

THE "MARSHALL HALL METHOD" IN THE TREATMENT OF ASPHYXIA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Should you consider the enclosed communication, with remarks, on a case of recovery from suspended animation, of sufficient professional interest, I shall feel obliged by its publication:—

On Saturday, the 10th of October, a young man named Kanes, aged eighteen, in the employ of a fishmonger of Southampton, in the act of going on board the *Australasian* steamer, missed his footing and fell overboard. An alarm was immediately given, when Bombardier Connor, about to sail with his company for India, hearing that a man had fallen overboard, stripped himself of his clothes, and jumped into the water to the rescue of the drowning man. He dived after him three times in the water about the ship, and was at last obliged to abandon his praiseworthy efforts. R. Russell, dock-headman, was immediately dispatched to procure the grappling-irons; and on his arrival alongside the vessel, made two other unsuccessful attempts to seize the body. Joseph Fryer, foreman to the dock company, subsequently made two hauls from stem to stern of the steamer, and his exertions proved also of no avail. Failing in their efforts to discover the body, Russell was let down into the pilot's boat, a distance of twelve feet, by means of a rope, and then made one haul with the irons from the stern to the stem of the ship, and was again unsuccessful. He lastly made another haul from stem to stern, and succeeded in finding the body. Kanes was now lifted into the boat, a rope was lowered from the ship, to which his body was secured; he was then hauled up to the quay, and finally taken on board the steamer and deposited in the galley, where his clothes were removed and exchanged for hot blankets.

The company's superintendent states most positively, that the body was *completely submerged* for a period of *ten minutes* and his statement is further confirmed by Russell, Fryer, and several of the bystanders. The above details may appear somewhat prolix; but they are given with a view to establish, in the most unequivocal manner, the calculation of time occupied in discovering and finally landing the body. Medical assistance was sent for in every direction, and the first person who arrived was Mr. M'Cowan, the surgeon of the ship, quickly followed by Mr. Thurston, surgeon to the *Orinoco*, and myself. The first step in our proceedings, on the suggestion of Mr. Thurston, was to remove the body from the galley (or kitchen) of the vessel to an open space in the ship, where there was a free current of air; the position of the patient was changed from supination, and he was placed on his face, his wrist being carried upwards, as directed by Dr. Marshall Hall, and placed under the forehead. Pressure was now made along the course of the spine and thorax, with a view to induce expiration; the pressure was then removed, and its removal was followed by slight inspiration after the lapse of about *forty minutes*. The weight of the body was then removed from the thorax and abdomen by gently turning it on its side, and a little beyond. These movements were again and again performed, about sixteen times in the minute, and every other remedial measure adopted as suggested and laid down by the distinguished authority above quoted. After the lapse of one hour and a quarter, we imagined that there was a slight movement of the ribs. We still persevered, adding to our prone and postural treatment, the free inhalation of ammonia, when, after a further continuance of our unceasing efforts, we observed that the ribs moved naturally, that the carotids pulsated, the nostrils expanded, the heart performed its ordinary functions—in a word, that after *five hours'* persevering efforts, the patient was enabled, without artificial assistance, to perform the ordinary functions of respiration. During the whole period of our treatment, the pupils remained fixed and dilated, and we were constantly reminded of the imperative necessity of continuing without intermission the means to keep up artificial respiration, as the patient relapsed into a comatose condition, on ceasing for half a minute only, the systematic movements of expiration and inspiration.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Southampton, October, 1857. JOHN WIBLIN, F.R.C.S.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Should you consider the following case worthy a place in your columns, I shall feel obliged by its insertion.

I was recently called to attend Mrs. Y—, then in labour, in Old Compton-street. On arriving, I found her on her hands and knees upon the bed, the legs and part of the

body of the child hanging suspended through the vagina. For about five minutes before I got there (according to the nurse's calculation) pulsation in the cord had ceased, and the parts already in the world were cold and flaccid. I immediately brought down the arms, and in about three minutes the head followed, the child, to all appearance, being quite dead. I at once commenced the Ready Method recommended by the late Dr. Marshall Hall, and in twelve minutes heard a kind of whining or moaning noise, which encouraged me to continue, and in about three minutes more followed an inspiration. At the end of twenty-five minutes the child made a faint cry, when two or three slaps on the nates made it cry out lustily, and respiration was established. The child is now living and doing well.

This being the first successful case out of three within the last two months, I thought it would not be out of place to make the same known in your widely-circulated journal.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Berwick-street, Oct. 1857. JAS. HADAWAY, M.R.C.S., &c.

CHAMPAGNE IN SEA-SICKNESS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Having read in some late numbers of your journal a few letters on the treatment of sea-sickness, in most of which chloroform is stated to be a never-failing remedy, allow me to say, that when surgeon to a large passenger-steamer, in 1855, I was at first in the habit of giving five drops of chloroform in a wineglass of cold brandy-and-water; but though it certainly superseded all other previous remedies (such as kreasote, prussic acid, &c.), I sometimes found it fail, especially with ladies, some of whom would not take it at all on account of its ethereal smell; in such cases, and in all when it was easily obtainable, I gave champagne (a glass every half hour), a few glasses of which invariably succeeded in allaying the distressing nausea; and, from its being an agreeable draught, it was always readily taken.

I may add that I have found champagne and chloroform very efficacious in relieving the sickness and cramps of cholera; and I have heard that champagne was a remedy much used at Corfu when the cholera last raged there; perhaps some of our military surgeons who served there will kindly tell us with what result.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Montpelier-road, Brighton, RAVENHILL PEARCE, M.D.
October, 1857.

COMMISSIONERS IN LUNACY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—When your correspondent, "Cimmerian Darkness" adopted his *nom de guerre*, he did so with a profound knowledge of his own condition. Let me adapt a few lines to him:

"Night, sable Goddess! from her ebon throne,
In rayless majesty, has stretched forth
Her leaden sceptre o'er his slumbering soul.
Reason, how dead! and darkness, how profound!"

Of all the irritating things I know, Sir, it is the most irritating to see or hear anyone impute to you what you have neither said nor implied. I did not say that *because* all medical superintendents are not well qualified to discharge the duties of a commissioner in lunacy, *therefore* it is right to appoint to that office a man who knows nothing practically of the management of lunatic asylums. I simply said, what no man in his senses can deny, that resident superintendents could not *all* be the *best* persons to appoint to lunacy commissionerships, and that there *might* be other persons, such as Dr. Cox, well fitted for the duties. Nothing but "Cimmerian darkness," or wilful perverseness, could have extracted out of my words an abortive syllogism so puerile as that your correspondent has incubated for me. The truth I desired to suggest to such of your readers as did not lie in "Cimmerian darkness" was, that however much previous acquaintance with the details of practical management might qualify for the office of commissioner in lunacy, there was still another element of fitness—which being absent no amount of knowledge of detail would compensate, and being present would amply replace it—I desired to protest against a doctrine which certain persons are endeavouring to cram down the throats of the public—viz., that superintendents, as a rule, ought to be promoted to commissionerships. In endeavouring to do this without circumlocution I have been not only misunderstood—for which I do not care a fig, but also misrepresented, which is "very tolerable, and not to be endured."