

Chorea and hysteria are, however, the nervous disorders in which bromide of camphor has been most extensively used, and with the best effects. Amongst the cases published on chorea are to be noted particularly those of Desnos, Gallard, des Brulais, and Petrovitz. In one case the patient, a child eleven years old, had been put with no result under the action of bark wine and of extract of belladonna (in doses of $\frac{1}{8}$ gr. to $1\frac{1}{8}$ gr. a day. Bromide of camphor, in the form of Dr. Clin's dragées, was administered in increasing doses of from one to eight a day. At the end of a week the improvement was manifest, and after twelve days all the symptoms had disappeared.*

As regards the phenomena of hysteria, Riemer speaks of bromide of camphor with praise in reference to a case of hysterical excitement. Bourneville also mentions the successful use of the drug in cases of epileptic delirium in females to whom he administered the bromide in enemata containing from fifteen to sixty grains of the remedy, or in the shape of Clin's capsules of camphor. Tommasi has noted good effects in a case of hysteria with genital erethism, and Hammond in a case of chronic hysteria. Dr. Pathault has collected in his inaugural thesis, published in Paris last year, a number of cases communicated by Professors Vulpian, Lorain, and Potain, and Dr. Mathieu, all of which show the benefit afforded in hysteria by the methodical use of the drug. In a case recorded by Dr. Lepine, of Beaujon Hospital, a young hysterical girl, subject to fits of sometimes three hours' duration, and to whom a dose of more than one drachm of bromide of potassium was given in the twenty-four hours with no effect, got better under the daily use of five of Dr. Clin's capsules (fifteen grains of the bromide). Certain forms of neuralgia, dyspnoea of a nervous origin, and nervous palpitations, are said to have been also favourably affected by the use of the bromide.

Turning to another class of disease—namely, affections of the urino-genital organs—we find that in a case of vesical and anal tenesmus, dependent on peri-uterine phlegmon, Dr. Siredey, of Lariboisière Hospital, has recorded the successful employment of the bromide. "In cystitis of the neck of the bladder," writes Dr. Lannelongue, "the action of bromide of camphor speedily shows itself—1. When cystitis is painful, and the pain is not dependent on any organic lesion (neuralgic cystitis). 2. In cystitis of the neck, having a congestive cause, and connected with a vascular change of the neck. 3. The action is more marked when catarrh is mild, and when acute prostatitis is added to inflammation of the neck of the bladder. In a case of symptomatic priapism, recorded by Dr. Longuet in the *Progrès Médical*, bromide of camphor was employed with success. Dr. Petrovitz has recorded some very interesting cases of individuals affected with gonorrhoea, in whom painful erections were stopped by the use of capsules of bromide of camphor.

The above facts would seem to show that monobromide of camphor deserves a place in the therapeutics of nervous affections. The number of careful scientific observers who have sifted its merits and tried it clinically is already considerable. The counter-indications of the moderate and methodical use of the drug are few and self-evident, and the only serious drawback seems to reside in its pharmacological preparation. It is not easy to prepare it in the form of syrup, and for children the form of *dragées* appears the only convenient one. For adults, the form of capsules is preferable to all others; and the observations published in France refer to those of Dr. Clin, which are said to be very strictly dosed and convenient for administration.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.

At the meeting of Council on Thursday, amongst other business transacted, the resolution at the former meeting, altering the constitution of the Committee of Reference under the Conjoint Scheme, was rescinded.

* Petrovitz: Etude Clinique sur le Bromure de Camphre. Montpellier, 1875.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

ON THE USE OF SALICIN IN ACUTE RHEUMATISM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As Dr. MacLagan has again called attention to the use of salicin in acute rheumatism, will you allow me to make a few remarks on his communication?

During the past six months I have treated in this infirmary more than thirty cases of acute rheumatism of all degrees of severity, with salicin, salicylic acid, or its sodium salt. Many of these have been reported in your own columns, and two cases, ending fatally, in the *Medical Times and Gazette* a short time since.

First, with regard to the influence of the drug on cardiac complication. In two cases pericarditis ensued while the patient was under the influence of salicin, in the one case having taken from six to a hundred and twenty grains a day for four days, and in the other a hundred and eighty grains a day for three days; neither of the cases being of great severity in other respects.

Secondly, as to the influence of the treatment on recovery. The experience of four cases which proved fatal in spite of active treatment, both specific, by means of salicylic acid, symptomatic by means of quinine and cold baths, precludes me from indulging in the hope that we have entirely mastered this most distressing disease.

At the same time many cases of considerable severity have recovered with remarkable rapidity, and I do not doubt that we have in salicin and its congeners a most useful remedy.

With regard to the comparative merits of salicin and the acid, the former is the more pleasant to take, though it occasionally disagrees, but its high price is some objection to its use in hospital practice. The quantity required, moreover, is larger than that of the acid.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

FRNEST H. JACOB, M.B.,
Resident Physician, Leeds Infirmary.

October 31st, 1876.

SPLENOTOMY.—TREATMENT OF THE INSANE IN AMERICA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In recording, in your issue of the 23rd ult., the Paris case of Splenotomy of last April, you say: "This brings the total number of operations of this kind upon record up to six, two having been performed by M. Péan, the remaining four, we believe, being due to MM. Küchler, Spencer Wells, and Koeberlé; but, strange to say, all have been unsuccessful except the two due to the Parisian surgeon." I beg leave to add to this list three cases (though one is doubtful) recorded by Professor Flint in his "Practice." Writing of splenotomy, he says that "the first case was in Naples in 1549; the operation was by Zaccarelli, and the patient recovered. The authenticity of this case is, perhaps, open to distrust. The second was in Germany, in 1826, Quittenbaum operating. Death followed in six hours." Flint refers to an article by Samuel Wilks in Guy's Hospital Reports, vol. xi., 1865, also to *London Medical Times and Gazette*, January, 1866, and to *New York Medical Journal*, May, 1866. Flint also records an American case in which about two-thirds of the spleen was removed which was protruding from an orifice made by a bullet. The operation was done by Dr. Alston, of Texas, in 1861. Dr. A. says that "the stump which remained plugged up the bullet-hole. No suppuration ensued, and he got well without a bad symptom."

I am glad that you have exposed so well in THE LANCET the abuses—if I may not say atrocities—of some American insane asylums. There are too few attendants in our asylums, and many of them, both by nature and nurture, are wholly unfit for their service. It was, if it is not now, a common custom at one, at least, of our Massachusetts asylums for attendants to put their patients into strait-jackets, so that they themselves might have an evening's