ON THE USE OF
OIL OF TURPENTINE IN TÆNIA.

COMMUNICATED

IN A LETTER FROM

JOHN RALPH FENWICK, M.D. OF DURHAM,

TO

MATTHEW BAILLIE, M.D. F.R.S.

Read January 2, 1810.

Durham, December 19, 1809.

SIR,

HAVING been informed that you are desirous of a fuller account of the efficacy of the Oleum Terebinthinæ in expelling the tape-worm, and knowing no one, who, by his influence in the medical world, and his zeal for the improvement of medicine, is more likely to diffuse a knowledge of that remedy, I shall now lay before you a detail of all the information I have received, and of all that my own experience has taught me on the subject. You will make what use you please of the communication, as my only wish is to make the remedy generally known.

In the month of August last, I was told that Mr. John Hall, of this city, had been cured of the tape-worm by the use of *Oleum Terebinthinæ*, and had since administered it with success in several other cases ; and lost no time to procure a conference with him, when I received the following information.

He stated that about five years ago, when suffering severely from the tape-worm, he had met with a seafaring man, who said he had cured himself of the complaint by taking *Oleum Terebinthinæ*. He was induced (as he informed Mr. Hall) to try it, by observing that whenever he drank rather freely of gin, he always passed portions of the worm, and experienced relief ; which led him to hope, that if he could find some substance of the same nature as gin, but stronger, it might effectually cure him. Under this impression, he took (his ship being at that time in the Baltic) a wine glass full of *Oleum Terebinthinæ*. The consequence was, that about two hours afterwards he passed, with a purgative stool, an entire tape-worm ; from which time the complaint had not returned. Disappointed in all the remedies employed in regular practices, and encouraged by this statement, Mr. Hall took two or three ounces (for he was not at the trouble to measure it) of undiluted Oil of Turpentine in the morning fasting ; and as it did not operate in two hours, he had recourse to a second dose, amounting, as near as he could guess,

to $\frac{3}{4}$ of the first. In about an hour after, he had a purgative stool, and with it passed a tape-worm apparently not quite dead. The medicine produced giddiness, like that which follows the use of ardent spirits, a slight headach, and a tendency to sickness, but he felt no other inconvenience, and he has since continued well. Though I had no reason from Mr. Hall's character, to doubt the truth of his account, yet the extraordinary dose, in which the medicine was said to have been taken, determined me, before I ventured to employ it, to examine carefully, and apart, those inhabitants of this city, to whom he told me it had been successfully administered. As their account entirely confirmed his, I shall now give the outline of their cases.

1. — Greathead, aged 70, had been afflicted with the tape-worm above twenty years, during which time he had taken many remedies; and among others Madame Nuffer's, with temporary relief, but with no permanent advantage. He took Olei Terebinthinæ $\mathfrak{z}$ ii. undiluted, fasting; and in two hours after $\mathfrak{z}$ i. more. A tape-worm came away soon after in a dead state, and he has since experienced no return. This took place near three years ago. The medicine acted as a brisk purgative, and produced considerable sickness, but no other inconvenience.

2. Edward Dodd, Serjeant-major to the Durham

Volunteers, also took the *Oleum Terebinthinæ* rather more than two years ago. He had had the disease about fifteen years, and had tried Madame Nuffer's and other remedies in vain. In this case also, a second dose of ʒi . was given two hours after the first, as that did not affect the bowels. This, in less than an hour, was followed by the expulsion of a dead tape-worm, 15 feet long, which he had preserved and shewed me. He has had no return. Edward Dodd informed me, that he gave it to a young girl of 10 years of age, in the dose of ʒi . with complete success.

3. Robson, shoemaker, aged 45, took the *Oleum Terebinthinæ* two years ago after breakfast with considerable relief; but his complaint returning in about six weeks, he next took it in the usual dose, and fasting. He did not attend to the nature of what passed, except so far as to observe that there were numerous portions of worm; but he has since been free from all complaint. This patient having drunk some malt liquor in the evening before the action of the medicine had ceased, was seized with such violent vomiting and diarrhœa as greatly alarmed his family. He did not remark that the liquor was hard, stale, or otherwise bad in its quality.

Besides these, five other cases were mentioned to me by Mr. Hall; but as I had not an opportunity to examine the patients, I do not notice them here.

Conceiving myself now fully justified in trying the remedy, I recommended it to Francis Coward of this city, butcher. He had laboured under the disease for several years, and was much emaciated. The medicine was administered by Mr. Clifton, surgeon, on the morning of August 8th. The first dose of ʒii. not affecting the bowels, in two hours ʒi. more was given, and in about half an hour after, an entire tape-worm, measuring $14\frac{1}{2}$ feet, came away dead. Soon after taking the first dose, when I saw him, he complained of giddiness and tendency to sickness. Neither his pulse nor the heat of his skin were affected by it. It operated briskly after the second dose, and produced great sickness in the evening; but he had no strangury or heat in passing urine, or other inconvenience, and was cheerful and at work early the next day. Dr. Southey saw this patient as well as Mr. Clifton and myself. Within the last three weeks the disease has returned, and he will shortly again take the remedy.

The second patient to whom I recommended the *Oleum Terebinthinæ*, was Anne Lumsden, aged 20. She took *Olei Terebinthinæ* ʒii. undiluted on the 23d of August, and that dose not operating in two hours, she had ʒi. more. Near another hour passed before she had a motion, and the first being scanty and nearly natural, and without any portion of worm, she took a third dose of the same strength as the second. The medicine then ope-

rated briskly, bringing away a large quantity of worms broken into small portions, with what had the appearance of skins and much mucus. I saw her on the 13th instant, and she had not since felt any symptom of the disease. This patient was seen by Mr. Clifton also.

The third case was that of Welford, shoemaker, aged 19. He had before twice taken the *Oleum Terebinthinæ*. After the first trial, he remained free from all complaint for near six months; after the second not quite so long; with both a great quantity of worm had been passed. He took the medicine August 25th, and passed several portions of worm, the operation of the *Oleum Terebinthinæ* being that of a severe purgative, and producing considerable sickness; but as he felt quite well the next day, and the effect had not been quite satisfactory, I advised Mr. Clifton again to give it to him on the 27th of August. He accordingly did so; with this dose however no tape-worm passed, but only a very large dead *Lumbricus*. During the month of November, he again had evidence of the presence of a tape-worm, upon which he had once more recourse to the *Oleum Terebinthinæ*, which brought away an entire tape-worm, which was dead when it passed. I saw it in Mr. Clifton's possession. I shall now offer a few observations.

From the general failure of purgative medicines in this disease, and from the circumstance of all

the worms being dead when they passed (except *perhaps* in Mr. Hall's case) we may safely conclude, that besides its purgative quality, the Oleum Terebinthinæ is really poisonous to the Tænia. But although destructive to the worms present, we have evidence in the cases of Welford and Coward, that it does not remove the tendency to generate those animals. This is yet a desideratum. From Welford's case there seems reason to hope, that Oleum Terebinthinæ will be found useful against the Lumbricus, and I am disposed to try it, in the form of injection, against Ascarides also.

After the evidence adduced, it is unnecessary to dwell upon the safety of these large doses of Oleum Terebinthinæ; I will therefore only observe that, when exhibited, its quick action on the bowels prevents its absorption, and accordingly we find in these cases, no complaint of those affections of the urinary passages, which have arisen from much smaller doses. As to the mode of exhibition, my directions have been, to take either no supper, or a very light one the night before; to abstain from all food or liquid till the medicine has operated twice or thrice, or a worm has passed; then to dilute freely, and through the day to avoid spirituous or fermented liquors.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient servant,

J. R. FENWICK.