remaining." The hydatids "were connected together by extensive fibrinous adhesions." From this last expression, and from the description and delineation which follow, it appears clearly that they were contained in the usual *nidi*. They were the common acephalocysts, and therefore differed in structure from those which I saw.

A very remarkable case of the same sort is briefly related by Ruysch, (Observat. Anatomicæ, lxxv.) in which he says that a bold and rude surgeon perforated the abdomen in the region of the liver, and discharged a great number of hydatids. A similar operation has often had a successful issue; but in this case the woman died; and it was found on dissection that "*tota substantia hepatis, eo in loco, in hydatides degeneraverat.*"

Cheselden, in his Anatomy, relates (p. 212,) a similar case, in which "the gibbous part" of the liver was "*entirely wasted,*" and contained hydatids in a proper nidus within that viscus. Another case will be found in Sandifort's Thesaurus, (Vol. i. p. 347,) and one in Meckel's Handbuch der Patholog. Anat. (Vol. ii. P. ii. page 409.) A large collection of such cases could easily be made, in not a few of which the hydatids were evacuated by incision during life from the site of the liver. In some, in which, it is to be presumed, the liver was not extensively injured, the health of the individual was restored.*

* I would refer more particularly to an excellent case of this sort treated by Guattani, and reported by Lassus in the Journal de Médecine et de Chirurgie, Paris, an ix. vol. i. p. 137. Another excellent case is recorded by Dr Monro in his Morbid Anatomy of the Gullet, Stomach, and Intestines.

3d. I have not been able to find any case in which the omentum was morbidly altered in the particular manner which I have described. Dr Cooke, in his edition of Morgagni, (Vol. ii. p. 261, *note*,) has spoken of a *horny* state of the omentum from hydatids, which had fallen under his observation. This may possibly have been a similar case.

4th. The albuminous and highly coagulable character of the substance of the entozoon, is another point in the case which I have sought to illustrate from the records of medicine. I shall first of all produce a case of this sort from Bonetus (Sepulchretum, Tom. ii. p. 490,) who very pertinently inquires, "*Quis medicorum curare potest hydropem ascitem limosum, membranis inclusum?*" He says he has heard and read of many such cases, and he gives the following as an example. "*Aperui cujusdam virginis ætate provectoris cadaver, cujus admodum distenti abdominis totam cavitatem repletam conspeximus innumerabilibus vesicis aut sacculis humore tenaciori et glutinoso refectis.*" Here the fluid was glutinous and tenacious, and therefore very unlike that of acephalocysts; and yet, I fear, the case cannot be safely produced as an instance of hydatids, though so regarded by the author. For he does not say whether these "*sacculi*" were attached or not; and as the subject was a female, it is at least possible, if not probable, that they were serous cysts connected with the ovary.

The following case from Ruysch is not open to the same objections, and is, besides, one of the most remarkable for destruction of the liver which I have met with. I quote his own words. "*Anno 1696 hydropici cadaver cultro anatomico subjeci, cujus hepar, totum quantum erat, ex meris vesiculis constabat, quæ materiam limosam pellucidam continebant.—In dicto jecinore ne minimus quidem ramulus venæ portæ, cavæ, ductus biliosi, aut arteriæ hepaticæ videndum sese exhibebat, quantumvis ad illud usque tempus vixerit æger.*" The author then enters into some speculations on the origin of the hydatids which are little to my present purpose, except on account of his characterising them as "*substantiam gelatinosam in se continentes.*" The patient was a male, as is evident from the first words above quoted; the disease was in the liver; the "*vesiculæ*" contained a matter which was not merely slimy and gelatinous, but *pellucid*; the description of these bodies, so far as it goes, would serve excellently for the appearances presented by the parasites in the case which I have described; and the extensive destruction of the liver completes the parallelism. (See Thesaurus Anatom., i. No. xii.) In a subsequent part of his writings, the author gives a plate representing a portion of this unusual liver. (See Thesaurus Anatom., ii. Table ii. Fig. 3.)

Dr Crowther has presented to the profession a remarkable enough case, in which considerable difficulty was found in tapping from the presence of hydatids. After the death of the patient, a female about thirty, the peritonæum was found greatly thickened; and presented, "on dissevering its laminæ," (such is Dr C.'s expression,) a great variety of "cysts, some round, some oval, some transparent, some opaque," the transparent ones containing "a thick, transparent, syrupy, gelatinous fluid," which is stated to have "coagulated by the application of heat." The abdominal viscera were all sound, the hydatids, if such they were, (and I think it probable that they were such,) being altogether external to the peritonæal cavity. There are few recorded cases in which the effect of heat on hydatids has been mentioned, and it is a pity that in this one, in which their coagulability was ascertained, the structure of the "cysts" is not more minutely described.* (See Edinburgh Med. and Surg. Journal, Vol. xxv. p. 49-50.)

5th, There yet remains one aspect of my case in which I have endeavoured to illustrate it from the observations of others; I mean, as it regards the external and internal structure, and the mode of attachment, growth, and development of the entozoon itself. I have endeavoured to give an accurate account of its characters in the former part of this paper, and my friend, Mr Harry Goodsir, conservator of the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, whose familiarity with subjects of this description, so eminently qualifies him for the task, has examined it with great minuteness, and introduced the results of his inquiries into a paper which he has recently communicated to the Royal Society of Edinburgh, on the structure, economy, and development of the different species of entozoa. Mr Goodsir suggests *Diskostoma Acephalocystis* as an appropriate name for this species. I have resorted to all the most probable sources of information accessible to me, from which parallel cases might be expected to be adduced, and more especially to the express treatises on the natural history and structure of entozoa in general, or of hydatids in particular, by Rudolphi,† Bremser,‡ Cruveilhier,§ Kerr,|| Owen,¶ Lobstein,**

* A collection of cases will be found in Sandifort, 22 in number, in many of which the seat of the parasites was similar to that of those observed by Dr C. (Thesaur., vol. i. p. 451.)

† Entozoorum Hist. Nat.

‡ Traité Zoolog. et Physiolog. sur les vers intest. de l'homme.

§ Article "Acéphalocystes" in Dict. de Med. et de Chirurgie Pratiques.

|| Article "Hydatids" in the Cyclopædia of Practical Medicine.

¶ Article Entozoa in Todd's Cyclopædia of Anatomy and Physiology.

** In his Traité d'Anat. Pathologique, t. i.

Meckel,* Laennec,† Lamarck,‡ Copland,§ Monro,|| and Hippolyte Cloquet.¶ I have also examined those more incidental accounts of hydatids which are to be found in such pathological works as those of Morgagni, De Haen, Baillie, Abercrombie, and many others, some of which I have quoted in this communication: finally, I have examined a very great number of those still more casual descriptions which are connected with the details of individual cases in the transactions of societies, and in periodical journals, and other works. From all these sources I have not been able to extract a single description of a parasite at all resembling that which was fatal to my patient. I am therefore warranted in asserting that it is a rare one; and that if it has been seen, which it very probably may have been, it has at least never yet been described with that precision which is necessary to its identification.

2. *Description of the Hydatid found in Dr Gairdner's Case.*

By HARRY D. S. GOODSIR, Conservator of the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh.

THE hydatids found in this case were globular, of various sizes, (Pl. V. Fig. 7, also preparation 2241, Mus. R. C. S. E.,) and were connected together in groups or masses, each group resembling the ovaria of birds in an active state of development; they were of a bright straw-colour. Each group was covered externally by a membrane, (Pl. V. Fig. 8,) which was formed by the hydatid. At first this membrane, from its appearance, was thought to have been the result of inflammatory action, but a more minute examination proved it to be a tissue *sui generis*, and one which intimately belonged to the hydatid. Its external surface was rough, in consequence of a number of striæ, which ran at irregular intervals across one another, so as to form interspaces of an irregular angular shape, (Pl. V. Fig. 7.) This membrane not only covered the surface of the group, but also dipped deeply between the hydatids and in those specimens which were altogether isolated, the membrane covered them entirely, even to the base of the pedicles, and generally passed from the hydatids to the surface of the peritonæum, where it became gradually thinner and thinner, as it receded from the parent stock.**

When magnified this membrane presented a very peculiar struc-

* In his *Handbuch der Patholog. Anat.* v. ii.

† In the *Bulletin de l'Ecole de Médecine*, &c. de Paris, an xiii.

‡ *Histoire Naturelle des Animaux sans Vertèbres*, t. i., Paris, 1816.

§ In his *Dictionary of Practical Medicine*, Art. "Hydatid."

|| In his *Morbid Anatomy of the Human Gullet, Stomach, and Intestines*.

¶ In the *Dictionnaire de Médecine*, Articles "Acéphalocyste," "Cysticerque," "Polycéphale," and "Ditrachyceros."

** *Transactions of R. S. E.*, Vol. xv.

ture, (Pl. V. Fig. 5); numerous disks of various sizes were seen scattered over its external surface, and larger disks were sometimes seen with two or three smaller ones upon them. Numerous tubuli ramified through the membrane, and opened on its surface, by means of small stomata, which were generally arranged round the edges of the disks, (Pl. V. Fig. 8.) Immediately underneath the membrane already described, there was a layer of cellular substance which connected it with another of a much more delicate texture. From observations made upon another, and also new form of acephalocyst,* I have been led to suppose that a third membrane exists in this hydatid, which probably lies internal to the two others, and from which the delicate septa which traverse the gelatinous mass of the body arise.† The stomata and tubes which were observed in the external membrane could not be traced into the deeper parts of the body of the animal.

When a small portion of the external or tubular membrane was placed under the microscope, its internal surface was found to be studded with numerous small shining bodies or cells. In general these cells were compound, containing from one to four, or more young cells in their interior.‡ These I looked upon as the gemmules of this hydatid, which, like the other acephalocystic entozoon, is gemmiparous. The younger or contained cells were sometimes seen free and detached from the parent cell, floating in the gelatinous contents of the parent hydatid. The tubular membrane, as it extends over the peritonæal surface, after arriving at a certain stage of growth, throws off cells similar to those just described from its attached surface, and invariably from spots in the neighbourhood of the large tubes.§

These cells enlarge, not by any apparent cellular development, but, like those of the common acephalocyst, by simple dilatation from the addition of new matter in the interior. As this increases, the tubular membrane in the neighbourhood becomes thicker, owing to the increased number of tubes necessary for the nourishment of the young cell.

In this entozoon there are two modes of propagation, one for increasing the size and extent of its own individual group; the other for the purpose of extending the species to as yet uninfested portions of the infested animal.

The first mode of propagation we have just described; the second would appear to proceed in the following manner:—The gemmules, by some means or other, escape from the parent acephalocyst, reach the uninfested tissues at some distance from the general parasitic mass,|| and thus in time form new groups, which,

* Vide, p. 279.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. p. 564, pl. xv. fig. 2, D. E. B.

§ Transac. R. S. E., vol. xv. p. 563.

|| Ibid. vol. xv. pl. xv. fig. 2, C.

in their turn, throw off gemmules also. This goes on for a longer or shorter period, until at length the whole surface of the peritonæum is completely occupied and covered. So soon as this is effected the succeeding gemmules are forced into the deeper tissues. As they increase in size, they tend always towards the surface of the infested cavity, and at length burst from their confinement, adhering, at the same time, to the bottom of their former, containing cellules by pedicles, (Pl. V. Fig. 5.) In this manner a peculiar honey-comb appearance was produced in consequence of the breaking up of the tissues surrounding them, (Pl. V. Figs. 5 and 6, also preparation 2242 in Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh.)

3. *Case of Ascites connected with a peculiar Parasite within the Peritonæal Sac.* (Read before the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Edinburgh on the 5th June.) By THOMAS M. LEE, Esq.

Jane Robertson, aged 53, had been twice married; first fifteen years ago, and a second time six years afterwards; had had two children, both by her first husband; the elder died while teething, the other is now 12 years old. She had lived in Edinburgh till she was last married, but since then had resided in different parts of the neighbouring country, wherever her husband, who is a labourer, could obtain employment, but had returned to town about fifteen months before her death. Her first husband died of cholera when that disease prevailed in this city. Her father and her only sister died paralytic, and her mother died of consumption. She had two brothers, one is still alive, the other died when a child of small-pox, or soon after having that disease. She is said to have been remarkably stout and healthy up to the time of her second marriage, soon after which her health began to decline, and since then she has had to endure many privations, and has suffered much from mental anxiety caused by domestic differences. She at first complained of drowsiness, and soon afterwards began to lose flesh and colour.

About five years ago, after labouring for some time under a disease of the knee-joint, which, however, yielded to repeated blistering, she had a spitting of blood, which left her very weak; but it does not appear that she was troubled at any time with cough. She has apparently had more or less of ascites for the last three or four years, and during that time has complained of a disagreeable sensation at her stomach, as if there were something in it, the removal of which would have given her relief, and of an inclination to vomit after eating, along with a dread at being touched about the abdomen. I saw her for the first time on the 19th of February last; the symptoms at that time were, anorexia,

globus, a bruised feeling along the lower border of the ribs, pain in the back, tenderness in the left hypochondriac region, pain at stomach immediately after food, with sweetish regurgitation, bread and tea being the sort of nourishment after which she experienced the least uneasiness: the abdomen was considerably distended, and fluctuation could be felt all over it; percussion on the abdominal parietes, while she lay on her back, produced a dull sound except over a small space in the umbilical region. She occasionally sweated at night after rigors, and had sometimes a disagreeable feeling of heat about the soles of the feet. She had been troubled with bowel complaint, but not for the last six weeks; her pulse was 80, her tongue clean, and her bowels regular; her urine, of which she made scarcely four ounces daily, was sometimes passed involuntarily, and was not coagulable by heat. During the next week, I have marked the state of the pulse once, when it was 68; the urine increased to twenty-four ounces under the use of digitalis, squill, and blue pill; she continued to take a blue pill every night until she had taken nine, when her gums became slightly affected. On the 26th of February she was a little feverish, and had had some shivering the night before; her skin was hot; tongue clean; pulse 88; urine twenty ounces. On the 1st of March she complained of a *jagging* pain at the epigastrium, of a feeling as if something heavy fell in her abdomen when she turned, and of a hot ball rising up her throat; she had no appetite and no thirst; her tongue was clean; pulse 68, of fair strength; skin cool; urine ten ounces. On the 11th of March, her mouth, which had been very slightly affected by the mercurial pills for about a week, was well; she still complained of pain, or rather heat after eating; a good deal of pain was excited by pressure on a spot a little below and to the right of the ensiform cartilage; no tumours could be felt in the abdomen; her bowels were regular, but her urine was very scanty and drained away involuntarily, and was said to have a very disagreeable odour; she complained of downbearing, which she had had sometimes before to a very unpleasant degree; she had had no discharge of any kind from the vagina for many years, but had sometimes pain in the region of the uterus and bladder; the *cervix* and *os uteri* felt healthy, but an irregular, hard, and moveable body, about the size of a hazel nut, could be felt through the upper part of the anterior wall of the vagina; (at a subsequent examination two or three of these bodies were felt in this situation); the uterus was not very moveable especially on the left side, and the lower extremity of the cervix was inclined to that side. March 15, had vomited some dark-brown fluid having a sweet taste, which is said to have resembled strong tea, and afterwards had lancinating pain in the right shoulder; tongue clean; pulse 60, of good strength; stated that she

never had any headach or bad taste of mouth. On the 25th of March, she still complained of heat and ball in the throat, abdominal distension had increased; her feet were a little swelled, and pitted when pressed; she felt very weak, but thought she would be well enough if she could live without eating. On the 20th of April she had retched much the night before, and had vomited a little fluid resembling thin mucilage with a little snuff disseminated through it; her tongue was slightly furred, and she complained of pain to the right of the epigastrium; her skin was warmer, and her pulse firmer than usual; she had taken a little wine a few minutes before I called. On the 21st she vomited some more of the brown fluid, and complained much of pain; her pulse was 76, of fair strength, and her tongue was white. After this she was kept pretty easy by large doses of morphia, but sunk rapidly, and died much emaciated on the 11th of May. For the last three weeks of her life, her bowels, which, for sometime had been getting less regular, were almost unmoved,—enemata, which could be administered only in very small quantities, having had a slight effect but once during that time; she had a good deal of thirst, but whatever she swallowed seemed to stick at the lower part of the œsophagus until it was rejected; for the last four or five days, however, she could swallow water freely. The conjunctiva became inflamed a few days before her death. Her mind continued calm to the last.

Dissection, May 13.—Present, Mr John Goodsir, Mr Harry Goodsir, Dr Gordon, and myself. When the cavity of the abdomen, which contained four or five gallons of a greenish yellow fluid, having an oily or ale-like consistence, was exposed, none of the abdominal viscera could be seen, except part of the colon, distended with flatus, and projecting over the spine between the kidneys. The intestines were found to be firmly bound down to the posterior part of the abdominal cavity, by a mass of gelatinous-looking matter of a structure somewhat similar to that of cooked tapioca, interspersed with irregularly rounded cysts of various dimensions, one or two fully three inches in their longest diameter, but for the most part about the bulk of the largest sizes of small shot. The peritonæum of the abdominal parietes was also studded with the same bodies, the larger ones being attached by a peduncle generally so slight, that when they were pulled away no trace of their attachment could be distinguished. The larger and many of the smaller cysts were covered by a strong membrane, of a dingy colour, having somewhat the appearance of intestine, but sufficiently transparent to allow of its being seen that they were filled with other cysts of a smaller size. One of the largest of these cysts was found loose in the abdomen, and one or two of a smaller size, which were also loose, were

probably broken from their attachments by my hand coming against them. The smaller cysts were apparently attached more firmly to the peritonæum than those of a larger size. A considerable part of the peritonæum was also covered with a yellowish gelatinous-looking matter, of a globular structure, but without the dingy membranous covering, similar to the contents of the larger cysts. The intestines were so firmly matted together, that an accurate examination of them could not have been made without more time and care than the circumstances would allow; hardened fæces were found in some parts of them, and the vermiform process was inverted, and lay within the gut. The uterus, exclusive of the cervix, was not much larger than a good sized filbert, and lay imbedded in a mass of the gelatinous matter, which was impacted in the pelvic part of the abdominal cavity, and which apparently prevented the bladder from contracting. The peritonæum was a little wrinkled in some parts, from the effusion and subsequent contraction of lymph, doubtless the result of the irritation caused by the presence of the parasite. No omentum could be seen. The liver, which was bound by a firm layer of gelatinous matter to the back part of the diaphragm, was small, flattened, and of a soft consistence. The stomach was apparently healthy; but some patches of ulceration were observed on the mucous lining of the lower part of the œsophagus. The only kidney examined was small, but was not remarked to present any morbid appearance. The substance of the heart was soft, and there was some slight osseous deposit about the aortic valves. There were some calcareous tubercles at the apices of both lungs, but they were otherwise healthy.

4. *Description of the Hydatid found in Mr Lee's Case.* By HARRY D. S. GOODSIR, Conservator of the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh.

This acephalocyst is very different from the *Acephalocystis simplex* and the species already described under the name of *Diskostoma acephalocystis*. It differs, however, from the species alluded to in points of considerable importance, and of such a nature as to require the constitution of a new genus for its reception.

It will be remarked, by those who are acquainted with these animals, that the *Acephalocystis simplex* is much less complex in its structure than the *Diskostoma*, on which account there can be no real affinity between them, a connecting link being wanting. In the acephalocyst under consideration we have what is desiderated; and it will be the object of the following remarks to point out its structure, functions, and relations.

In its rudimentary state, the *Astoma acephalocystis* is of a glo-

bular form; but in the parent this form is to a great extent lost, owing to the young cysts within it increasing irregularly in size, and presenting a nodulated appearance. In the larger specimens, the external surface is quite smooth, an appearance which seems to arise from distension, the small or young ones being rough, and corrugated externally. The parent cyst is very strong, fibrous, and dense, and is composed of three membranes, the outermost of which is the strongest, the *remaining two* being much more attenuated, though at the same time of considerable strength. On stripping the external layer from off the two others, and placing it under the microscope, it presented a peculiar reticulated appearance, with a few indistinct masses of ovules on its internal surface, (Pl. V. Fig. 1,) separated by accident from the succeeding or middle layer of membrane, which appeared to be the seat of development of the gemmæ. At the same time the internal membrane and the septa which arose from it, and ran into the gelatinous body of the hydatid, appeared to be matrices for these cellules. The structure of the middle membrane was more fibrous than the external one, (Plate V. Fig. 2.) The innermost of these three membranes was very peculiar in its structure, and differed altogether from the other two. When placed under the microscope it was transparent and colourless, with an immense number of fibrous-looking bands running through it in all directions, which ramified in a manner similar to the extreme capillaries of blood-vessels. A number of ovules were attached to this membrane, but there were few when compared with those in the middle one. In this membrane also numerous reticulated circular masses of considerable size were seen. These were the ovules in an advanced state of growth, (Plate V. Fig. 3.)

The great mass of the body of this animal consisted of the same gelatinous-looking substance of which the *Diskostoma* was composed, but it was not in such abundance. At the same time numerous septa or fibrils, similar to those observed in *Diskostoma*, traversed the gelatinous mass. Several distinct ovules were seen attached and apparently growing from the septa in this part, and in the jelly a number of small filaria was frequently observed, (Plate V. Fig. 4.) The middle part of the body of these thread-worms was rather large, and tapered gradually to so fine a point from this to the extremities, that the eye lost all trace of them even under a strong power. The middle part of the body was black, but both the extremities were colourless. The filaria were sometimes seen single, but generally they were lying in masses, twisted, and contorted with one another. They were much more common in some specimens of the acephalocyst than in others.

The free or parent *Astoma* varied in size from a millet-seed to

that of a large orange, and was of a lightish brown or sand colour. Those that were not larger than a filbert were globular; as soon, however, as they became larger, they assumed the nodulated appearance, which gradually increased with the size of the animal.

When a small portion of the middle membrane was put under the microscope it was found, as already observed, to be filled with small ovules, most of which were of a similar size. Some of these, however, were observed to be larger than others, but it was not till they reached, or came in contact with the inner membrane that the ovules began apparently to increase much in size. As the ovule increases in size it projects into the cavity of the parent cyst, sometimes carrying before it a layer of the internal membrane of the parent; and it is to be observed that, as this process is going on, the secondary animal, or hydatid, is also being distended with young, which again throws off another or fourth series, so that there is a constant formation of young,—one within the other, the parent or original cyst containing all the formations within itself (Plate VI. Fig. 1, preparation 2243, Museum Royal College of Surgeons.) When a parent cyst, therefore, is divided, the internal structure will be found to be very complicated, consisting of cells within cells of all sizes. The parent cyst, after arriving at a certain state of distension, bursts, whereby the young, which had been formerly confined within it, are exposed, and as the original cyst is now useless, it is absorbed, the young in the meantime becoming attached to the peritonæum. (Plate V. Fig. 3, also preparation 2244, Museum Royal College of Surgeons.)

In this species, as in the *Diskostoma*, there are two modes of propagation, viz. one for the extension of the group, and another for the extension of the species to the portions of the body as yet uninfested. The former of these, which takes place at the expense of the parent cyst, is that which we have just described, the latter is exactly similar to the analogous mode in the *Diskostoma*. The younger cells, which have become detached from the membranes, and are seen suspended in the gelatinous fluid, escape, by some means or other, from the parent hydatid, and reach the parts of the body which have hitherto remained uninfested, where, forming a nidus, and, gradually increasing in size, they become independent animals, and in time throw off ovules also. (Plate V. Fig. 2.)

This species, like the *Acephalocystis simplex*, is without any apparent organs of nutrition, unless the ramifications which are seen very slightly in the external membrane, and more strongly in the two internal coats, are looked upon as vessels,—a point which cannot be determined with accuracy.

It was suggested by Dr Gairdner that the cysts might be sup-

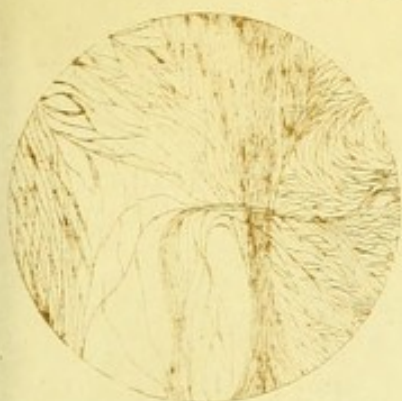
plied with blood from the body of the infested being, which would, he thought, prove their affinity to the morbid and adventitious cysts found in the ovaries and other parts of the body. With the view of deciding this point, I had the vessels of a large portion of the intestines, which was infested with the hydatid, filled with minute injection, when I found that, although the intestines were most minutely injected in all parts, the hydatids which were attached to them were perfectly free of blood-vessels. In many instances, also, the peritonæum, round the base of the parasite, where we would naturally look for inflammatory appearances, was found to be most minutely injected, while there was not the slightest vestige of injection on the parasite itself. (See preparation 2245, Museum of Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh.)

The propriety, however, of classing these bodies along with the Acephalocysts, or even looking upon them as having any degree of affinity, has been questioned. In a paper read before one of the late meetings of the Royal Society, I proved that the common Acephalocyst and Diskostoma were independent animals.* Now, the Acephalocyst under consideration, as regards both its structure and functions, has a great affinity to Acephalocystis as well as Diskostoma, so that if the animality of these two is granted the like must be granted to Astoma also.

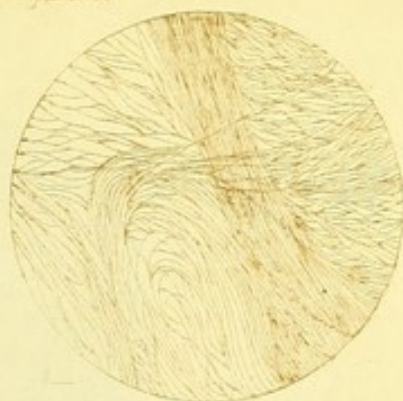
In investigating the nature of adventitious cysts, and comparing them with the bodies under consideration, it cannot but strike the observer, that a remarkable difference exists between them. In the former, we have a thick, highly-vascular coat, with a number of large vessels permeating it; the minute structure of which consists always of apparently compressed cellular substance, being in this respect exactly similar (and formed in a like manner,) to the vascular coat which surrounds the external cyst of the Acephalocystis, which has no connection with the hydatid, being entirely composed of the tissues of the infested person. In the latter, the minute structure of the tissues is very different and decidedly non-vascular. The mode of propagation, however, is perhaps the most specific mark of difference which we have for the distinguishing of these two very different bodies.

* Transactions Royal Society of Edinburgh, Vol. xv. p. 561.

Mr Goodsir's Descriptions of Hydatids



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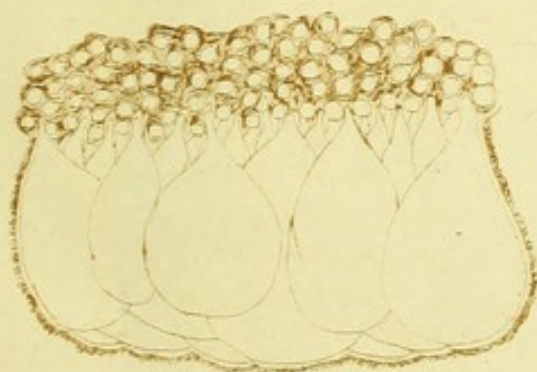
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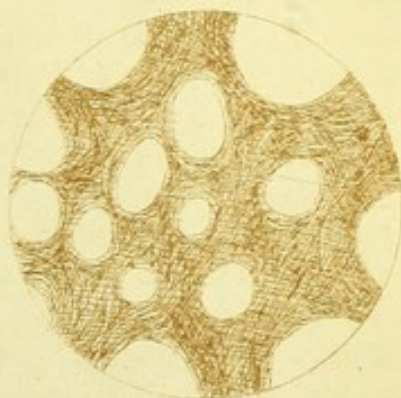
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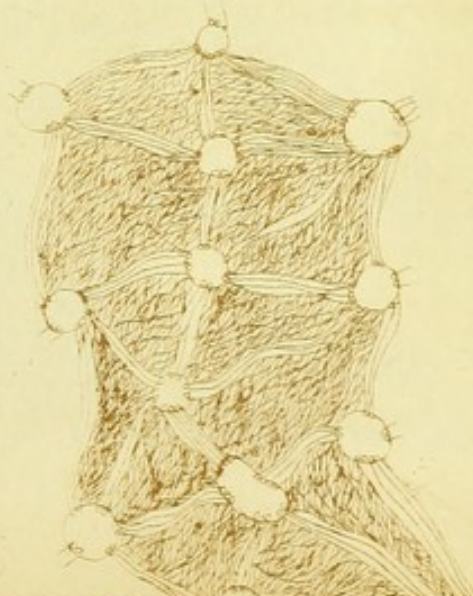
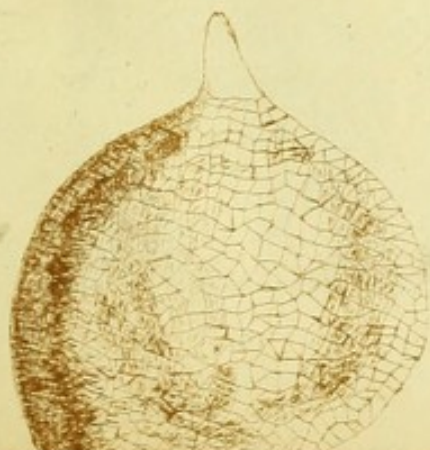
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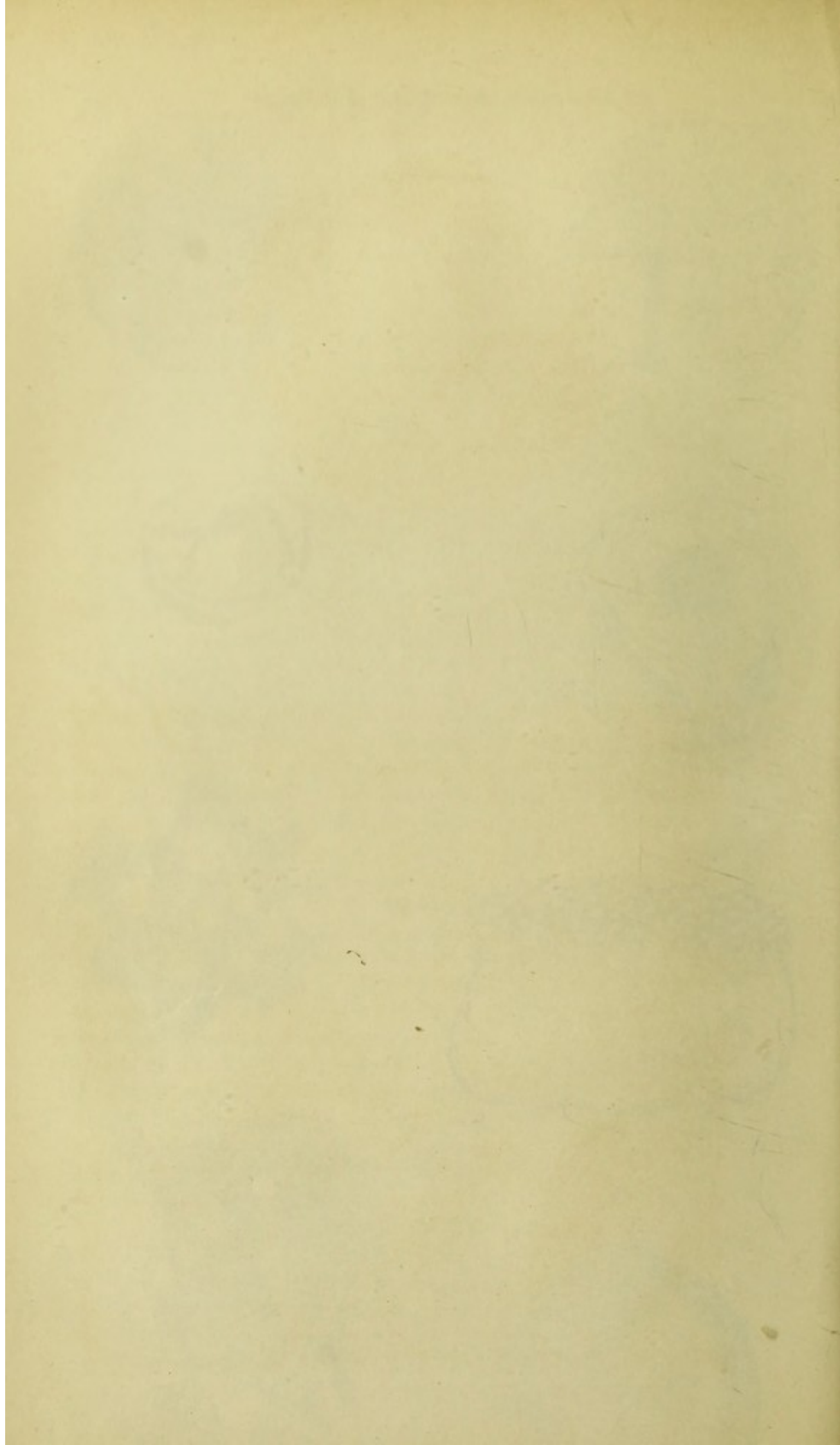


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Mr Goodsitt's Description of Hydatids:

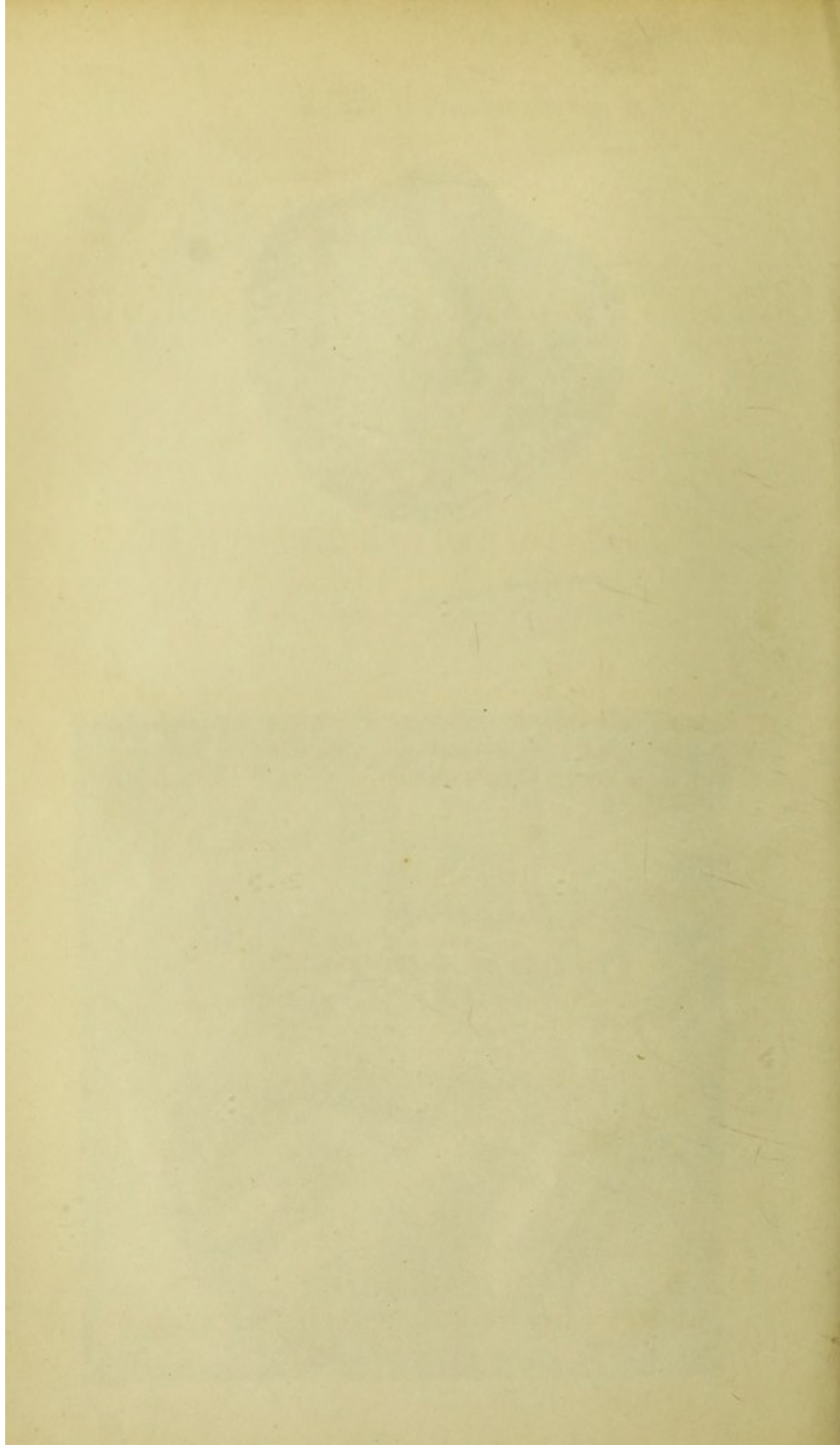


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To Dr. Hughes Bennett ^{B.}
with the Author's Respectful Ann

THE

(140)

PRESENT SYSTEM OF PUBLISHING ;

BEING AN

EXAMINATION OF A PROPOSED PLAN FOR SUPERSEDING IT ;

CONTAINED IN A PAMPHLET ENTITLED " REASONS FOR ESTABLISHING
AN AUTHORS' PUBLICATION SOCIETY, BY WHICH LITERARY LABOUR
WOULD RECEIVE A MORE ADEQUATE REWARD, AND THE
PRICE OF ALL NEW BOOKS BE MUCH REDUCED."

" The patronage of English literature has long since been devolved on our booksellers, and the measure of their liberality is the least ambiguous test of our common success."—GIBBON.

LONDON :
RICHARD GROOMBRIDGE, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1844.

PRESENT SYSTEM OF PUBLISHING

EXAMINATION OF A PROPOSED PLAN FOR IMPROVING IT

BY
JAMES H. BURNES, ESQ.
OF THE CITY OF EDINBURGH.

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THE
PRESENT SYSTEM OF PUBLISHING, &c.

THE success attending the Percy, Shakspeare, Parker, Wodrow, Calvin, Spottiswoode, and other similar Societies of limited operation, taken in conjunction with the occasional failure of authors in their literary undertakings, has led to the belief, in some quarters, that the whole business of publishing could be more advantageously conducted by an Associated Body of Literary Persons, than if left, as at present, to the management of individual booksellers. Being of opinion that this conclusion has been come to hastily, and without due inquiry into the nature and efficiency of the existing system, we shall take the liberty of submitting a few remarks for the consideration of authors, as well as of the public generally, in which we shall attempt to prove that an institution, of the extent and character proposed, would not be practically workable ; or that if carried into effect, would not be productive of the contemplated results.

I.

ON THE TWO LEADING OBJECTS CONTEMPLATED BY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AUTHORS' PUBLICATION SOCIETY.

In a pamphlet entitled ' Reasons for Establishing an Authors' Publication Society,'* we find that the two grand objects proposed

* London : Petheram.

to be realized by the organization of this institution, are "more adequate rewards to literary labour," and "a great reduction in the price of *all* new books."

At the very threshold of his subject, the author connects two antagonist elements—a large remuneration to the author, and a low selling price to the public. We are quite aware that he contemplates an increased demand from cheapness of price, and in the case of meritorious publications, undoubtedly this result would follow; but as regards those which would not take the market,—and, as we will afterwards show, the Society will not likely be infallible in its speculations any more than individual publishers,—in such cases, we would no doubt have cheap books; but so far from the literary labourer receiving a "more adequate *reward*," he would receive no reward at all, except his share of the income of the Society, which would, of course, be an abstraction from the profits of some more successful member. That which is not the direct result of one's own labour is misnamed when it is called "reward;" and, therefore, the "major proposition" should run thus: "by which the literary labour of *some* would receive a more adequate reward" at the expense of others. And then, as regards high prices, they do not act so very perniciously, either on authors or the public, as may at first sight appear. So far as authors are concerned,—and it is presumed that their interests have been prominently kept in view in proposing the new Society,—high prices are positive advantages. If an author sells his copyright to a publisher, the higher that the selling price is, the greater will be the sum given; if an author retains the copyright in his own hands, and takes on himself the risk of publication, and the book sells well, then again the higher the selling price, the greater will be the proceeds accruing to the author; and if it should not sell well, surely limited sales at a high price are better than limited sales at a low price, especially as after working the high price, a low one can be tried as a farther source of revenue,—whereas, if fixed low at first, a "lower still" begets suspicion as to the value of the work,—as, reversing John Bunyan,

He that's *low* need fear a fall.

Then, as to the public, there is a self-adjusting principle connected with the selling of books which prevents them from being high priced long, or even at first to an inconvenient extent. A

work, if of a valuable or an interesting character, and published at a high rate, sells for a time as a *necessary of life*. Lady Sale's Journal, for example, would have sold well had it been offered at a higher rate than it actually was. It belongs to that class of works which readers in the higher and middle walks of life will purchase despite of cost; and in publishing at higher rates in order to avail themselves of this disposition, publishers are no more to blame than any other class of traders, who act on a well-known principle in political economy—that of carrying their goods to the best market. But let it be borne in mind, that this profitable market can be taken advantage of only in the case of a limited number of customers, and so soon as their wants are supplied, a crisis arrives in the price of the book. Whether good or bad, it must now fall,—the self-regulating principle to which we have referred, operates in this way. If the work has “not taken,” then it must be reduced in price, in order to command a sale, and also to put the publisher in possession of new capital, with which he can embark on fresh enterprises; as it is self-evident that, with funds locked up in unsaleable paper and print, a publisher cannot for any length of time carry on his trade, any more than the aeronaut can float a sinking balloon without a diminution of ballast. The “remainder bookseller,”* therefore, becomes purchaser, who lowers the price with a witness; and if still possessed of too much gravity, the work must then be consigned to darkness and the trunk-maker. But, on the other hand, if the work be meritorious, and has sold well at a high price, every publisher of sagacity will at once perceive the propriety of reducing the price in order to command a more extended sale. If a body has momentum enough to run along a level line, it will advance with accelerated speed on an inclined plane; and so, in like manner, if a book sell well at 20s., it will sell infinitely better at 5s. It was on this principle that Mr Murray, senior, acted with regard to Byron's Life and Works, reducing them to a guinea each; and similarly, and with greater boldness, was it, that Mr Murray, junior, reduced Borrow's Bible in Spain, from 28s. to 6s. We, therefore, come

* The author confounds “second-hand” with “remainder” booksellers, (p. 4.) Literally he is right, but technically wrong. A second-hand bookseller deals in used books; a remainder bookseller in the unsold copies of new works lying on the hands of the original publisher.

to the conclusion, that books, whether superior or inferior, never continue long at a high price.

This enables us to dispute one of the leading positions of the author of the 'Reasons.' We deny that the works constituting the *national literature of Britain* are sold at a high price. Instances there may be where *class* books, which in usual circumstances can command a limited number of purchasers, may either be declined by individual publishers, or, if taken up by them, may be sold at a high rate; and which class, as we shall afterwards prove, afford legitimate scope for the exertions of Publication Societies; but we deny that the poorest are shut out from buying those works essential to form and regulate the general intellect of the country. If we are wrong, it will be very easy to refute us by quoting instances in point.

We also dispute the general truth of the statement, that literary labour does not in this country receive its adequate reward. We have nothing to do with what took place in former days regarding the remuneration of authors; our business is with present times. We regret, as much as any body can do, the scanty sums received by De Foe, Gray, Milton, &c.; but whilst sympathy is so generally extended to authors on this score, it would only be justice to bestow a portion of it on those publishers who have suffered by over-liberality. Mr D'Israeli, who cannot be charged with lukewarmness in the cause of authorship, states, that "a book might be written on authors whose works have ruined their booksellers."* Inadequate remuneration to literary men is an accidental result, not a necessary consequence of the present system of publishing. No bookseller in his senses will give a niggardly payment to a good author, for the very plain reason, that if he does so he runs the risk of losing that author's next publication. Most of the cases of shabby payment will be found to have been authors' very first publications, or else their first publications of a popular cast; and when an unknown author applies to a bookseller, is it any miracle that he should sometimes make mistakes as to the real value of the proffered work? Dr Johnson was more reasonable on this point than the author of the 'Reasons' appears to be, as he candidly said to Boswell,—“My judgment, I have found, is no certain rule as to the sale of a book.”† And

* *Curiosities of Literature*, p. 369. † *Boswell*, by Croker, viii. 100.

equally humble was the admission of Dr Robertson regarding the monetary value of a first publication. "Henry," says the historian, "erred in not selling his first volume at a moderate price to the booksellers, that they might have pushed him on till he had got reputation. I sold my 'History of Scotland' at a moderate price, as a work by which the booksellers might either gain or not. I afterwards received a much higher price for my writings. An author should sell his first work for what the booksellers will give, till it shall appear whether he is an author of merit, or, which is the same thing as to purchase-money, an author who pleases the public."* One all-important point in this matter has been noticed by Sir Joshua Reynolds, but almost universally kept out of view by literary men, which is, that "in estimating the character of a work, one must have two judgments—the first as to its real value, the other as to what may please the general taste at the time."† This at once transfers the responsibility from the publisher to the public. He is but the mechanical indicator of "the age and body of the time"—the angle of reflection, not of incidence. He does not profess to judge of abstract merit,—he simply regards a work as a marketable commodity; and for the most part, when a fault is committed, the blame should rest not with him, but with the public, whose representative he is. He may, occasionally, misinterpret the public mind, but we are persuaded he does so oftener to his loss than to his gain; and if it be said, that this elevation of a bookseller to the office of expositor of public opinion has a capricious influence on the interest of authors, we quote, in reply, the opinion of Gibbon on this very point, who states, that "the measure of a bookseller's liberality is the least ambiguous test of common success."‡

Literature is a profession as well as law, medicine, or divinity, but unfortunately it is too often the last resource of the members of all other professions; and the immigratory process which thins the avenues of other callings only tends to throng the crowd of aspirants in this precarious mode of life. Authorship is frequently the last shift of a learned man, and it is as frequently the first of the uneducated genius. Where all run, all cannot win the race. And while theology has its lawn

* Boswell, iii. 297.

† Boswell, iii. 289.

‡ Gibbon's Autobiography.

sleeves and its starved curates, law its ermine and its shrivelled attorneys, and medicine its gold-headed canes and its physicians writing "Diaries" in garrets,—is it wonderful that authorship should have its lights and shadows? What is there in it by which to secure an agrarian distribution of temporalities? But let us turn to the actual state of matters. What eminent author of the present day has been "inadequately remunerated?" Scott, Byron, Moore, Southey, Campbell, Rogers, &c., have all been well paid; the editors of all our reviews, magazines, and periodicals are well paid; and if the principles we have laid down be in any measure correct, it will not be the mere transference of publishing from booksellers to authors that will effect a material change. Just now, the author maintains the high position of writing for public instruction; in the matter of money he deals only with the publisher in his "back room," and it is the latter that is the trafficker; but exclude the publisher, and then you bring literary men in direct contact with the world, as the hucksters of their own wares,—a consummation not likely to be favourable to their interests.

II.

REMARKS ON CERTAIN INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS CONTAINED IN THE PAMPHLET.

We have disposed of the title-page of the 'Reasons,' and shall now proceed to investigate such portions of its contents as we may not already have answered by anticipation. The consideration of the general plan of the proposed Society we shall not take up until we have gone over some of the other points touched upon by the author, which, although not all directly bearing on the question of the Society, are yet treated of in such a style as to call for special comment.

He complains that "the size of a book, as well as its price, are equally subject to accident or caprice,"—"that an author has no standard by which to judge of the value of his work before publication" (page 1),—"that there is a want of some means by which to gauge public opinion in relation to any given book or books announced for publication" (page 2); and the remedy proposed for this is,—

"A subscription list, with a short abstract of the contents of

the books, in addition to their titles.”—“ A large advertising sheet, containing the titles of books to be published, and, if necessary, a short abstract of their contents, with an alphabetical index, would admit of a chronological order, and being kept constantly standing in type, books could be added, and others taken away, at a trifling cost in the composition, until the necessity of a new list should arise.” *

This plan is also offered as a substitute for advertising—the evils of which are summed up as follows :—

“ 1stly, All books are not advertised ; 2dly, There is no unity in the present plan, even if they were, because the advertisements are distributed over the whole of the London and Provincial press ; 3dly, The newspaper is the creature of a day, and, useful as it may be for advertising goods lost and found, and other things of a temporary nature, the continual repetition of advertisements, attended as it is with so much expense, entails a very great additional cost to the buyer, which he must pay, or the publisher cannot, in common justice, be expected to adventure his capital in the speculation.” †

The author here shows that he does not fully comprehend the *rationale* of advertising. A literary register, such as he describes, is to a small extent already to be found in the Publishers' Circular ; but supposing that work to be remodelled on the plan suggested, and that it alone became the sole announcer of new books, the immediate result would be a great falling off in the demand for books. The exclusiveness of character possessed by a book-list would at once restrict its dissemination to the literati. John Bull looks on book-buying as a branch of expenditure on which the axe of retrenchment should, in all times of pressure, first fall, and as a precautionary measure, costing him no effort of self-denial, he would never open such a list, lest temptation should come upon him ; whereas, in the present way of advertising in the newspapers, “ creatures of a day ” as they are, and “ very great as is the additional cost,” yet book advertisements catch the eye of John as he reads the fund list, or as he doses over “ accidents and offences,” and they catch the eyes of his daughters as they simper over the marriage list ; and the consequence is, that in spite of themselves, they become purchasers of books.

The author apparently belongs to the aristocratic class of

* Reasons, pp. 5, 10.

† Reasons, p. 10.

authors, as he cannot speak from personal knowledge of the hardships of literary life ; and this is a class from whom, as in the case of Lord Chesterfield, literature can expect little sympathy.

*" I have been assured that no little of our literature is manufactured by persons, who are hired by publishers, at some twenty or thirty shillings per week, to do the job-work of the house for that consideration. If this be the case, a glance behind the scenes would afford both amusement and instruction." **

We shall only remark, and we do it with regret, that there are thousands of meritorious individuals in London alone, to whom "twenty or thirty shillings" a-week would be a great boon ; and if the new Society give a few of these employment, it will do a service to literature for which many will be grateful. Let the author consult the records of the Literary Fund Society before he again write on this point. In the meantime, it is gratifying to observe, from the correspondence between her Majesty and the Secretary of that admirable Institution, that the Queen on the throne is more conversant with the "calamities of authors" than some of her subjects.

Again, he is opposed to popular literature.

" The high price of books, and the increased demand for them, occasioned by the spread of education, and the gradual change in the habits of English society, have led to the production of a host of cheap publications, many of them of inconvenient shape, printed in small type, of great pretension, and of most wretched fulfilment ; their contents too often purloined from more valuable works, somewhat altered to destroy identity. But let us hope that the age of Useful Knowledge Society's Tracts, Penny Magazines and Cyclopædias, Chambers' and Saturday Journals, is nearly at an end. It was probably the hopelessness of obtaining any thing better than these ephemeral publications at a reasonable price from the publishers, that led to the formation of Publication Societies."

We do not join issue with the author in wishing the extinction of the "ephemeral publications" mentioned ; our opinion of their character is higher than his, and we deny that their "wretched fulfilment" was the cause of Publication Societies being formed. We believe that the publications sneered at have created a love for literature where it did not before exist, which will survive for a long time, and one fruit of which has been the projec-

* Reasons, p. 4.

tion of those very Societies which have suggested to him the great institution still in embryo. We shall only further remark, that if that institution is to consist of "known and acknowledged authors of both sexes," he will find that in this category will be comprised a goodly number of the contributors to the 'Penny Cyclopædia,' and to the 'Useful Knowledge Society's Tracts' [Volumes].

The author's remedy for American piracy is short and summary.

"There is no contending with a matter of fact; the Americans pirate our books, because they want what we produce cheaper than we will sell it to them, and those who are acquainted with the American character, will be satisfied that so long as a dollar is to be got in that way, nothing can stop them; but as soon as we send our books into his market at a cheaper rate than the American publisher can produce them, his profitless occupation will be abandoned. All this appears like a stale truism, doubtless, but it is not the less forgotten in practice." *

"Those who are acquainted with the American character," know that Jonathan reprints our best works on the inside sheets of newspapers, and those who attempt to cut lower than him at that game will hazard a "profitless speculation" indeed.

But assuming that the class of readers in America, who thus use what may emphatically be termed "People's Editions," do not comprehend the whole population, and that there is a large body who would prefer having their literature in a book form, we have yet to learn that paper-making, type-founding, printing, and book-binding, are all cheaper in Britain than they are in the United States. From all that we have seen of British reprints of American works, we are inclined to think that our Transatlantic brethren can manage these matters cheaper than we can do; but supposing the prices to be equal, the expense of transit must be added, which would at once turn the scale against us. Publishers may, and do speculate in American wares, but how an *Author* should think of looking to that country for profit, after it has hesitated to legalize international copyright, and after it has repudiated the lawful debt of one of the best-known authors in the Old World, does certainly greatly surprise us.

* Reasons, p. 8.

III.

PROPOSED CONSTITUTION OF THE NEW SOCIETY.

We now proceed to the consideration of the plan of the Society; and to enable our readers fairly to judge of it, we shall quote its proposed constitution at full length.

“*First*, That a Society be formed of known and acknowledged authors of both sexes, and of others, who, not being authors by profession, may wish to find a medium of publication less expensive than is now to be met with.

“*Secondly*, That to constitute a member, a small subscription shall be required on admission, which, if necessary, shall be continued annually.

“*Thirdly*, That the objects of the Society shall be the following: 1st, The publication of original works of living authors in every department of literature, science, and art. 2dly, The reprinting and editing of various works, foreign as well as English. 3dly, The publication of translations from other languages. 4thly, The publication of works in which a union of labour and talent is required, such as Encyclopædias, Dictionaries, Biographical collections, weekly, monthly, or other Reviews, &c.

“*Fourthly*, That to promote good feeling, and to encourage the production of works in the continental languages, all foreigners becoming members of the Society shall be entitled to equal advantages.

“*Fifthly*, That a council of management shall be chosen from the whole body of the members, annually; from which body a certain number shall be elected, as a Publication Committee, to whom all works offered by their respective authors or proprietors shall be referred.

“*Sixthly*, That a very great reduction, amounting to one half at least, shall be made in the usual publication prices; and to ensure certainty in the sale, a subscription list of the books proposed for publication shall be printed and extensively circulated, before any work goes to press; but that after a work has been accepted for publication, the author shall not, unless by his own consent, be held responsible for the expenses of publication.

“*Seventhly*, That a separate account shall be kept of each work, and after its sale has been effected, all positive charges to be deducted, such as for paper, printing, binding, advertising, &c., and the profits paid to the author, he paying out of the same a per centage towards the general expenses of the Society.

“*Eighthly*, That the council be empowered to rent the necessary shop or warehouse to carry on the Society's trade, appoint

a superintendent and other officers, and agents at home and abroad ; pay on account of books in progress, &c." *

IV.

THE PLAN OF THE SOCIETY SHOWN TO BE NOT NEW, AND TO HAVE BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL WHEN FORMERLY TRIED.

Our first remark is, that the plan is not new. From the Bishop of Gloucester's *Life of Dr Bentley*, we learn, that a similar society was formed in London in 1736, and was given up in 1748.

"In the year 1736, an association was established in London for the 'Encouragement of Learning,' consisting of numerous personages distinguished for rank and genius; who subscribed to assist authors by publishing their works under the auspices and in part at the cost of the Society. It was an important object for this institution to start with eclat, by printing the work of some great author; and accordingly they offered to commence with the publication of Dr Bentley's *Manilius*, which was known to be ready for the press. The Doctor, to their surprise and mortification, instead of gratefully accepting the proffered honour, started certain objections to the tendency of such a society, which had never occurred to its liberal supporters, and condemned with great freedom the whole undertaking. Piqued at this unexpected rejection of their offer, they addressed a similar proposal to Bentley's old enemy, Conyers Middleton, who was at that time engaged upon his *Life of Cicero*, which they solicited his permission to publish. He however preferred the more lucrative method of printing by subscription; and the Society were obliged to content themselves with authors of less celebrity. The experience, however, of a few years proved the justice of Bentley's exceptions; the design of the Society, liberal and spirited as it undoubtedly was, could not be executed without interfering with the interests of the booksellers, who are in reality the most efficient patrons of literature: it became therefore the policy of that whole fraternity to oppose the success of their general rival. In a short time, it was found necessary to take in the co-operation of some booksellers, as partners; but even then the liberality of the Society to its authors left for the traders such small profits, that they felt no interest in the circulation of its books: and after twelve years' perseverance, it was found that the whole funds of the Society, consisting of about £2000, had been expended, without any effectual advance towards compassing its public-spirited objects." †

* Reasons, p. 11.

† Monk's *Life of Bentley*, ii. 395-6.

V.

STRICTURES ON THE PUBLICATION SOCIETIES IN CURRENT OPERATION, AND ON THE WARRANT WHICH THEIR SUCCESS HOLDS OUT FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE NEW SOCIETY.

Our second remark is, that there is nothing in the state of literature at present, which holds out the prospect of more success now, than attended the scheme a hundred years ago. The flourishing state of the Parker, Wodrow, and similar Societies, is the most plausible sign of the times, and to that we shall direct our attention. There is a temporary eclat attending such bodies, which must not be mistaken for a love of letters. The Wodrow has 2000 members, but had Wodrow's Correspondence been published by a bookseller at the very same rate as it has been issued by the Society, not 500 members would have bought it. Besides, those Societies are organized for the specific purpose of reprinting a particular kind of works, known and approved of by the parties subscribing; but it does not follow, that a similar plan would succeed, which has for its subject the indiscriminate publication "of all books." A man may trust the committee of an institution to furnish him with one or two books in a year, but to suppose that he will leave the furnishing of his whole library to "a council," although they should be "the first men of the age," is a proposition so absurd that we are surprised how it should have been deliberately entertained for one moment. There is indeed a glimmering given of a plan whereby the works will, in some measure, be announced before parties are to be asked to subscribe; but, as we shall subsequently explain, the machinery of the club will not be adequate to effect this object to any successful extent. The master-evil in the Wodrow and other similar Societies is, that the public must go to them, and not they to the public. They are not aggressive, but passive; and hence they offer no adaptations to the ever-changing state of society in its cravings for intellectual food. If one wishes a set of their publications, he finds that the lists are filled up, or if he obtains the current volume, he finds that its predecessors are at a premium; and if he happens to be a day behind with the next subscription, he forfeits his right of membership,—and so on continually will he be exposed to petty annoyance, unless he observe with military exactness the laws of the Institution.

And supposing that he obeys all the regulations with the most rigid punctilio, he never gets a complete book at a time,—all that his yearly payments bring him are the two first volumes of two different authors, and the fourth and fifth of some third worthy. People will not buy a cheap lot of shoes if all for the right foot, nor of gloves if all for the left hand; and neither will they long continue to buy books after a fashion so absurd. If Societies are to cope effectually with booksellers, they must lower their rules a peg or two, and accommodate themselves to public wants, as do all regular traders.

But the author quotes, as favourable cases, the Religious Tract Society and similar boards, as “in some respects analogous” to his plan, inasmuch as they are, or were intended to be, “independent of the general publishers.” Here he connects together matters which have no common principle of identity, and, of course, draws a false conclusion; and, therefore, before going farther, we must assist him in adjusting a correct classification of facts, from whence inferences can legitimately be drawn. His object is to organize a Society which

- (1.) Shall reward authors more liberally.
- (2.) Shall sell books at one-half of the present prices; and which in effecting these objects intends
- (3.) To adopt new methods of making its works known; and
- (4.) Proposes new methods of putting them into the hands of the public.

Now, from the experience of the past, what proofs have we as to the practicability of the scheme? The Bannatyne and the other Antiquarian Clubs merely professed to publish rare books, and without giving any pledge about the conditions we have specified; the Parker and Wodrow profess to act on the 2d and 4th conditions,—they never promised, and we are not aware that they have given large sums to authors, nor have they proposed any change in advertising, but, on the contrary, have liberally used it in dunning their dilatory members; the Useful Knowledge Society professed the 2d, in connection with scientific treatises; the Religious Tract Society also professed the 2d, in connection with evangelical treatises. But neither of the two latter, it will be observed, professed high scales of remuneration; and in conducting their sales, they have no more been “independent of the general publishers” than any

one of these publishers are of each other. Under certain restrictions, subscribers to the Tract Society get its books at reduced prices; but otherwise it has not altered the rate of usance on the Row Rialto; and we question very much if, in conducting its operations, the Society would willingly forego the co-operation of booksellers. In leaving this point, we should be sorry to be understood as pronouncing a sweeping denunciation against Publication Societies. As we hinted at an early stage of our inquiry, they are most useful for the purpose of issuing *class* publications,—by which phrase we mean, works on such technical or abstract subjects as, from the limited number of readers, could be produced by individual publishers only at high rates. To this class belong specimens of early English literature, Provincial Antiquities, Oriental Translations, Recondite Treatises in Science, &c.; in fact, this field is almost endlessly wide, and might be cultivated to the full, without in any degree trenching on the province of the booksellers; and as “book openeth book,” so the more extensive that Societies carry on operations of this kind, the more will habits of reading be fostered, and the more extensively will books be disposed of through other channels. To this extent such institutions are beneficial, but beyond that they are unworkable.

VI.

SPECIAL OBJECTIONS TO THE SOCIETY.

I.—EXTENT OF OPERATION.

We now proceed to an examination of the Rules, and we break ground with the 5th. All works offered for publication are to be referred to a committee. As *every* department of literature, science, and art, is to be taken up, this committee must needs be very large, or else its members must be omniscient, in order to discharge the cosmopolitan task that lies before them. The *Times* has ridiculed the British Association for undertaking so many subjects, and yet, comprehensive as its sphere undoubtedly is, it adventures but a fraction of the universal whole. The Association's cycle is as follows:—

Section A Physics and Mathematics.

... B Chemistry.

... C Geology, and Physical Geography.

Section D Natural History.

... E Anatomy and Medicine.

... F Statistics.

... G Mechanical Science.

To this meagre list we may add Civil and Ecclesiastical History, Theology, Ethics, Political Economy, Polite Literature, Languages, and Law; and, without making the subject ludicrous, we have, in the two lists, such a variety of topics as, in their endless ramifications, would be beyond the management of any committee, however large. But supposing that question settled—such are the varieties in human taste, that no body of men of homogeneous calling would, as a public board called to discharge such duties, give public satisfaction.* We shall prove this from the working of the Royal Academy of Painters. In that respectable body no offending bookseller, wholesale or retail, steps in between genius and a generous public, and therefore, so far the case is favourable for comparison; and yet, how do they manage amongst themselves? We shall not multiply instances, as it is matter of notoriety that artists, whom posterity has placed in the niche of fame, either never were admitted fellows, or, when elected, were so after cruel delay. When we find Hogarth laughing at the rules of all his brethren,—and then Fuseli, an academy professor, branding Hogarth as a vulgar caricaturist; when we find Barry, another professor, calling Reynolds' lectures "poor flimsy stuff" in his own presence,—and then Reynolds depreciating Wilson;—what confidence can we have in the decisions of men of genius regarding each other? Take the department of History: could any committee decide in such a way as to please Dr Lingard, the Roman Catholic; Mr Tytler, the Episcopalian; and Dr Vaughan, the Independent? Take Theology: would the Council of Trent itself have undertaken to please the public with their fiat regarding publications offered by Dr Pusey, Dr Wardlaw, Archbishop Whately, and Jabez Bunting? And in the matter of 'Reviews,' which are gravely proposed to be taken up, would the Quarterly, Edinburgh, Westminster, and Dublin, all be embraced in the plan?

But supposing a committee of literary men were obtained, which should be eligible in point of number, and workable in

* D'Israeli's Quarrels of Authors, *passim*.—Literary Character, chap. xiii., xiv., xv.

point of unanimity, we have no hesitation in avowing our opinion that they would be unskilful publishers. Most undoubtedly they would be better able to judge as to the abstract merits of the works submitted to their consideration, and it is quite possible that, under their surveillance, we should have fewer superficial or inaccurate literary performances; but, on the other hand, we should have a greater number of unsaleable productions. If any authority were needed to prove this point, we could quote that of the author of the 'Reasons' himself, who states at p. 4, that when "authors are so unfortunate as to publish on their own account, the balance rarely returns them anything but annoyance and loss." Now, in the vast majority of cases wherein authors publish on their own account, they do so simply because booksellers, distrustful of success, decline purchasing the copyrights. Publishing, it must be remembered, is a profession, and a very difficult one; it should be ranked amongst what Dr Abercrombie designates as the "uncertain sciences;" and, like every other profession, there is no royal road to it,—success is the result alone of earnest and long-continued application. But experience in this calling does beget considerable dexterity in deciding as to the marketable character of a book; and, in coming to a decision, a publisher exercises what may be called an instinctive sagacity, which does not reason so much on the matter, but rather, as Locke has it, "jumps to a conclusion."

"Slow reason walks, swift instinct leaps."*

The promptitude thus evinced in deciding, must not be confounded with precipitancy,—it is simply taking a shorter road to a result which others might reach by protracted reflection; and as we are claiming for it no higher intellectual character than that of a mere instinctive principle, acquired from long practice, we trust that literary men will not so far misunderstand us as to suppose that we wish to ascribe to *the trade* a parity with them in mental power. We might indeed, in many instances, claim for booksellers the possession of higher calibre than we have contended for, and might specify illustrative cases, such as their having suggested 'Johnson's Lives of the Poets,' or as their having discovered genius when literary men failed to perceive it, as when the late Mr Blackwood inserted the 'Diary of a late

* Young.

Physician' in his Magazine, after the editors of the different London Magazines had refused it ; but we prefer arguing their superiority on the alone footing of adroitness arising from experience. And the reality of the superiority of this principle may be illustrated in a way which will make it at once palpable to men of letters. For example, how very few authors are there who can be trusted with the punctuation of their own MS.? They will make their sentences too long or too short—they will misplace capital letters—they will use commas for semicolons, and *vice versa*,—and, in fine, set all laws of *pointing* at defiance, and that not only to the offending of a printer's eye, but to the embarrassment of an ordinary reader. Now, a common journeyman compositor, with little and sometimes no knowledge of grammar, will be able to remedy all this, just by the influence of the instinctive habits acquired in the practice of his business. And if the principle be successful in the one case, we can see no good reason why it should not be so in the other.

II.—REDUCTION OF PRICES, AND CONSEQUENT SUPPRESSION OF BOOKSELLING AGENCY.

From Rule sixth, we learn that the Society intends selling its books "at one-half at least under the usual publication prices." This is a consummation which cannot be accomplished without renouncing all connection with booksellers, both wholesale and retail. But before entering into any discussion as to the hazardous character of this step, we shall quote the opinion of Dr Johnson on the subject of booksellers' profits, and under the shadow of his colossal authority, we shall be better able to propound our views on this much misunderstood topic. Boswell's remarks will at once explain the circumstances under which his judgment was delivered.

"The heirs of Lord Chancellor Clarendon presented the University of Oxford with the continuation of his History, and such other of his lordship's manuscripts as had not been published, on condition that the profits arising from their publication should be applied to the establishment of a *manège* in the university. The gift was accepted in full convocation. A person being now recommended to Dr Johnson, as fit to superintend this proposed riding-school, he exerted himself with that zeal for which he was remarkable upon every similar occasion. But,

on inquiry into the matter, he found that the scheme was not likely to be soon carried into execution ; the profits arising from the Clarendon press being, from some mismanagement, very scanty. This having been explained to him by a respectable dignitary of the church, who had good means of knowing it, he wrote a letter upon the subject, which at once exhibits his extraordinary precision and acuteness, and his warm attachment to his Alma Mater.

‘ To the REVEREND Dr WETHERELL, Master of the University College, Oxford.

‘ DEAR SIR,—Few things are more unpleasant than the transaction of business with men who are above knowing or caring what they have to do ; such as the trustees for Lord Cornbury’s institution will, perhaps, appear, when you have read Dr * * * * *’s letter.

‘ The last part of the doctor’s letter is of great importance. The complaint* which he makes I have heard long ago, and did not know but it was redressed. It is unhappy that a practice so erroneous has not been altered ; for altered it must be, or our press will be useless, with all its privileges. The booksellers, who, like all other men, have strong prejudices in their own favour, are enough inclined to think the practice of printing and selling books by any but themselves, an encroachment on the rights of their fraternity ; and have need of stronger inducements to circulate academical publications than those of one another ; for, of that mutual co-operation by which the general trade is carried on, the university can bear no part. Of those whom he neither loves nor fears, and from whom he expects no reciprocation of good offices, why should any man promote the interest but for profit ? I suppose, with all our scholastic ignorance of mankind, we are still too knowing to expect that the booksellers will erect themselves into patrons, and buy and sell under the influence of a disinterested zeal for the promotion of learning.

‘ To the booksellers, if we look for either honour or profit from our press, not only their common profit, but something more must be allowed : and if books printed at Oxford are expected to be rated at a high price, that price must be levied on the public, and paid by the ultimate purchaser, not by the intermediate agents. What price shall be set upon the book, is, to the booksellers, wholly indifferent, provided that they gain a proportionate profit by negotiating the sale.

* “ I suppose the complaint was, that the trustees of the Oxford press did not allow the London booksellers a sufficient profit upon vending their publications.—BOSWELL.”

‘ Why books printed at Oxford should be particularly dear, I am, however, unable to find. We pay no rent; we inherit many of our instruments and materials; lodging and victuals are cheaper than at London; and, therefore, workmanship ought at least not to be dearer. Our expenses are naturally less than those of booksellers; and, in most cases, communities are content with less profit than individuals.

‘ It is, perhaps, not considered through how many hands a book often passes, before it comes into those of the reader; or what part of the profit each hand must retain, as a motive for transmitting it to the next.

‘ We will call our primary agent in London, Mr Caddell, who receives our books from us, gives them room in his warehouse, and issues them on demand; by him they are sold to Mr Dilly, a wholesale bookseller, who sends them into the country; and the last seller is the country bookseller. Here are three profits to be paid between the printer and the reader, or, in the style of commerce, between the manufacturer and the consumer; and if any of these profits is too penuriously distributed, the process of commerce is interrupted.

‘ We are now come to the practical question, what is to be done? You will tell me, with reason, that I have said nothing, till I declare how much, according to my opinion, of the ultimate price ought to be distributed through the whole succession of sale.

‘ The deduction, I am afraid, will appear very great: but let it be considered before it is refused. We must allow, for profit, between thirty and thirty-five per cent., between six and seven shillings in the pound; that is, for every book which costs the last buyer twenty shillings, we must charge Mr Caddell with something less than fourteen. We must set the copies at fourteen shillings each, and superadd what is called the quarterly book, or for every hundred books so charged, we must deliver an hundred and four.

‘ The profits will then stand thus:—

‘ Mr Caddell, who runs no hazard, and gives no credit, will be paid for warehouse room and attendance, by a shilling profit on each book, and his chance of the quarterly book.

‘ Mr Dilly, who buys the book for fifteen shillings, and who will expect the quarterly book if he takes five and twenty, will send it to his country customer at sixteen and sixpence, by which, at the hazard of loss, and the certainty of long credit, he gains the regular profit of ten per cent., which is expected in the wholesale trade.

‘ The country bookseller buying at sixteen and sixpence, and

commonly trusting a considerable time, gains but three and sixpence ; and if he trusts a year, not much more than two and sixpence ; otherwise than as he may, perhaps, take as long credit as he gives.

‘ With less profit than this, and more, you see, he cannot have, the country bookseller cannot live ; for his receipts are small, and his debts sometimes bad.

‘ Thus, dear sir, I have been incited by Dr * * * * *’s letter, to give you a detail of the circulation of books, which, perhaps, every man has not had opportunity of knowing : and which those who know it, do not, perhaps, always distinctly consider. I am, etc.

‘ SAM. JOHNSON.*

‘ March 12, 1776.’ ”†

In contrast with this, we shall give the opinion of the author of the ‘ Reasons ’ on university prices :—

“ The practice adopted by the University of Oxford, with the publications of the Clarendon Press, which are always sold at the same prices as at first fixed upon, is *much to be commended*.” ‡

Except in some matters of detail, the *bookselling* system is essentially the same now with what it was in Dr Johnson’s time ; but as our inquiry refers to the *publishing* system also, it will be necessary, for the more clear elucidation of the subject, that we take a complete survey of the history of a new book, from its first appearance in MS. down to its being placed on the table of the purchaser.

We shall suppose that an author indites a good publishing book, by which we mean a work answering to one or other of the following conditions :—

1. That the author possess reputation.
2. That the subject be of permanent interest.
3. That at the time of publication the public mind be strongly directed to the topic treated of.

His first object is to find a publisher, and having found one,

* “ I am happy in giving this full and clear statement to the public, to vindicate, by the authority of the greatest author of his age, that respectable body of men, the booksellers of London, from vulgar reflections, as if their profits were exorbitant ; when, in truth, Dr Johnson has here allowed them more than they usually demand.—BOSWELL.”

† Johnson, ii. 372–375.

‡ Reasons, p. 13.

one or other of the following arrangements will be entered into:—

1. The publisher will give a definite sum for the entire copyright.

2. He will give a definite sum for the copyright of the first edition.

3. He will give a certain proportion of the selling price for every copy sold.

4. He will give a certain sum, provided the expenses of publication be cleared.

5. He will publish at the half-risk and half-profit of the author.

6. He will publish at the exclusive risk of the author.

A bargain being concluded, the publisher sets about the work of printing, binding, and advertising; and when ready, he *subscribes*, *i. e.*, offers for sale, the volume or volumes to the other booksellers. To one class, the ordinary bookseller, it is offered at a reduction of 33 per cent., in order to induce them to take a quantity at the outset, but afterwards the rate of supply is raised 8 per cent. To the wholesale houses (the Dillys of Johnson's time) the allowance is 43 per cent.; and as they are expected to purchase largely, and to supply retail booksellers at 25 per cent. off, and more in particular cases, we think we shall be able to show that this allowance is not too much, either to the one or to the other. It is notorious, that the retail bookseller's profit is only nominally 25 per cent.; for to such an extent has reduction taken place in the price of books to the retail customer, that Protection Societies have been formed amongst the booksellers in large towns, for the purpose of making the *maximum* discount to one class of purchasers 16 per cent., and to another 10 per cent. Here, then, we have the retail bookseller exposed to a reduction of his profit to 9 per cent.,—out of this he has to pay rent, taxes, shopmen's wages, and carriages (which come oftener to him than they do to any other profession)—to run the risk of bad debts, slow sales, and of depreciation of value in stock, arising from books getting soiled, or from their being superseded by newer editions or newer works on the same subject. We put it to the candid reader, whether, when all these things are taken into account, retail bookselling be a very lucrative calling? Dr Johnson knew it, in early life, by painful experience; and it is

highly creditable to that great and benevolent man, that he has so strongly recorded his testimony on the subject. But it may be said, that if the retail bookseller be pinched, the wholesale trader is too liberally dealt with. This is also a mistake. He has an expensive establishment to maintain; his stock must be large; he has to send out travellers to collect orders, each at an annual expense of several hundred pounds a-year; and he has to print catalogues and book-lists at all seasons. Moreover, whatever pressure is made by the public on the retail bookseller, is borne back to the latter by him. As

“The mountains look on Marathon,
And Marathon on the sea,”

So does the country trader, on finding his profit stripped of its fair proportions, try the contracting principle with his metropolitan correspondent; and his application has its effect, especially if a given quantity be taken, because it is obvious, that when a party speculates in a large number of copies of a book, he is entitled to an additional bonus for his enterprise.

But we have hitherto been considering cases in which the retail bookseller can go direct to the wholesale house, which keeps stock of the publications which he wants; but it is obvious that, large as these emporiums are, they cannot keep every book, and therefore, when the party in London, from whom the book is ordered, has to get it from some other establishment, two profits are charged before it reaches the retail bookseller. We shall illustrate this by an example. Mr —, a gentleman resident in Edinburgh, writes, and afterwards publishes at his own risk, a Treatise on Glass-Blowing, which he puts into the hands of A., a bookseller in that city, for sale, at a retail price of say 10s. 6d. A bookseller in Cardigan receives an order for the work, and writes B., his usual London wholesale correspondent, for a copy. He has none, but procures one from C., who supplies it probably at 8s. 9d. B. will charge it at least 9s. 6d. The retail bookseller is thus cut down to 1s.; and for this he has to pay carriage from London, give twelve months' credit to his customer, and in all likelihood allow a discount at settlement. But the case may even be worse than this. It is perfectly possible that neither B. nor C. may keep copies of a work not adapted for general sale; and if it require to be specially commissioned from

Edinburgh, the charges will amount to nearly full price before it reaches Cardigan.

At this stage of the question, the advocates of an Authors' Publication Society may step in and say that all this system of primary, secondary, and tertiary profits is cumbrous and burdensome,—that it has increased, is increasing, and must be put down. To this we have simply to say, that however complicated the machinery may be, it is indispensable; and seeing that the same results could not be obtained by the adoption of any other method, we must regard these matters as necessary evils. Let any person, not of rigidly literary habits, look at his book-shelf, and say how many of the volumes which it contains would have been bought by him, had his only inducement been the occasional perusal of a dry book-catalogue. Let him think what portions of them have found their way there from the insinuating advertisement which met his eye in the county newspaper, and what additional portion of them became his property from their having been attractively displayed in the windows or counter of the village bookseller, or from their having been sent to him on inspection by that respectable person.

We are afraid the contemplation of this picture will be too much for the most sanguine innovator, and the next shift will probably be to retain the services of the retail bibliopoles, but to dispense with those of the *ursæ majores* of Paternoster Row. This, however, will, on the Society's principles, be more easily proposed than carried into effect. We go back on the statement that it was to produce new books at "one-half at least of the present publishing prices." Well, by our explanation of the system of bookseller's commissions, allowances, discounts, and long credits, together with advertising, which is one of the antiquated usages to be swept away, we reckon that one-half of the nominal selling prices of books is consumed, the other half, then, must be reserved for printing, binding, and remuneration to the author. Printing and binding are not squeezible items, for, to keep up appearances, the Society's books must look well, and consequently the retail bookseller's allowance must come off the author; and as that allowance cannot, from the explanations which we have given, be less than ten per cent., "echo" must "answer where" the "more adequate rewards to literary labour" are

to come from. It will not do to say that the Society cannot be worse off than publishers, because publishers will swim where authors would sink,—there being scarcely a publisher in Britain who is not a wholesale or a retail bookseller, and who can, from these branches of trade, supplement deficiencies in his publishing speculations.

III.—SCHEME FOR MUTUAL DIVISION OF PROFITS.

But another and fatal objection to the Society is to be found in this same rule. It is stated, that unless an author expressly wishes to take the risk of publication on himself, the Society will relieve him of this responsibility; and hence the principle of a “mutual participation in the profits” is established,—a principle which, when based on the Carlisle Bills of Mortality, answers very well for Fire and Life Assurance Companies, but which we are afraid would not answer in this body. A *Republic* of Letters, in a financial sense, would not long work well,—“the separate account” which is proposed to be kept of each book would soon reveal who the unsuccessful authors were, and the more fortunate writers declaring off without delay, the *mouvement* would speedily end in the absorption of the general fund.

We shall now recapitulate our argument. We have attempted to show that books in this country never, for any length of time, remain high-priced to an extent that is felt to be generally inconvenient. That the pecuniary remuneration to literary men, derivable from the publication of their works, is for the most part as liberal as the nature of things will admit of. That the sphere of action of the Publication Societies, presently in operation, is limited, and cannot efficiently admit of such expansion as to overtake the publication of all new books. But, in particular, that in organizing a Board to decide on new publications, a sufficient number of persons could not conveniently be obtained,—that unanimity in their decisions would not be practicable,—or, if these difficulties were overcome, that their selections would not be of such “exchangeable value” as if made by professional publishers. That the proposed suppression of promiscuous advertising and of bookselling agency would greatly diminish the sale of books in the country, and that the contemplated reduction

in selling prices would prevent any increase of allowance for literary labour. And finally, that the plan of equally dividing the revenue of a Publication Society would, by making the unsuccessful writer a burden on the fortunate author, soon result in the disruption of the scheme.

VI.

BRIEF SUGGESTIONS FOR THE REMEDY OF EVILS REALLY EXISTING.

In conclusion, we have to admit that there are many instances where literary labour does not receive its due reward, and some where books might be advantageously lowered in price. Both are important *ends*, and as such we have not opposed them ; it is only with *means* inadequate to promised results that we have had any quarrel. For the first evil, therefore, we would suggest,—

1. The more general introduction of Government pensions for services rendered to literature, and the employment of literary men in civil and scientific offices.

2. The extension of copyright to 100 years, or in perpetuity, to an author and his family. Publishers need not be afraid of this, as they could, if necessary, buy up copyrights ; and the public need not be afraid for suppression, as the new law of copyright provides against that. And there would be no danger of high prices, as copyright books are as good and cheap as those which are open to the appropriation of all and sundry. The works of Scott, Byron, Campbell, and Rogers, in poetry, and of such as George and Andrew Combe, in science, are all copyright ; and yet, although the copyrights expired to-morrow, they could not be produced in the same style at a cheaper rate.

For the second object, it might be advisable,—

1. To reduce the nominal selling price of books 10 or 12 per cent., and then introduce, as far as practicable, the practice now obtaining in the sales of other commodities,—that of “ready money, and no abatement.”

2. To cancel old back-titles when reductions are made, and substitute in their stead new ones, containing the lowered rates, —the same alterations being made on catalogues and lists.

3. To procure endowments from the patriotic and benevolent

for the stereotyping of works calculated to be of material use in particular branches of knowledge.

4. The institution of Publication Societies for class books, as before described.

APPENDIX.

SINCE the foregoing was in type, an admirable article has appeared in the *Spectator* newspaper, on the subject of certain pecuniary grants made by her Majesty to destitute literary persons, recommended by the Literary Fund Society; and we quote it (slightly abridged), *first*, in order to show that the class of individuals whom the author of the 'Reasons' sneers at as "job-writers" (p. 4), are of higher intellectuality than he supposes; and, *second*, because it confirms, with much force, what we have advanced regarding the hopelessness of supporting some descriptions of authors otherwise than by Government aid.

This is a class of which little notice has been taken amid all the noise that has lately been made about the rights of literature. The writers and speakers and would-be legislators about copyright, have had exclusively in view our great popular authors—in particular, the poets and novelists, and the secondary imaginative writers, who pass for belonging to this class—as mongrels and trundle-tails are designated by the general appellative dog. Whether a perpetual or indefinitely prolonged lease of copyright in their own works, would benefit this class and their families, may be doubted; but that it would be of no use to this class is certain.

It is one in which a very high order of talent is sometimes found, but rarely talent of an originating or commanding character. They are your workers to order for booksellers and others. They are sometimes possessed of extensive learning, sound discrimination, a vein of felicitous occasional remark, a talent for lucid arrangement and elegant finish. They compile books which obtain currency because they bring into a focus information scattered through many different works, and convey it in a pleasing style; or, perhaps, because they facilitate reference. They are your manufacturers of Universal Histories and Popular Compendiums of Science, your contributors to Cyclopædias and Libraries of Useful Knowledge, your makers of Indexes, Digests, and Dictionaries. They take what, in theatrical phraseology, is termed "the heavy line" in magazines, reviews, and other periodicals. They are an industrious, if not always a provident and regular race. They are gregarious for the most part. In old times, in this country, they were to be found in the garrets of the great publishers for whom they worked: Fielding has immortalized Curll's garret. Now-a-days, they frequent public libraries. The Reading-room of the British Museum is their great resort in London; on the Continent, every public library swarms with them. Sometimes a solitary specimen occurs. Johnson's adventures during his early London career, while in waiting upon Cave, illustrate the life of such a one: Johnson, with his amanuensis in his own house, compiling his Dictionary, is a specimen of the gregarious.

They are not without their use. A poem is the work of an individual mind, but a science is the work of society. The author of a scientific treatise must take many observations and experiences on trust from others; many of his in-

ferences have been drawn for him by his predecessors ; even the errors of those who went before him may, by a principle of antagonism, suggest truths upon which he would never otherwise have stumbled. The *littérateurs* we have been describing place facts and opinions in new combinations ; they modify the expression of them. In short, by pillaging the ideas of older authors and each other, by digesting and assimilating them into their own system, they keep up a kind of literary gossip on a large scale, and help inventive minds to materials to work upon. The history of this class of drudges, in Paris, Amsterdam, Leipzig, and London, is a curious and too much neglected chapter in the history of the progress of opinion.

As they are a hard-working, so they are mostly an under-paid class ; the slopseller's sempstresses scarcely more inadequately remunerated,—the factory children scarcely more in need of a short-hours bill. This is unavoidable, if they can only be employed as bookmakers. The useful compilations and compendiums which afford them employment can only be undertaken by publishers, with any hope of profit, in a state of the literary body-corporate in which population presses hard on the means of subsistence. The useful literary drudges are, in general, not in a condition to refuse any wages however inadequate. They are composed of dreamy speculators, whose youth has been wasted in poetical or philosophical reveries—of briefless barristers, clergymen who cannot get livings, and physicians who cannot get patients—of all kinds of educated men who have failed to get any other means of livelihood. Though their gains are scanty, they are thankful for them, since without them they must starve outright.

The gains of the most fortunate among them can rarely afford any surplus to lay by, and the best copyright-law imaginable could do nothing for these unfortunate persons. Most frequently their individual productions are swamped amid the miscellaneous mass of the volumes to which they are contributors. Often they are of too ephemeral a nature to retain their interest beyond the day of their appearance. Even the compilers of independent volumes suffer from the mutability of fashion. In our days, *Continuations of Hume and Smollett*, and *Russell's Modern Europe*, have been displaced by *Pictorial Histories* and *Cabinet Cyclopædias*. They are not of the works that live, but of the works which do good service in their day and then give place to others.

There is no help for our literary drudges in the benevolence of the age. But the State has the power to make them useful, and enable them to earn a livelihood. They cannot strike out means of making fortunes for themselves : they are of the kind of men who can only get on by executing task-work for salaries ; they are the operatives of literature, of which the booksellers are the capitalists. An old established newspaper or review is a pasture on which a limited number can graze. The offices of librarian or curator to public libraries and museums, and of secretary to literary societies, are means of providing for others. Well-organized universities would find employment for some more. In this country little is done for them in that way, except by voluntary associations of individuals : in France, a great number are thus provided for by the State, both to its advantage and theirs. Both the Republic and the Constitutional Monarchy wisely adopted the policy of the Absolute Monarchy which preceded them, in organizing "the University," and the public libraries, museums, botanical gardens, &c., in a way to make literature a profession nearly on the same footing as the Church. Literary men can best be aided in this way ; not by reluctant grants of pensions to a few, but by cutting out useful work for a good many.