

THE
MEDICAL TIMES AND GAZETTE.

A
JOURNAL OF MEDICAL SCIENCE,

LITERATURE, CRITICISM, AND NEWS.

VOLUME II. FOR 1861.



LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY JOHN CHURCHILL, 11, NEW BURLINGTON STREET;
AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

THE ANÆSTHETIC EFFECTS OF BELLADONNA.

In a case of incarcerated hernia recently operated upon by Professor Pitha, it was found that neither chloroform nor ether were able to induce a sufficient degree of narcosis. After the patient had inhaled a very large quantity of both these soporifics for about two hours, no anæsthesia had been induced, and enemata, with a scruple of the extract of belladonna, were then administered. Some time after that, the patient appeared to be in a state of deep intoxication; and herniotomy was then performed. The sopor resembled throughout a deep and tranquil sleep; the face was placid; the features calm, the respiration regular, the pulse good; neither spasms, contractions, nor paralytic symptoms were to be observed, and the only signs which excited some anxiety, were the excessive dilatation and immobility of the pupils and the absolute impossibility of rousing the patient. Neither the removal of the patient from the bed to the operating table, nor the operation itself, induced any return to consciousness; and it was not until twelve hours after the operation that the patient awoke. He had no recollection of anything which had passed, and with the exception of a slight scratching in the throat and dilatation of the pupils, all traces of the action of belladonna had disappeared. When he awoke (at three p.m., on a bright day) he believed it to be still night; but towards the evening of the same day the vision was entirely re-established. Professor Pitha thought that the anæsthesia was due to the combined action of the chloroform, ether, and belladonna; and he recommends a mixture of atropine and chloroform to be administered for inducing anæsthesia in cases of chloroform *réfractaires*.