of sulphate of magnesia, or of Glauber's salt.

After what I have said in the relation of my case respecting the good effects of the *digitalis*, it is quite unnecessary for me to recommend it here. On the use of antimonials, Dover's powder, &c. in asthma, as nauseating and diaphoretic medicines, I shall say nothing; as their utility in inflammatory affections of every kind is well known, and almost universally acknowledged.

Not many years since it was the common practice to administer in asthma a number of medicines, which, from their antispasmodic qualities, were considered highly beneficial in that disease. This practice, the offspring of a most erroneous theory, has now fallen into pretty general disuse; for experience has shown, that such medicines, by their stimulant powers, only aggravate the symptoms. There is, however, one species of the disease in which they are probably useful. The species to which I allude is that which is usually denominated *dry*, but which might very properly be termed *chronic asthma*. It is most frequently met with in persons advanced in life, many of whom were, in early years, sufferers from the more acute form of the disease. Its symptoms are comparatively mild, but it very seldom has anything like perfect remissions. It is often relieved by *galbanum*, *assafœtida*, or *ammoniacum*.

I have never, I regret to say, had an opportunity of examining after death the bodies of asthmatics. I have, therefore, in the above observations, referred solely to the symptoms during life for proofs of the correctness of my opinions. The further evidence in their favor,

which may be drawn from the *exciting causes* of the affection, is so likely to obtain due estimation from all who turn their thoughts to the subject, that I have thought it unnecessary to insist upon it.*

II.

OBSERVATIONS ON DROPSY. BY
HUGH HUGER TOLAND, M.D. OF
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MAN in a rude and unpolished state, deprived of all the luxuries of life, and scarcely able to obtain a comfortable existence, whose intellectual faculties are uncultivated, and exert comparatively little influence over the physical energies of the system, is, as far as I have been able to ascertain, almost entirely exempt from dropsical affections. But when we take a view of him in a state of civilization the scene is reversed. Being tenderly raised and subject to the wrecking influence of inordinate repletion, stimulating potations, inactivity of body, mental excitement, and other causes of a local and accidental nature, he is rendered obnoxious to this and many other diseases of a complicated character, for the removal or palliation of which many remedies are required, and great skill in their administration called for.

Although the subject of this paper has received much attention, and physicians of the greatest respectability have been engaged in its investigation; and although much benefit has resulted to the unfortunate victims of this disease, by their unwearied exertions, something more yet remains to be done in order to enable them to treat successfully all its aggravated forms. In some of these publications, the

* London Medical Gazette.

treatment of this disease is detailed in a manner calculated to inspire great confidence ; but when resorted to in a complicated case, it fails, and but too often under the joint influence of all the remedies recommended, it progresses regularly to a fatal termination.

Some writers suppose dropsy to be hereditary ; and it certainly as well deserves this appellation as most other diseases ; persons of a phlegmatic temperament being most liable when placed under the circumstances producing it. As exciting causes, have been enumerated every circumstance calculated in any way to produce a feebleness of constitution. But I am disposed to doubt the correctness of this opinion ; having never seen a case of ascites, or general anasarca, in which considerable chylopoietic derangement did not exist : one or more of the vital organs having refused obedience to the laws by which they are governed in a healthy state. Moreover, the well-known effects of intemperance, and neglected or mal-treated febrile diseases—the most fruitful causes of dropsy—should in my humble opinion be sufficient to convince every one at all conversant with the subject, that a case of idiopathic dropsy rarely occurs.

Almost every case which has come under my notice, could be proved satisfactorily to have depended on one or all of the causes above mentioned ; all of which produce an unsoundness of the digestive organs, by which the fluids are vitiated, the system badly nourished, and the circulation disturbed.

In the section of the country where I lately resided, intermittent fever prevailed extensively, during the summer and autumnal months ; and almost every person of a phleg-

matic temperament, who suffered the disease to take its course uncontrolled, was afflicted with ascites, or anasarca, or both. Great enlargement and induration of the spleen, with pain in that region, more particularly whilst exercising, were invariable concomitants. Occasionally a sense of fulness in the right hypochondriac region, and sometimes pain, extending into the right shoulder, attended, with want of appetite and other symptoms of gastric derangement.

The *modus operandi* of constitutional derangement in producing the diseases under consideration, is yet a matter of doubt. A want of balance does certainly exist between the absorbent and exhalant systems ; but whether it is owing to an increased action in the exhalants, or to a torpidity of the absorbents, or both ; or how the local determinations above mentioned produce the disease in some, although not predisposed, whilst others, similarly situated, escape, are questions which necessarily arise. It is enough for us to know that they are symptomatic diseases. To treat them successfully, the loss of balance from which the effects, ascites and anasarca, arise, must be corrected before the disease can be permanently removed. If some organ or organs are in a state of chronic inflammation, or of slight enlargement, with attendant functional derangement, our treatment should be directed accordingly, whilst at the same time we use the necessary means to remove the effects already produced. If we are successful in removing the cause and effects, by the same, or a combination of remedies, disease no longer exists.

Persons of a phlegmatic temperament appear to be most liable to enlarged states of the abdominal

organs, which is probably owing, in some degree, to the relaxed condition of the vascular system, yielding to the unequal distribution of blood, which takes place in febrile diseases. In such cases, after the operation of cathartics, and the removal of the water, chalybeates are highly serviceable.

Being frequently unsuccessful with the common remedies employed in this disease, and supposing this want of success depended on the treatment being directed to remove a symptom rather than the disease itself; knowing, moreover, the inefficacy of most of the remedies used in removing the cause, and being fully convinced that calomel in large doses possessed properties combined in no other article, to whose pervading influence every tissue of the human system yields submissively, and acknowledges its control,—to it alone we look with confidence for the adjustment of that lost balance, and for the restoration of that harmony of action, which in each, and every part, or sub-system, is so essential to the well-being of the whole. I supposed, moreover, that if an active diuretic could be combined with it, and administered in such a manner that the functional derangement could be corrected, and the fluid discharged, before ptyalism was produced, that we would be in possession of a remedy to which we might resort with great confidence of success, in the most aggravated forms of dropsy.

Under these views the first case which presented was ascites, with œdema of the lower extremities, with no external marks of inflammation; an enlargement of the spleen with gastric derangement attended. It succeeded an attack of intermittent fever. Fifteen grains

of calomel and four of squills were administered three times a day, which operated seven or eight times, daily, as a cathartic, producing bilious passages; and in seventy-two hours from the administration of the first dose, the hydropic collection was entirely removed, by the powerful diuretic and purgative effects of the compound. The carbonate of iron freely administered, combined with aromatics, prevented a relapse, and the recovery was rapid.

Being encouraged by the happy termination of the case above mentioned, the same remedies were administered subsequently with equally good effects. And in every trial which was made I was more convinced of their superior efficacy over every other plan of treatment recommended in such cases.

In cases where an inflammatory diathesis existed, relief was generally afforded by the calomel and squill as above directed, it having been rarely necessary to use more active depletory measures. Relapses, however, frequently occurred, and it was found necessary to resort to the medicines frequently, to give relief, and to correct the local affections which remained. During the intervals, counter irritants, laxatives, and the tinct. sanguinariae canadensis, were found beneficial. The last is a medicine which deserves more attention than it has received from the profession. My attention was particularly directed to its use by the recommendation given it by an eminent practitioner who considered it superior to every other remedy in diseases of the liver and spleen, calomel not excepted, and also by the frequent use made of it by the country people for the cure of intermittent fever, and enlarged

spleen, which they call ague-cake.

Although I do not entertain so high an opinion of its virtues as the physician spoken of above, I know no remedy better calculated to relieve a patient with œdema of the lower extremities, and an enlargement of the spleen, than the saturated tincture of sanguinaria given in as large doses as the stomach will bear, three times a day; 3i. is a suitable dose for most persons.

The quantities of calomel and squills, above recommended, will not always have the desired effect upon the bowels. If they fail to operate seven or eight times in twenty-four hours, the quantity should be increased—if they are too active, diminished—which, however, will seldom be found necessary. Active purgation seems greatly to enhance the diuretic properties of the compound. Some persons may suppose that the stomach would not retain the doses of squill recommended. In all the trials made with it, I have never seen it rejected. Even in five grain doses, it nauseates very little. Perhaps in the form of pills would be the most agreeable way to administer it.

It certainly would be an extravagant, and also an unwarrantable assertion, if I were to say that this, or any other plan of treatment, will always be successful. But I do think that it is by far the most successful mode of treating ascites and anasarca. It is much more prompt and certain in its operation than the same medicines used in the common way; which if continued long without giving relief, as is often the case, generally salivates, an effect which I have never seen produced by the large doses of calomel recommended. When ptyalism does

take place, it is injurious, because it prevents the continued use of the medicine without conferring any benefit whatever, never having seen any advantage obtained by salivating a patient in dropsy before the evacuation of the water.

Some practitioners use hydragogue cathartics daily, until relief is obtained, which probably will require ten or twelve active cathartics, and by their use the patient is so much exhausted, that a relapse almost invariably takes place, although tonics may be freely administered. The digitalis, as it is frequently found in the shops, is so insignificant a remedy, that it scarcely deserves notice. Having had but one case of hydrothorax, and that in the advanced stage, in the person of a sot, who had made a business of drinking spirituous liquors for twenty or thirty years, I am not able to say whether the same success would attend this plan of treatment in that form of dropsy as in ascites and anasarca.

The squill that was used was dried in an iron mortar, placed near the fire, pulverized and confined closely in phials.*

III.

TALIACOTIAN OPERATION FOR RESTORATION OF THE UNDER LIP. BY C. BRYCE, M.D.

IN July last the Hakim-Bashi sent me, at Constantinople, the following singular case of destruction, by mortification, of the under lip and chin, which, from the success following the treatment pursued, seems worthy of notice.

The subject of it, a Turkish child, three years old, was attacked, in June preceding, with scarlet

* Transylvania Medical Journal.