

(see Mr. Hopgood's letter, LANCET, No. 1000), but practise far too loosely to overcome any ordinary difficulty. At the very time when their exertions and readings are particularly called for, they resign the task to dame Nature, and then call this having some little experience in disease! Mr. Hopgood's hobby with the tincture of catechu will be a short one, I easily foresee, unless his practice lies exclusively among the poorest of the poor of his seven large parishes, for in the pauper cases the ulcers affecting the nipples no sooner make their appearance than they assume the sloughy condition, hence Mr. Hopgood's complete success with the trial of tincture of catechu—as yet. I am, your obedient servant,

J. H. HORNE, Surgeon.

Princes-street, Oct. 31, 1842.

Sir,—In the following case the tincture of catechu was used with the desired success:—The patient was a young woman whose right breast had suppurated and ulcerated prior to my seeing it. I then recommended her to apply the usual remedies, and she soon recovered. Upon visiting the child some time afterwards, I found that in the meantime the mother's left breast and nipple had become swollen, fissured, and extremely painful. I again recommended the customary remedies, but on this occasion without any benefit. Having read Mr. Farr's statement, I resolved to try the catechu, and the cure was rapid and effectual. It is worthy of observation that in using the tincture she accidentally dropped a small portion on one of her fingers, which had for some time been ulcerated and excoriated. The catechu was equally efficacious to the finger. The tincture was that made of the best catechu, and this leads me to suggest that the want of success represented in Mr. Davis's cases is, perhaps, to be attributed to the use of an inferior sort; for it is well known that there are two kinds, one much more expensive than the other, and therefore the less used. I make this statement through your valuable Journal, to do justice to Mr. Farr, to whose communication I feel myself much indebted. I remain, Sir, yours obediently,

JOHN CORNWALL, Surgeon.

Chichester, Nov. 1, 1842.

Sir,—After what had been written on the tincture of catechu for sore nipples, since the recommendation of Mr. Farr, I thought] it (although myself engaged in active midwifery practice, chiefly amongst the working classes) useless to trouble you with any remarks until I read the letters of Messrs. Davis and Pottle, which I considered might deter many practitioners from using so valuable a remedy. Mr. Davis, however, has tried it

but in six cases (and in one of them, he says, it had not a fair trial), and Mr. Pottle only in two; both gentlemen saying that in their cases the inflammation was extensive. I think, therefore, that neither of them have given the tincture a fair trial. The cases were too few, and the inflammation should first have been subdued by emollient treatment. In fact, Mr. Horne (in No. 998) cautions the profession against its use “until the excitement has gone by, and the nipple has assumed a sloughy condition,” then is the time, he says, when the *tr. cat.* exerts its beneficial influence, in which I perfectly agree. Fifteen cases in which I have used it (but not until they had assumed the *chronic* form) were all cured by it in less than a fortnight; the patients certainly complained of smarting on the few first applications, but not afterwards. I order the nipple to be wiped perfectly dry with a piece of soft linen after each time of suckling; the tincture to be then applied with a camel's-hair brush. If the fissure be deep, I direct an Indian-rubber shield to be used when suckling, and, in the intervals, a piece of lint, saturated with the tincture, to be kept over the nipple, due attention being at the same time paid to the bowels.

Mr. Davis, in THE LANCET, No. 1000, says, “If the case be left to itself, and the infant removed from the breast, nature alone would cure it.” Certainly she would; remove the exciting cause, and the effects cease. For instance: a child is labouring under convulsions from indigestible food, a confined state of the bowels, or worms. In such case, thoroughly clear out the alimentary canal, and the convulsions cease. Instead of removing the child from the breast, I would recommend him to order the mother to suckle her infant through a shield. I am, Sir, yours obediently,

H. J. HINXMAN, M.D.

Bury, Lancashire, Nov. 1, 1842.

#### ASTRINGENTS, GENERALLY, FOR SORE-NIPPLES.

Sir,—The *penchant* of the public for “certain cures” has always been the grand source of charlatanaerie. “What is good for a cough?” “What is a cure for a sore leg?” “For hooping-cough, sore nipples, &c.?” Such questions are frequent. When a demand is made a supply is sure to be afforded if a shilling can be made by it. Hence we have certain cures for everything, from corns to dropsy, and yet people are always hobbling about with the one, and dying from the other, as heretofore. The correspondence in THE LANCET on the catechu has led to these remarks. That the application is a very good one, is next to certain *à priori*, but the principle is as old as the hills. Astringent

applications, of various kinds, have been employed for such cases for many generations, but every accoucheur of experience knows that even this very good plan of treatment requires to be employed with discretion. It is not every case of sore nipples that will bear strong astringent applications. There are other applications first required, of a soothing nature, and in many of these cases local treatment alone will not afford much relief. I have never been foiled by sore nipples, yet I have no nostrum that will certainly cure all cases in all stages. Fomentations, and, afterwards, mild astringent lotions, with tincture of opium, as the local means, have been, in the more severe forms, very beneficial. In chronic cases I have no doubt that the catechu would, with proper attention to those circumstances which a respectable practitioner would observe, be a very good application, equal to lead, iron, copper, silver, or zinc, tormentil, bistart, galls, oak-bark, pomegranate-bark, or any other mineral or vegetable astringents. To enumerate all the applications that have been employed for sore nipples would occupy too much space. The popular remedies, such as house-leek, brandy, and port wine, have all performed "wonderful cures," by common report. If these remarks, from an accoucheur of thirty-five years standing, are deemed worthy to be recorded, perhaps you will give them a place in your widely-circulated LANCET. I am, Sir, &c.,

JOHN HOULTON.

London, Nov. 1, 1842.

#### THE PAR VAGUM AND NERVUS ACCESSORIUS.

CONSIDERABLE difference of opinion has of late existed among physiologists regarding the exact functions of the par vagum. Some maintain that it is entirely sensiferous and incident; others, that it also contains a few motor filaments. Scarpa, Arnold, Bischoff, Valentin, &c., have asserted that all the motor filaments of the pharyngeal and laryngeal branches of the par vagum actually come from the spinal accessory; while Müller, John Reid, Volkmann, &c., maintain that a few motor filaments are bound up in the par vagum at its origin, though they admit that the greater number of the motor filaments found in the trunk of that nerve, as it lies in the neck, are derived from the spinal accessory. Mr. Spence, in the "Edinburgh Journal," Oct., 1842, has proved, by minute dissections, that a few of the filaments of the par vagum are non-ganglionic, or motor, passing over the superior ganglion of that nerve, and joining themselves to the internal root of the accessory. The white nervous cord so formed by this junction can be traced down over the inferior ganglion of the vagus, to which it gives one or two delicate filaments, and at last seems principally to pass into the formation of the inferior laryngeal nerve.

No. 1002.

#### THE TREATMENT AND THE MAL-TREATMENT OF DISEASE,

BY  
WATER, HOT AND COLD.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The following cases have recently come under my notice:—

A gentleman subject to *gout*, and actually suffering under an attack, chose, on his own judgment and responsibility, to keep the affected foot in cold water for a quarter of an hour, every morning. The pain, tumefaction, &c. were, indeed, by this means removed, but simultaneously a sensation of oppression, weight, fulness of the heart (symptoms previously unknown to the patient), set in, from which I have hitherto failed to relieve him.

A gentleman, subject to *rheumatism*, chose, like the foregoing, on his own responsibility, and misled by the reports from Gräfenberg, to take the cold bath, irrespective of the feebleness, the cachectic complexion, and the very diminished reactive power of his constitution. He has paid the penalty of his imprudence by bringing on himself a cardiac affection, more serious even than that of the person just referred to, and which will, in all probability, conduct him to a premature grave.

A gentleman subject to *rheumatic-gout*, whose stomach is almost continually acid, and whose kidneys act indifferently, has, after a perusal of works lately published on hydrous treatment, accustomed himself to swallow vast quantities of water, at all times of the day. He has been benefitted in consequence. His urine, which was lately scanty and turbid, is plentiful and clear. His stomach is less deranged; his rheumatoid arthritis very considerably relieved. I ought to notice that, to the first draught which he took in the morning, he added a few grains of the tartrate of soda and of the carbonate and super-tartrate of potass, which, no doubt, guided to the kidneys the large quantity of water which he subsequently swallowed during the day.

A gentleman, who also indulged freely in cold water, seems to have transferred a *rheumatoid-gouty* affection from the heart to the cervical muscles and ligaments, the scalp, and the *dura mater*.

It may be said that these cases were not treated strictly according to Priessnitz's method, nor were under the care of a hydro-pathic\* physician. While we grant this, we think it proper to adduce them as illustrations of the extreme facility with which rheumatic and gouty affections are displace-

\* I need not point to the Bœotian ignorance implied in the coinage of the word "hydropathy."