

thirty thousand practitioners for the faults of a few. Their eagerness for office did not justify him in turning his back on our just claims, and adopting the interested suggestions of the monopolists, whose career of corruption, on their own confession, is unparalleled in the annals of corporate depravity.

What would Sir James have thought of his colleagues if they had had the folly to obey the directions of the boroughmongers in propounding their scheme of municipal reform, and to disregard the demands of the nation? It is a parallel case. This has been his error. He has legislated for the pures and the physicians, not the profession, to whom the lives and wealth of the community are entrusted. He has sought to make the pyramid stand on its apex, not on its base. He seeks to elevate the man of limited acquirement over the head of the man who is accomplished in every department of his avocation, and whom, as the *Times* remarks, the public has pronounced most competent to minister to their requirements. He lays down this monstrous rule, that special is superior to general information in a profession which is naturally one and indivisible. He perpetuates all those divisions in a science whose objects and studies are similar, and which have been so injurious. He contravenes, in all his self-evident absurdities, the opinions of the Hunters, Bells, Coopers, Abernethys, Armstrongs—all the lights of our profession. He seems to know not that from our ranks have arisen the men who have enlarged the field of science, and that the repositories of medical knowledge are swelled by our observations, drawn from the book of nature which is open before us, and that we have for a long time been the interpreters of her truths. He retards the advancement of the most indispensable branches of medicine, by casting a slur upon those who practise them. He places in an inferior position the obstetrician whose skill saves the life of mother and child, and degrades the man who provides medicines, the chief appliance of his art, and thus protects his patient and his own reputation against the ignorance and cupidity of the chemist! He elevates the pure, who admits his limited qualification, and to whom the term can only ironically apply, as he is every day invading, poaching upon, that demesne of practice which he disclaims, and of which he acknowledges himself ignorant, and is daily engaged in huxtering traffic with the chemist, to the injury of his patient's pocket, and to the discredit of the profession. The *Times* may well ask,—If Herschel, in preparing his glasses, degrades or lessens himself or astronomy in the social scale?

It may be urged, in reply, that Sir James Graham could not interfere with existing charters. I answer—Was he not one of those who laid the ruthless hand of destruction on the charters of three hundred corporations, when it was proved that they were not in accordance with the spirit of the times? Our charters have been proved incompatible with the interests of science and the profession.

We have only to employ union, sense, and firmness, to convert these truths into living principles. We have yet the parliamentary means of emancipating ourselves from the multitude of evils which our enemies would inflict upon us. After the first emotions of surprise and indignation have passed away, one simultaneous exertion will put an end to the dynasty of diplomacy and selfish manœuvre, and force the infatuated, self-convicted, prostrate council of the College of Surgeons to enfranchise its members, and make it the head and home of the general practitioners, ultimately leading to a one faculty, which is as certain to come to pass as one of those laws which prevail in the world of intelligence, and as that certain consequences may be foretold to follow the laws which govern the phenomena of nature. It is an inevitable result, which the power of the minister of the day may postpone, but cannot prevent. The revelations contained in the letter of Mr. O'Connor give us an insight into the character of the Committee, and are "confirmations strong" of the correctness of my strictures on that body. He admits that the cause of their defeat was, that self-interest was in antagonism with public principle, and courteously characterizes the official report as "simply untrue." I will return, shortly, to the pathology of the Hanoverian monster, and to the damning facts contained in Mr. O'Connor's communication. I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

Sept. 15th, 1845.

JORDAN ROCHE LYNCH.

TOBACCO IN TIC DOULOUREUX.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In a late number of your journal, a correspondent recommended, and strongly applauded, the use of tobacco in the treatment of tic douloureux.

If not under a misapprehension, the author of that communication was the first, about two years ago, at the house of a mutual friend, to suggest to me the employment of this remedial agent in

neuralgic affections. Since that time I have prescribed its application in various cases of tic douloureux, but with such a very opposite result from that reported to have attended its use in the hands of your correspondent, as to render it impossible for me to reconcile the discrepancy.

At first I gave a fair trial to a strongly-concentrated infusion of shag tobacco, directing it to be applied by friction, and by cloths saturated with it kept upon the affected part. This plan proving completely unproductive of the slightest mitigation of the pain, it occurred to me that a better mode of concentrating the active medicinal properties of the agent, and producing it in a more convenient state for external application, would be by reducing it to the form of extract. For that purpose, I directed the best shag tobacco to be infused in boiling-water, then, after cooling and being well macerated, the fluid to be strained off, and evaporated at a low temperature, to the consistence of an extract.

Two ounces of tobacco thus yielded three drachms and a half of extract. This extract I prescribed, in the form of a plaster, to be placed over the site of the pain, and, mixing it with a suitable quantity of lard, in the form of ointment, to be used in the way of friction. Yet this preparation proved equally as inert as the infusion in neuralgic affections.

In other affections, however, where tobacco has been indicated, I have found this extract to be a convenient and effective preparation, admitting of greater nicety and precision in the exhibition of so powerful and dangerous a narcotic.

I remain, Sir, yours truly,

G. W. BLANCH, M.R.C.S. Edin.

Vassall-place, Brixton-road, Sept. 8th, 1845.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE OXIDE OF SILVER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your last week's number I notice a communication from Sir James Eyre, respecting the oxide of silver. He recommended its administration in some fluid vehicle, and states, that in many instances he has found the remedy effectual when so given, though it had previously failed in the shape of pills or powders.

For myself, I cannot but consider the fluid mode of administering the oxide of silver as highly objectionable, on account of its nauseousness, the contingent liability to chemical change, and the uncertainty of its being thoroughly suspended. My own experience, since I first introduced the remedy in 1840, is decidedly in favour of its administration in a pilular form, and I am confident, that every advantage which can result from its use may be so obtained, if the medicine be given in proper combinations. A few of the substances which I most commonly present with the oxide are, inspissated ox-gall, the extracts of henbane, hemlock, poppy, rhubarb, camomile, and gentian; also the various essential oils. Ipecacuanha is a most useful adjunct. The addition of a proportion of Castile soap to the pills is also very advantageous, securing their ready solution and diffusion over the gastric surface; I also frequently recommend that a small quantity of tepid water shall be drank immediately after the pills are taken.

But what is of far more consequence than the mode of administration, is the preparation of the oxide of silver itself. I have at present four specimens before me, widely different in appearance: the first is nearly black, the second is a light grey, the third is a dark olive-brown with white specks, the fourth is light brown, and is the one which is desirable for medicinal administration. Its accurate preparation depends on the decomposition of the nitrate with a due proportion of pure alkali, its thorough freedom from impurity, and its equable desiccation by the continued application of a high temperature.

Mr. Hooper, chemist, of Pall-Mall East, has undertaken to prepare the medicine according to my directions, and as he has taken much trouble to render the chemical process as accurate and uniform as possible, I should recommend those who desire to have it genuine, to procure it from him.

I purpose shortly to publish a further account of the result of my experience in the use of the remedy in question, which has been most gratifying.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

C. H. BUTLER LANE.

Ewell, Surrey, Sept. 1st, 1845.

THE OXIDE OF SILVER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A communication has appeared in the last number of THE LANCET, from Dr. Eyre, on the subject of the medicinal use of the oxide of silver.

Perhaps you will permit me, through the medium of your columns, to add my testimony to its efficacy, having witnessed its effects in dyspepsia, chronic gastritis, and nervous irritability, for