great consideration, for when continued too long, great emaciation, with tenderness of the epigastrium, and sometimes inflammation of the stomach, ensues. But the most certain test is afforded by adding to the urine a few drops of nitrous acid, with a solution of starch; and if the quantity of free iodine is considerable, a very copious deep-blue precipitate is immediately produced, which, of course, varies in appearance in proportion to the quantity present. This is the course of analyses I have adopted, and when I find the precipitate very profuse, I discontinue the medicine for a few days, which is always sufficient to allow it to work out of the system, and then have recourse to it a second and a third time if required.

Iodine has been administered with great success in many diseases. Of one hundred cases of bronchocele, Coster asserts that he completely cured two-thirds by this remedy. Lugol relates many cases of scrofula successfully treated with iodine, and the preparations of it; as also Mr. Breaming, of Hull, who applied it externally to white swellings with advantage: and subsequently the vapour of iodine was recommended to be inhaled in cases of consumption of the lungs by many eminent men in this country. I can speak confidently of its extraordinary effects, when combined with a saturated solution of conium, and occasionally ipecacuanha: in certain cases of pulmonary consumption, I have used it extensively, and with uniform advantage, in mitigating symptoms and giving relief. In illustration, the subjoined case may not be uninteresting.

I was requested to see Edward Jones, Moore-street, Bryanston-square, in February last, whom I was told was in the last stage of consumption; and certainly I never saw a case more strongly to justify such a conclusion; by trade a baker; he had the pallid cast of countenance peculiar to that class; of a plethoric habit of body, but then considerably emaciated. I found he had been ailing for some months, and had tried various remedies from dispensaries, and otherwise, without effect; and on examination I considered his case quite hopeless. The symptoms indicated a high degree of hectic fever; pulse 120, and upwards; animal heat 102; dyspnoea so oppressive that he could not lie in the recumbent position, but was obliged to rest in a semi-inclined posture, in an arm-chair, all night; night sweats excessive; feet oedematous; face much bloated, and countenance expressive of extreme agony, through fear of immediate suffocation; expectoration of puriform matter tinged with blood, upwards of two pints daily. By auscultation and percussion pulmonary ulceration was well marked; pectoriloquy cavernous; respiration in the superior lobe of the right

lung was distinct, and on applying the cylinder over the middle portion the respiration was bronchial, but less so towards the inferior lobe. The left lung was not so much diseased. The clavicular region only being affected, which was shown by dulness on percussion, and a want of the natural respiratory murmur, the rest of the lung was sound, with puerile respiration. From the above facts, I placed my sole confidence in inhalation and counter-irritation to give relief. Having by me some of the saturated tinctures of conium and iodine, prepared by Mr. Carter, of Dorset-street, surgeon to the Institution for Asthma and Consumption, I commenced inhalation in small quantities, increasing the strength as the patient could bear it. The effect, after a week's trial, was most gratifying; the pain and irritation in the chest had considerably subsided, and he was now enabled to enjoy some tranquil sleep, which was unknown to him for many weeks before. He persevered unremittingly for eleven weeks, and by that time nearly all the symptoms I have enumerated had gradually subsided. From the onset he expressed the utmost hopes and confidence in the remedy, and I am now happy to say is enabled to return to his work. When able to take it, he was ordered a light nutritious diet, with beer, and the avoidance of all slops.

From the fortunate termination of this case, I am very far from offering the treatment as a *panacea* for consumption; but I consider its effects are such as to warrant the giving of it a fair trial, when I think that it will be found to do good, as it has in this case, and many others which have come under my care.

IMPROVED METHOD OF EXHIBITING THE IODINE VAPOUR.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—Through the medium of your Journal I am desirous of presenting to the profession an improved method for the exhibition of the iodine vapour, in cases of tubercular phthisis, which stands pre-eminent before the mode adopted by Sir Charles Scudamore, in my opinion, for two reasons: first, the quantity inhaled by the patient can be precisely calculated; and, secondly, the inhalation can take place independent of any exertion on the part of the patient; and thus the precise quantity of iodine brought into immediate contact with a diseased surface can be regulated according to the nature of the case. The unparalleled success that has attended this treatment in those cases where disorganisation had not proceeded to such an extent as to impede

considerably the respiratory functions, is the chief object in now offering my plan of treatment to the consideration of the profession. I will merely preface, in lieu of useless argument, the fact that experience tells us, how highly beneficial local treatment is upon external diseases, and produce, in its being made use of, effects in about one-twentieth the time that remedies do when used as constitutional. The following is the apparatus which I have made use of, the form and description of which I shall append, can easily be understood.

- A, a glass globe, containing tincture of iodine.
 B, a porcelain vessel, containing water, kept at a boiling heat, by
 C, a spirit-lamp, which is placed beneath.
 D, D, a wire-stand, with three shelves of wire, for the purpose of supporting the different articles.

A cork must be introduced into the mouth of the glass globe, through which we pass a number of cotton threads, or candle-wick; through this the iodine tincture is allowed to drop, at the rate of about five drops per minute: this, of course, we can regulate according to our own will, either by increasing or diminishing the opening in the cork. The tincture, thus allowed to drop upon the hot water contained in the porcelain-vessel, is immediately volatilised, along with the vapour of water. From this chemical fact we learn that iodine volatilises at a heat something below that of water, and thus the chamber becomes duly impregnated with iodine vapour. Now, we will suppose the patient in one hour (the atmosphere being loaded) breathes one-twentieth part of this atmosphere, he must necessarily have applied to the surface of his lung one grain of iodine in its most minute portions. We are thus presented with the means of directly applying to the diseased surface a remedy of deservedly the highest repute in this fatal disease, or what we have hitherto been accustomed to consider as fatal, and applica-

ble at a period, too, when constitutional remedies can be of no real service, and but little calculated to agree with a deranged state of the digestive organs. Should any of the faculty be desirous of inspecting the history of those successful cases which I have treated, with an accurate account of their pathognomic signs and symptoms, I shall be most happy to forward them for perusal through the medium of your valuable Journal, as early as possible. For the present I respectfully take my leave.

J. DIXON, Surgeon.

Whitehaven, July 20, 1841.

ON THE EXHIBITION OF SMALL DOSES OF MERCURY IN EFFECTING PTYALISM.

By CHAS. CLAY, Esq., Surgeon, Piccadilly,
Manchester, Lecturer on Medical Juris-
prudence, &c. &c.

IN THE LANCET of January 18, 1840, is reported a discussion on the effects of small doses of mercurial preparations in producing ptyalism, and some valuable hints are thrown out on that subject by Mr. SNOW. I think it will be generally admitted by all medical men of lengthened experience, that if ever the homoeopathic principle was justifiable, it would be found in the exhibition of mercurial preparations. The great variety of opinion expressed as to the plan and dose to be given to effect the same object, stamps the whole with doubts and surmises which it would be well to remove, if possible, and place the subject on a more certain basis. There is not anything more certain than that ptyalism has been produced in very many instances by an almost incredibly small quantity of mercury in some form, whilst it is equally certain that amazing quantities of a similar preparation have been given without the slightest effect being produced. Many attempts have been made to explain this discrepancy, but as yet unsatisfactorily. Mr. SNOW attributes the success of small doses in producing ptyalism, not to an idiosyncrasy of constitution, but to the existence of acidity in the first passages; and he was led to form this opinion from the rapidity with which mercury affected individuals who happened to be taking at the time acidulated mixtures, which appears extremely probable. It is also well known that habitually constipated habits are sooner affected with mercurials than those of a contrary tendency. Whilst I am writing these remarks, a lady under my care had only taken six grains of the blue pill before ptyalism was complete; and I have seen many cases where the same effects have been produced by even less doses. Dr. LAW frequently produced ptya-