TREATMENT OF PNEUMONIA.

To the Editors of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

IN your last issue is a report of the proceedings of the late quarterly meeting of the Norfolk District Medical Society. The subject of discussion was the treatment of pneumonia. The discussion was a very interesting one. In the course of it I stated what had been my observation on the disease, and what had been my treatment. My opportunities for observing pneumonia were many, as I had been one of the physicians of the Massachusetts General Hospital for twenty-four years. Among my colleagues was my honored and beloved master of medicine, Dr. James Jackson. I asked Dr. Jackson one day why he bled in pneumonia, citing Mr. John Hunter on Inflammation, &c. "I bleed," said Dr. Jackson, "in pneumonia and pleurisy to diminish pain—agony."

As I have for some time ceased bleeding, I substituted an active medicinal method. Being called to one of the most severe cases of pneumonia I have ever met with, I prescribed as follows:—*R.* Hyd. submur., ℥ i. ; antimon. tart., gr. i.; opii, gr. iv.; mucil. acaciæ gum., q. s. *M.* Ft. pil. No. iv.

CASE II.—Mrs. — had been recently confined. About a fortnight after, I was desired to see her, and found her very ill with double pneumonia. I prescribed the pills above described. Mrs. — had a good recovery. Slight ptyalism occurred. It has been observed that in the puerperal state ptyalism is apt to occur from the use of calomel, even in moderate doses.

I stated the above treatment of pneumonia to a highly respected professional friend of mine. He told me that he had tried it in several cases, of which two were slightly salivated, one of whom was an aged man.

It is well known why small doses salivate. They undergo chemical changes in the stomach, become soluble, and so get to be absorbed. Large doses do not. An old professional friend of mine, now dead, was called to see an old lady who was supposed to be about to die of dysentery. He advised two drachms of calomel to be taken immediately. The dose was taken. He called again next morning and learned that Mrs. — had been faithfully purged, large fecal discharges had occurred, and the dysentery had disappeared. A good and rapid recovery followed, and without ptyalism. So much for heroic medicine.

WALTER CHANNING.

Dorchester, July 27, 1867.

A PRIVATE lunatic asylum has been opened at Alameda, Cal., by Drs. Tucker and Trenor. For a long time the State Asylum at Stockton has been crowded beyond its capacity as a curative institution. There are insane patients enough in California to supply still other establishments.—*Pacific Medical and Surgical Journal.*