

muscular pain, almost immediately, provided it does not depend on structural disease. Requesting you to take a note of these facts and assertions, and of their date, I remain, your obedient servant,

A. B. GRANVILLE, M.D.

Grafton-street, Oct. 22, 1838.

TARTAR EMETIC IN SPASMODIC CHOLERA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—From frequent opportunities of witnessing the beneficial effects of tartar emetic in some forms of delirium tremens, more especially those in which vomiting and a relaxed state of the bowels exist, I was induced to try its influence in spasmodic cholera: the result, in several cases, has been such as to render it worthy of more extensive trial. Those who are in the habit of relying upon calomel and opium as their sheet-anchor in this disease, will have, in the majority of cases, to lament the obstinacy of the vomiting by which, almost as soon as given, every dose will be rejected, and thus the disease go on to a fatal termination; but the speedy manner in which the most severe action of the stomach is arrested and subdued by tartrate of antimony, constitutes the chief peculiarities in its use. When in London, during the epidemic of 1832, I had the most extensive opportunities of trying calomel and opium, in large as well as small doses, both alone and combined with each other; but with it, as with other plans then practised, the results in the greater number of cases were highly unsatisfactory. Since that period the occurrence of the disease has not been so frequent as to render my experience extensive in the remedy I now propose; I however, beg to subjoin the two following cases:—

CASE 1.—J. H., æt. 56, of inactive habits, had, for a few days, complained of slight twitching pain in the bowels, with shivering and nausea. On the 29th October, 1837, at 9 A.M., I was called to visit him; he had then been vomiting every 10 or 15 minutes for some hours; frequent dejections, like rice and water; severe muscular spasms, in upper and lower extremities; loss of voice; skin livid and contracted; cold, clammy, perspiration of the face, chest, and hands; no pulse perceptible at the wrist; slight epigastric tenderness; pulsation of abdominal aorta labouring; most anxious expression of the countenance, and, to all appearance, as if the vital powers were rapidly sinking; tongue cold and moist. Ordered to have frictions to the body, mustard plasters to the legs and feet, a large blister over the epigastrium.

Tartarised antimony, viii. grains;

Calomel, xx. grains;

Opium, xii. grains. Eight pills; one every hour.

Carbonate of soda, ii. drachms;

Aromat. confection, i. drachm;

Peppermint water, viii. ounces. Two teaspoonfuls every second hour.

2. P.M. Has not vomited for more than an hour; surface more natural; pulse perceptible, but feeble; cramps less frequent; stools as frequent as before; has not evacuated the bladder since yesterday. Continue remedies.

8. P.M. Has vomited twice since last visit, in both instances after taking the mixture; appearance improved; complains of no pain, except from the mustard plasters having produced vesications; reaction becoming established; pulse 110; has had four stools, the last having a greenish hue. The catheter was introduced, and about half a pint of urine removed. Discontinue mixture, and omit the pill to every four hours. To have beef-tea, &c., in small quantities frequently.

30, 9 A.M. Has slept frequently during the night; says he feels very low, but free from pain; in every respect better. Omit the pills. From this time he continued to improve rapidly, although the retention of urine remained for several days.

CASE 2.—H. W., æt. 40, having a child at breast 14 months' old, has been frequently the subject of disease; bowels had been somewhat irregular for three or four days, but on Thursday, the 20th September, 1838, had vomited and been purged frequently. About 2 o'clock A.M., on Friday, she became considerably worse, and at 8, A.M., I was sent for. She was then in a most severe state of collapse; the whole surface of the body was livid; the features contracted, and indicative of extreme suffering; the tongue blanched and cold; a clammy perspiration about the hands, which, together with the breath, has the sickly odour so peculiar to this disease; cramps in both upper and lower extremities very severe; the voice was gone to a mere whisper, except at such times as the spasms were almost intolerable, when the articulation broke forth in a painful whine. She was vomiting every quarter of an hour a transparent fluid of a greenish hue, and had rice-water dejections every half-hour; no urine had been evacuated the afternoon of previous day. Pulse 100, almost imperceptible. A large blister to be applied over the epigastrium; turpentine embrocation, with friction to the extremities.

Tartarised antimony, vi. grains;

Calomel, xxiv. grains;

Opium, viii. grains. Eight pills, one every hour.

Liquor of acet. of ammonia, 1½ ounces;

Aromat. spirit of ammonia, i. drachm;

Spirit of nitrous ether, ii. drachms. Two spoonfuls every second hour.

2. P.M. She vomited after the first pill and twice since, in both instances after swallowing the mixture (ordered to be discontinued); has had three stools of a like character to the last; appearance somewhat better; pulse 120, very feeble; cramps not so frequent. Continue pills. To have small quantities of sage or arrow-root.

10. P.M. Pulse as quick as before, but stronger; has only vomited once since last visit; feels very much exhausted; no tenderness or distension over the hypogastrium; has parted with two dejections, but no urine; temperature of the surface nearly natural. Omit the pill to every three hours.

22, 10. A.M. Has slept a little during the night; no pain, no vomiting; has had three stools, the last about a pint of nearly transparent serum, with a precipitation like boiled rice, and precisely the colour of the acetas cupri; countenance improved. Discontinue pills. To have beef-tea, &c.

9. P.M. Having passed no urine, I introduced the catheter and drew off about eight ounces of turbid urine, of a very pungent odour; pulse continues quick, but regular.

Carbon. of soda, ii. drachms;

Hydrocyan. acid, viii. drops;

Acet. of morph. $\frac{1}{2}$ grain;

Peppermint water, viii. oz. Two spoonful every third hour.

23. Has had three or four evacuations, tinged with bile; pulse 110; very thirsty; in other respects better. She continued to improve slowly but steadily; the inability to expel the contents of the bladder required the use of the catheter for a day or two, and on Oct. 2nd she was quite convalescent.

Dr. Graves of Dublin, in explaining the *modus operandi* of tart. emet. in delirium tremens, attributes to it narcotic effects, and in looking over vol. 2, 1835-6, of THE LANCET, for his remarks, I find a communication from Mr. Wm. Greenwood, of Kendal (which I had not previously seen), who details a case illustrative of such effects in a very striking degree. Whether, with those gentlemen, we should consider it to be a narcotic, or, with Tomassini and others, a counter-stimulant, it is not my intention here to inquire; but having laid these *facts* before the profession, I leave it to the reflection of all unprejudiced practitioners, either to adopt or reject a remedy which, so far as I have observed, possesses considerable power in arresting the symptoms of an hitherto almost uncontrollable disease. I am, Sir, your very obedient servant,

G. FEARNLEY, M.D., M.R.C.S.L. & E.

Church-street, Dewsbury,

Oct. 12, 1838.

THE LANCET.

London, Saturday, October 27, 1838.

IF the English lunatic asylums have not been forgotten during the last twelve years they have been greatly neglected. Since the Parliamentary Committees sat in 1807, 1815, 1816, and 1826, notwithstanding the disclosures then made, general attention has never been fairly directed to these institutions, or to the inefficiency of the public boards of inspection and regulation. This is greatly to be deplored; no branch of medical police is of greater importance to the public, or more interesting to the medical practitioner, who may be called upon to give advice, or evidence, on any day in the year, and should always be prepared to do his duty. We shall, therefore, rapidly examine the state, the effects, the abuses, the laws, and the public management, of asylums for the insane.

The subject is uninviting. Intellect is so much the essence of human nature, that men deprived of reason seem to forfeit all claim to fraternal sympathy. Sensitive persons turn away with instinctive abhorrence from the manifestation of headlong passions, exaggerated pretensions, weakness, wickedness, folly,—in a word, from INSANITY, in all its multitudinous forms: for it is, as it were, the corruption of the mind, passing from the Divine image to apathy and death. It was beautiful in its workings—that brain—and will be ashes, but madness is horrible. This consideration enables us to understand the treatment which lunatics receive among savages, and the wretched sufferings to which they have been doomed in prisons and asylums in England. The life is *extinguished* by the savage,—it is allowed to *waste away*, in isolation, and dens, and chains, in England. And what has civilisation to object to these practices? What, it may be asked, after PLATO, has society to gain by the protracted existence of lunatics? What, in England, too, where population,