continued exposure to a cold wind. The sounds which used to annoy me have almost ceased; and the arterial beating in the right ear has been long since gone.

A. W.

Edinburgh, May 1, 1840.

SLAUGHTERING ANIMALS FOR FOOD WITHOUT PAIN.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—I have addressed the accompanying letter to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals: will you oblige me by giving it a place in your Journal. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

A RETIRED PHYSICIAN.

GENTLEMEN:—The praiseworthy objects for which your Society has been instituted can never be fully attained, unless the destruction of animals for the sustenance of man be effected in a very different manner from that which is customary at present. The amount of pain in a London slaughter-house, during one week, far outweighs the sufferings from incidental cruelties practised on animals throughout the United Kingdom during a year. The occupation of a butcher necessarily renders him callous to the feelings of the animal creation, and prepares him and his assistants for the exercise of those occasional cruelties which call for your interposition to prevent or punish; and there is too much knowledge of the fact, that persons who are in the daily habit of witnessing the painful deaths of animals, are deficient in sympathy for their fellow-creatures.

Some benevolent persons have condemned the general custom of mankind, living so much on the flesh of animals, like the beasts of prey, and have consequently restricted themselves to a vegetable diet, and their example would be followed by many others if they were to witness the scenes of a slaughter-house; but if means were to be devised for extinguishing life without pain, the multiplying of animals for the purpose of food would produce a greater amount of enjoyment, than if the creatures were to be fewer in number, and allowed to perish by accident, disease, or natural infirmity.

Physiology and chemistry teach us the means of removing many moral, as well as physical evils, and of these one of the most valuable, is the mode of abolishing the agony of death, in the millions of animals employed for the sustenance of man. It has been long known that the inhalation of carbonic acid gas, unmixed with any other air, is instantaneously fatal, without occasioning any struggles, or sensation of pain. When the experiment is properly

conducted, the interval of time between the life and the death of the individual is too short to be appreciable. The life of the internal organs, however, does not immediately become extinct. The heart continues to beat long enough to admit of the abstraction of the blood, which is found to be capable of coagulating, and the muscles also become rigid—a proof that the respiration of carbonic acid gas destroys life through the medium of the nervous system, and that it has no tendency to decompose either the fluids or the solids of the animal body, so as to thereby render them unfit for food.

If the carbonic acid gas were to be used on a large scale in slaughter-houses, it could be obtained in any quantity, and without expence, from the different manufacturing processes which generate it; and might be kept for use in varnished bladders, or bags of Indian-rubber cloth, from which it might be transmitted into bags of the same material, tied over the mouth and nostrils of the animal, the discharge of the gas being regulated by stop-cocks. But if the mode of slaughtering I have recommended should come into general use, many contrivances would be made which would render the application of the gas easy and safe to the operator, and expeditious with regard to animals intended to be killed.

It is sufficient, Gentlemen, to draw your attention to this subject. Your interest will naturally be excited by a matter so intimately connected with the objects of your Institution.

[* * * We are not authorised, at present, to communicate the name of the writer of the foregoing letter; but we may state that he has occupied a high station in the profession for many years, and that his name, if announced, would ensure for his communication, the utmost respect.]—SUB. ED. L.

SEVERE CASE OF HÆMATEMESIS.

SULPHATE OF COPPER IN HOOPING-COUGH.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—I beg to send the following for insertion in your valuable columns. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

PYE HENRY CHAVASSE.

Birmingham, May 9, 1840.

HÆMATEMESIS.

April 19, 1840. I was sent for at eight o'clock this morning, in great haste, to attend John Jones, who was vomiting blood. The vomiting had commenced yesterday morning. He has had three or four attacks since then, and has brought up in that space of time (twenty-four hours) at least half a gallon of blood. I found him excessively weak and exhausted; his countenance death-like; his

skin covered with a cold, clammy perspiration; his pulse quick, and extremely feeble; he has pain and tenderness over the scrobiculus cordis; he has a trifling cough, which appears to proceed from a cold he has been labouring under, but in every other respect the lungs and their membranes appear perfectly healthy. My patient has been a very hard drinker, so much so, that he has almost subsisted on drink alone; the consequence has been that he has been labouring under symptoms of indigestion. The following is the treatment:—

Superacetate of lead, grs. xxiv;

Powdered opium, grs. viij;

Mucilage of gum arabic, a sufficient quantity to make eight pills; one to be taken every four hours.

The room to be kept cool; the patient to be kept very quiet, and to have nothing but cold water and cold gruel to drink, and to have no solid food whatever.

9 o'clock, P.M. I found him much better; he has had only one return of vomiting of blood, and that only small in quantity, since I saw him this morning; the pain and tenderness of stomach much relieved; pulse reduced to 80; tongue clean; expresses himself as being much better. Continue the treatment.

20. Very much better. Continue the treatment.

21. Rapidly improving; no return of the vomiting; tongue clean; tenderness of the stomach nearly gone; pulse 72; bowels confined. Discontinue the pills, but proceed with the low diet, and take the following mixture:—

Sulphate of magnesia, ℥j;

Carbonate of potash, ℥iij;

Simple syrup, ℥j;

Water, ℥vi, M. Two tablespoonfuls of the mixture to be taken with one of lemon-juice every three hours, whilst effervescing.

22. Still better. Continue the mixture, but allow him weak broth.

24. He has slight pain over the region of the liver; in every other respect (excepting weakness) he feels well. Discontinue the mixture, and take the following pills and mixture:—

Compound extract of colocynth,

Blue pill, of each, 3ss. To make twelve pills; two to be taken every night at bedtime.

Compound decoction of aloes, ℥iij;

Peppermint water, ℥iij;

Camphor mixture, ℥ij; M. A wineglassful to be taken three times a day.

May 1. He has been rapidly improving since last report, and now feels better than he has done for the last twelve months.

SMALL DOSES OF SULPHATE OF COPPER IN HOOPING-COUGH.

I wish to call the attention of my medical brethren, through your medium, to the great
No. 874.

value of *small doses of sulphate of copper* in hooping-cough. I have used it in numerous cases, and with the happiest result. The form I generally order is the following:—

Sulphate of copper, ½ gr.;

Syrup of poppies, ℥ss;

Aniseed water, ℥iiss; M. One or two teaspoonfuls (according to the age of the child) to be taken every four hours.

INQUEST AT ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—I forward to you an account of an inquest, which indicates some culpability which the coroner appeared to be unable or unwilling to detect,—most probably the former; a notice of it should be added to the records of “incomplete inquests.”

On Tuesday, the 28th of April, an inquest was held at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, on the body of John Ryan, a child, three years old, of Aldersgate-street. The boy was suffering under an attack of measles, and was attended by Dr. Farre, of the Aldersgate Dispensary, who prescribed mercury, in small doses. Immediately after the administration of the medicine, the child got worse; the mouth became inflamed, dark, and discoloured, the teeth dropped out, and he died in great agony. A general practitioner was called in to attend, and he pronounced that the child had been excessively salivated. In my examination at the inquest, however, he seemed loth to inculcate the medical officers of the Institution.

The party at the Dispensary, who made up the recipe, never weighed the calomel according to the evidence of the mother.

I felt great regret on this occasion that we had not a competent coroner, possessing a knowledge of medicine, to direct the investigation into its proper channel. Dr. Farre was much annoyed at the neglect of the compounder, seemingly contrary to the wishes of the former.

We recorded the following verdict:—“That the prescription was neglectfully compounded, and that the child died from an overdose of mercury.” I am, Sir,

ONE OF THE JURY.

* * In answer to a private question on this subject, it may be stated, that in all Middlesex there has not, in the last election for coroner, been found so determined a body of opponents to the appointment of a coroner possessing medical knowledge, as in St. Bartholomew's Hospital. The foregoing report has been authenticated.

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