

the caries faces the adjacent tooth, it obviates the necessity of extraction in all cases of hollow teeth, which all practitioners declare to be desirable, if possible; and it enables the dentist to perform the operation of 'stopping or filling the teeth,' much sooner than he can otherwise accomplish. In a word, it will alleviate a vast deal of human suffering, and supersede a most painful operation. It is not a panacea for all the diseases of the teeth and gums, though a certain and efficacious remedy for the most common causes of tooth-ache. It will be a valuable remedy for children, delicate persons, and pregnant women. It does not accelerate the decay of the tooth to which it is applied.

As the employment of this acid in the disease under notice is not recommended by any pharmacopœia, ancient or modern, of these or other countries with which I am acquainted, and as tooth-ache is now a most prevalent complaint, in consequence of the inclemency of the season, I think a more favorable opportunity cannot occur for the communication of the information described in this paper."

Lon. Med. and Surg. Jour.

III.

For the Boston Med. and Surg. Journal.

CASE MANIFESTING THE DECIDED EFFECT OF DRASTIC PURGATIVES IN THE CURE OF ASCITES AND ANASARCA.

By JOHN C. HOWARD, M.D.

PHILIP LUBECK, aged 30, a mariner, came under my care on the first of last July, at which time he was suffering from ascites, anasarca of the lower extremities, and

hydrocele; there was also great effusion in the cellular membrane of the scrotum and penis. So far as I could ascertain, his habits had been temperate. He had been taking, for some time previous, the usual hydragogues, and when he came under my charge was taking powders of the submuriate hydrarg. and pulv. scill. three or four times a day. The hydropic swelling was little if any diminished, and he was so very large that he could barely move himself. After pursuing this course for several days, without any perceptible amendment, I determined to try the effect of some strong drastic purgatives, and accordingly prescribed the following:—

R. Elaterii grs. ii.
Colocynth,
Gamboge,
Scammony,
Jalap, āā viii. grs.

M. ft. in pil. no. vi.,

all to be taken at a single dose; and to be followed, in the space of six hours, by a strong decoction of senna, with an ʒiiss. of sulphate of magnesia dissolved in it. These means procured very frequent and copious liquid dejections. The urine in quantity* was very scanty, and to stimulate the kidneys I directed olei junip. xx. gtt. three times a day in a solution of supertart. potass. which seemed to increase the quantity so much, that, from passing 3 iv. of urine in twenty-four hours, he in a few days passed over a pint. He had been in the habit of drinking, on an average, three quarts of liquid a day, a very small proportion of which

* The urine in this case coagulated on exposure to heat, which Bright, who has been a considerable experimenter, regards as indicative of diseased kidney.

was passed *per urethram*. I diminished this quantity, so that he drank less than a quart.

Finding no injury growing out of the large drastics administered, and seeing the decided improvement of all symptoms, I directed my students to add two grains of each medicine to the dose, and this to be followed by salts and senna as above mentioned; the additional two grains rather increased the liquid dejections, and, after three weeks, the abdomen was very evidently diminished, and in the space of a month entirely flat, as if no effusion had existed.

But there was another trouble. The swelled scrotum increased very much, and produced occasional severe pain from its immense size and great tension, so that it was deemed necessary to operate. I did so, and the symptoms were relieved. The legs too were enormous, so large that it was impossible to flex them; they were scarified in many places, and large quantities of water flowed off in this way. I will observe there was no ulceration about the scarifications, a condition which often comes on in such cases, but on the contrary a perfectly kind healing ensued. Finding considerable benefit from the diuretic properties of the oil of juniper, it was continued, increasing two drops until thirty-six were taken three times a day, when he passed over three pints of urine in twenty-four hours, the anasarca left the legs, the abdomen continued flat and natural, and the man was entirely relieved. — What is very astonishing, and would seem almost incredible, was the great power of constitution, that could bear such violent and long continued purgation, without sinking, and this too without any violence to the mucous coat of the intestines.

At the present time,—five weeks from the period of relief last mentioned,—he continues without any sign of effusion or tendency to it; has a great appetite; suffers little from debility; and takes no medicine.

Boston, November, 1831.

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BOSTON, NOVEMBER 29, 1831.

AN AFFLICTING CASE.

THE reader will probably recollect a brief notice we gave, a few weeks ago, of Dr. Grigg's chair for invalids. In consequence of that notice, we received a letter from a gentleman in Connecticut, detailing a most distressing case, and requesting our opinion of the applicability of the chair to the purposes of the afflicted writer. The letter was immediately sent to the ingenious inventor, whose note in reply, together with the letter itself, will be found below. The account of the case is drawn up with peculiar clearness and facility of expression, and we apprehend the use of the chair, some of the peculiarities of which are concisely enumerated by Dr. G., would prove eminently serviceable in promoting the ease and enjoyment of the patient.

Respecting the price of this apparatus, we should suppose it cheap. There is much about it of machinery that is costly and durable, and it should be remembered that it is not like a garment, to be worn out by the first purchaser, but *property* to enrich and comfort many successive proprietors.