

OBJECTIONS TO RELIANCE ON
SALT EMETICS
IN ALL STAGES OF
MALIGNANT CHOLERA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I hope the great importance of the subject will be a sufficient excuse for my again addressing you. In the last number of *THE LANCET* I find various communications on the treatment of the worst forms of cholera with salt emetics; and if the blaze of cures performed with that remedy had been shaded a little with an account of some cases in which it must inevitably fail, I do not know that I should have troubled you with this communication.

Soon after the disease broke out in England, I met Dr. Pidduck in consultation, and from the high testimony he bore to the use of salt as an emetic, I determined to give the remedy a fair trial, the result of which has been, that in twelve consecutive cases in which salt emetics were freely administered, where the operation was *most complete*, and the remedies were repeated two, three, and four times, and even oftener, after the cases became hopeless, under my own immediate inspection, nine died in the cold stage, and three ran into a lingering consecutive fever and died. I could have accounted for the discrepancy between my cases and the eleven consecutive cases of recovery treated by Mr. Beaman, if that gentleman had not stated the treatment to be applicable to "cholera in its *worst* form," and implying that his cases were in that condition of the disease.

I sent you a short account of some cases too late for insertion in last week's *LANCET*; and I again repeat, that although I know of no better remedy than a salt emetic in the *worst form* of this disease, I have not the least faith in such remedy; for I have seen it fail, most decidedly fail: nor have I observed, as Mr. Beaman states, "that on the following day the patient generally passes a small fecal evacuation, containing bile." On the contrary, I have usually observed that no water is passed during the first 48 hours, sometimes much longer, and that while gruelly motions continued passing generally two, three, or four days.

In justice to the gentlemen who attend at the St. Giles's Cholera Hospital, and who are a little aspersed by Dr. Todd in *THE LANCET* of last week, I take leave to say, that if the cases admitted there are

such as I have usually seen in cholera hospitals and poor-houses,—aged, diseased, and labouring under the "worst form of the disease,"—much credit is due to those gentlemen in being able to save two patients out of fifteen. The pain of witnessing the death of so many infirm beings, without the power of affording relief, is surely quite sufficient without an accusation from a medical brother that in all probability lives were lost from an obstinate adherence to preconceived opinions, or a more culpable and guilty determination not to avail themselves of a simple and efficacious remedy to which their attention had long ago been directed. Let those who cure cholera when it has seized on an aged, worn-out, abused, constitution (as I will venture to say thirteen out of fifteen are, of the patients admitted into St. Giles's Cholera Hospital), who is seen for the first time in the blue, pulseless, frigid state, and who will be found to have laboured forty-eight hours under a violent attack of premonitory diarrhœa, with salt emetics, give publicity to the details of half-a-dozen cases in the pages of your journal. If medical men would oftener communicate the unsuccessful results of different remedies, many a rock, which others look to as a secure resting-place, would be avoided, and much valuable practical information would be recorded.

I am, sir, your faithful servant,

FRANCIS GODRICH.

Little Chelsea, Sept. 5th, 1834.

PRODUCTION OF CHOLERA
BY RICE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The following facts, which were this morning communicated to me by Mrs. Smythe, I beg leave to send for publication in *THE LANCET*.

Mrs. Smythe, a lady of high respectability, living in the Strand, communicated to me on September the 6th, 1834, the following facts:—In the summer of 1832, half an hour after partaking of rice soup, which was composed of rice, water, and turnip, she was seized with most violent pains of the stomach and bowels, attended by all the symptoms of cholera. Another lady, who was in the house at the same time, likewise partook of the soup, and she was also affected precisely in a similar manner. Both patients recovered in consequence of prompt medical assistance. The quantity of soup swallowed by Mrs. Smythe did not exceed half a pint.

About a fortnight afterwards, Mrs. Smythe, not suspecting the rice to have been the cause of her sickness, again partook of rice soup, made of the same ingredients, and was a second time affected with symptoms of the same description; and since that time, under any circumstances, she has not made use of *rice* for food.

Mrs. Smythe has authorized me to say, that she is convinced it was the rice which made her ill, and that the other lady, who is since dead, was of the same opinion. Mrs. Smythe has also authorized me to state, that she is ready to declare the above facts and this conviction, before any person, and at any time. She ate the rice in London. The grain was broken and small, and had the appearance of having been exposed to water.

The description of grain alluded to by the lady above named, is at this moment exposed for sale throughout London at the rate of twopence per pound. A statement of the above facts, certified with her name, is in my possession, and can be seen by any of your readers who may be desirous of examining them. I beg to remain, Sir, your most obedient servant,

R. TYTLER, M.D.

London, September 6th, 1834.

PHRENOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF PARIS.

President, M. ANDRAL.

Annual Meeting, August 22, 1834.

HYDROCEPHALUS—CRIMINALS—BENEVO-
LENT PERSONS—ORGAN OF RAPE—MU-
SICAL TALENT—HEAD OF NAPOLEON.

THE expectation of a discourse, *ex cathedra*, on the head of Napoleon Bonaparte, assembled a numerous collection of phrenologists at the annual meeting of the Society at the *Hotel de Ville*. Unfortunately, M. Froissac, who was charged with the duty, was prevented from appearing. M. Dumoutier, who undertook to supply his place, had not sufficient time to make the researches necessary for a complete investigation of the subject. The meeting, however, on the whole, was so interesting as to induce us to lay a report of it before our readers.

THE PRESIDENT (the celebrated M. Andral) opened the meeting by a short review of what had already been done in phrenology, and pointed out what still remained to be done, in order that many principles laid down by the science should obtain the authority of facts. As to the

basis of phrenology, that is to say, the relation which exists between the configuration of the skull and the different moral and intellectual faculties of man, M. Andral showed that it was supported by so many strong presumptions as nearly to merit the rank of a certainty.

M. CASIMIR BROUSSAIS, as secretary of the Society, was charged with the duty of giving an account of the labours of the Society since the last public meeting. He commenced by observing, that the time when a doctrine required the greatest number of proofs, was that when its enemies showed themselves most active in attacking it. During the year which had just passed, the Society had collected a certain number of facts which served to confirm it in the belief of the opinions it had always advocated. After a few other observations, M. BROUSSAIS proceeded to pass in review about 20 heads which had been examined phrenologically, and exhibited plaster casts of each. The first head exhibited was that of a child eleven years of age, affected with hydrocephalus. This disease does not of necessity exclude all intelligence; but in order that the individual affected should preserve his mental faculties, it is indispensable that the volume of the head assume an increased development, proportionate to the quantity of fluid contained in the skull: by this means the effects of pressure are counteracted, and the functions of the brain, though in general more or less altered, may remain with some degree of activity for a considerable time. But in the case to which M. Broussais directed the attention of the meeting it was quite different; the skull in fact was two or three times smaller than natural, instead of being enlarged: hence the substance of the brain was reduced to a mere nothing, and the child, as a necessary consequence, was a complete idiot. M. Broussais next showed two brains taken from the dog species; one the brain of a spaniel bitch which was remarkable for her intelligence, the other taken from one of her pups, the only one of a whole litter which was totally inapt to receive any education. The speaker pointed out the striking difference of proportion between the two brains, and particularly the absence of *educability* in the grown pup, while the organ was very prominent in the mother. Passing to an examination of the heads of individuals whose lives had been stained by crime, &c., M. Broussais indicated the incontestable predominance of those regions allotted by phrenologists to the passions and instincts, at the expense of those where the intellectual faculties and sentiments are situated. Thus, in the head of Lemaine (who lately assas-