THE MARSHALL HALL METHOD OF TREATMENT IN ASPHYXIA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Permit me to avail myself of a short space in your interesting journal, to record my testimony to the advantage of the "Marshall Hall Method," as exemplified in a case that came under my care on Friday, April 24th, in which I succeeded in producing the process of respiration, contrary to my expectation. I believe the old modes of proceeding would have been entirely fruitless in bringing about such a consummation, *ceteris paribus*.

Mrs. G—, residing at New Luton, was seized with labour-pains on the morning of the above date. I saw her at about ten A.M., and found the uterus dilated to such an extent as to necessitate my continuance with her: the pains, were, however, inefficient, and, having made no progress for several hours, at about three P.M., I gave her a small dose of ergot, soon after which strong expulsive pains came on, and in half an hour a large full-grown child was extruded, fully ten minutes having intervened between the expulsion of the head and the shoulder. The funis was coiled round the left wrist and the right ankle; it was flaccid, and ceased to pulsate. The placenta was immediately expelled. Having completed my attendance upon the mother, I hurried to adopt the "Marshall Hall Method" with the infant. The face and extremities were of a dark-blue colour, and a frothy mucus oozed from the mouth and nostrils. After about five minutes' rolling and rubbing, *secundem artem*, I perceived the colour of the chest alter from blue to red; in a short time there was a very faint and feeble inspiration, followed by a most languid cry. Continuing the movements for a few minutes longer, until respiration was completely established, I desisted only when I found the young stranger give unmistakable evidence, by a lusty shout, of his determination to enter the lists in "the battle of life."

In October, last year, a footling case, almost similar in its details to the one published in THE LANCET of April 25th, by Mr. Cowan, came under my observation, and my want of acquaintance with this newly-introduced anti-Malthusian boon, is doubtless a reason why one of the finest and strongest infants I have ever seen is not now numbered with the living.

All honour, then, to that philosophic mind that has educed from the stores of its profound intelligence, this most important discovery, the influence of which will diffuse itself over unborn thousands—it may be millions—of the human race! I feel that the claims of Dr. Marshall Hall are deserving of the highest honour that can be conferred upon one of the greatest benefactors of the medical profession, and of whom it may be said, "Nihil tetigit quod non ornavit."

I am, Sir, very faithfully yours,

Nottingham, June, 1857.

P. J. HYNES, M.D.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A short time ago I was called to Mrs. G—, the messenger stating that the child was born. On my way to the house I was further informed that the child was dead. I found the mother standing on the floor, supported by attendants, and fixed to the spot (the placenta not having come away) by the umbilical cord. The child lay coiled up at the bottom of a large *pôt-de-chambre*. I immediately released and attended to the mother. On examining the child, it was to all appearance dead. This was so much the impression, that it was considered an useless attempt to endeavour to resuscitate it. I nevertheless adopted the method recommended by Dr. Marshall Hall, and in half an hour respiration became established, and the child lived.

In connexion with this subject, I would venture to remark that most of us must have observed, amongst those who have the care of children, that when their little charges present, from any cause, symptoms of suffocation, they are in the habit of throwing them across their arms, or placing them in their laps, in the prone position, then rolling them to and fro and slapping their backs, generally with good effect. The essential part of this treatment is similar to the Ready Method, and, it appears to me, assists in establishing the soundness of Dr. Marshall Hall's views, and in showing that we are indebted to him for basing on scientific grounds a means empirically employed, and above all for giving those means a wider application.

I remain, Sir, your very obedient servant,

Howland-street, Fitzroy-square, 1857.

HENRY MADGE, M.D.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As the Committee of Management of the Royal National Life-boat Institution appealed to the readers of THE LANCET for "such individual or collective information as the profession may be able to afford" with regard to the "Marshall Hall Method" in the treatment of persons apparently drowned, I beg to send you the following case. Although the result was not so fortunate as in my former case, yet it may be useful to place it on record, as it illustrates strongly the danger that attends the removal of the patient, and the use of the warm-bath, as *still* recommended by the Royal Humane Society in their amended (?) rules.

I was summoned on the evening of the 24th of May to see a boy, five years of age, supposed to be drowned. About ten minutes before my visit he had been taken out of a pond. His lower extremities were in hot water, and hot wet blankets were being applied over his body, which was quite flaccid; his face and lips very livid; tongue slightly protruding, and a little frothy mucus around the nostrils; neither respiration nor pulse discernible. He was carried to the door immediately, and treated by the "Marshall Hall Method." I began the movements, &c., at eight P.M., and continued them steadily for twenty-five minutes, when Mr. Young, another medical man arrived, and with his able assistance efforts were persevered in till five minutes past nine. It then became so dark that we considered it excusable to give up, especially as no symptoms of life had appeared.

I ascertained subsequently that the little fellow had been in the pond between fifteen and twenty minutes; that his father took him out; that he "gave two little gasps" at the side of it; that he was immediately carried home (about one hundred yards) and placed where I saw him. In fact, had the poor boy's father been acting under the immediate superintendence of the Royal Humane Society's committee, he could have done no better for his child. To those only who can fully understand the value of minutes in such a case will it appear as almost certain that life would have been restored by the Ready Method, if it had been brought into operation when the child gasped at the side of the pond.

Here, then, is a striking instance of a life lost by ten minutes' delay. "The other methods occupied but a few minutes;" in the meanwhile, however, death had snatched his victim. The result is one more warning to the Royal Humane Society to substitute "*postural movements on the spot*" for *removal and the warm-bath*, as speedily as possible, unless they are content to have the "*NOMEN et præterea nihil*."

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

South Shields, July, 1857.

A. LEGAT, M.D.

THE SOLVENT PROPERTY OF GLYCERINE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Extensively employed as glycerin for many external purposes, the value of it as a solvent or menstruum is not, I believe, so generally and fully known, or so justly appreciated, as it deserves to be; and a few remarks, the result of personal practical observation and experiment, may not be altogether without interest to a portion of your readers, particularly those who are desirous of turning to the best account any suggestion likely to add to the comfort or relief of their suffering patients.

The especial property which glycerine possesses of dissolving the disulphate of quinine would alone be sufficient to render it an object of interest, but it is equally powerful with many other substances. It readily dissolves the disulphate of quinine in the proportion of two grains to the fluid drachm, forming at first an opaque fluid, which in the course of a few hours becomes a clear bright solution, possessing the peculiar pale-blue, superficial tint peculiar to the solutions of that substance, and this without the aid of heat or any acid. This solution is miscible with waters and tinctures in various proportions, and it appears a great advantage to possess a clear, bright, elegant, and by no means disagreeable solution of the disulphate of quinine, without the addition of acid. Gallic acid, which requires one hundred parts of cold water for its solution, is soluble in rather less than twelve parts of glycerine, making a clear, straw-coloured liquid, of a pleasant, sweetish, sub-acid taste, in this state offering a desirable mode of administering the gallic acid where pills might be objectionable, and a large quantity of fluid impracticable.

Tannic acid is also freely soluble in this substance, and as an external astringent application might prove preferable in many instances to an oily or greasy compound. In the treatment of