

it. I am anxious to impress upon you that it will take place independently of mercury, because one may condemn practitioners who have gone before us, and think they have given too much mercury, but there is no reason to say that the affection is unquestionably and necessarily dependent on mercury, and it undoubtedly may occur when not a grain of mercury has been given.

---

### OBSTRUCTION IN THE BOWELS.

---

FORCIBLE INJECTIONS OF WARM WATER—  
TOBACCO SMOKE.

---

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As I consider the principal object of your publication, next to private profit, to be the enhancement of practical knowledge in the treatment of disease (although I grieve to observe a work dedicated to science, polluted by such frequent personalities), I offer no apology for attracting the attention of your readers to the subject of that formidable and fatal disease—obstruction of the bowels.

Another case has lately presented itself to me, so demonstrative of the efficacy of continued and somewhat forcible injection of warm water and soap, or warm thin gruel, by means of Read's injecting syringe, that I consider it deserving of publication. The subject of the case was a young man whose bowels had been confined several days, during which all the usual methods of treatment had been tried. Purgatives of different kinds had been given, and clysters, common and medicated, had been administered; the stomach, however, had become so irritable, that whatever was swallowed was soon afterwards rejected, and the clysters came away "unmixed with baser matter."

The abdomen was distended, and painful on pressure, and nothing but a fatal termination was anticipated. Unwilling to irritate the stomach by more liquids, I directed a pill to be given, composed of two drops of croton oil and two of hydrocyanic acid mixed up with liquorice powder,—soon afterwards, large quantities of warm water and soap to be forcibly and assiduously injected *per anum*, introducing the flexible tube gently, and as far as it could be insinuated without giving pain. Without troubling you with an unnecessary detail, suffice it to add that this plan of treatment very soon succeeded—very little pain was suffered, the bowels were copiously and satisfactorily relieved, and the patient is nearly well.

This practice was equally successful

under my direction in the case of a young lady of very delicate constitution, in which all the usual remedies had been tried in vain; liquid quicksilver had been poured down, and although five medical men surrounded the bed, anxiety, grief, and despondency, held their melancholy triumvirate over the family. I, nevertheless, directed the immediate and forcible injection of warm water as above; and after large quantities had been thrown up with unceasing assiduity, the patient complained of severe pain midway between the scrobiculus cordis and umbilicus, when, shortly after desisting from this operation, the warm water came away, followed by feces; the symptoms immediately subsided, and she rapidly recovered.

In some cases I have, of course, been disappointed, but the *post-mortem* examination has at least given me the satisfaction of ascertaining that art was unavailable (as in a case I published in a contemporary periodical). In others I have had signal success from the injection of tobacco smoke—an expedient, of which, in cases of obstructed bowels, the omission is almost criminal. As the stomach generally becomes extremely irritable, I have tranquillized it by a blister to the epigastrium, and by combining the hydrocyanic acid with the medicines I have prescribed, which will frequently at once arrest the vomiting.

I am well aware that there is nothing very original in what I have in this letter advanced; but as obstruction of the bowels is not uncommon, is generally obstinate, and frequently fatal, it may be as well to encourage perseverance in measures calculated to relieve, by the corroboration of testimony in their favour. I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.,

J. C. BADELEY, M.D.

Chelmsford, Dec. 12, 1832.

---

### LACERATION OF THE PERINÆUM SUCCESSFULLY TREATED BY SUTURE.

M. Roux has recently detailed to the Academy of Paris the particulars of a case of laceration of the perinæum and recto-vaginal inter-communication, in consequence of awkwardness in the use of the forceps. The case was treated by *suture*, and terminated successfully in about a month.

---

M. ALBERT'S PRIZE, for the essay on a natural classification of diseases, has been gained by Dr. Paget, author of the excellent essay on diseases of the heart which we recently noticed in THE LANCET.