

jerking of the muscles of the extremities, and tonic contraction of the dorsal and lumbar muscles, amounting to decided opisthotonos; abdomen tympanitic; pulse 110 and irregular. Prognosis, unfavorable. Advised, that if proper to do anything in such an extremity, stimulants should be given internally, and the most powerful counter-irritants applied along the spine and over the stomach and abdomen—brandy and milk, by the mouth and by enema, and sulphuric ether; all of which were assiduously applied, but without any good effect whatever, the patient expiring at a few minutes before noon, or in two hours after I saw him.

In conclusion allow me to make one or two remarks. I have little doubt that both these children might have been saved, had rational medical treatment been resorted to sufficiently early. Though there is no antidote that I am aware of, still the indications were sufficiently plain for any one to follow. Probably they used several varieties of the fungi. The specimen shown me by the father, and said to be like those used, resembles the *Agaricus Campestris*, which is said to be innocuous, but I believe it belongs to the section *Amanita*. It is somewhat singular that a poison capable of producing such fatal effects should not manifest itself sooner. The father and mother have both recovered, being but slightly affected. Another singular fact in regard to this genus of plants is, that the edible varieties become poisonous when they grow in low moist situations. It appears that the plant is a powerful irritant and acro-narcotic, and when used in a moderate degree is capable of producing those delightful impressions upon the nervous system so much courted by the debauchee. Pereira informs us that some of the inhabitants of North Eastern Asia use the fungi for producing intoxication, and that the fit of debauch is often prolonged by the subject of it drinking his urine, in a few hours after eating the plant. Also, that the intoxication can be transmitted through five individuals, the second drinking the urine of the first, the third that of the second, and so on.

Stillwater, Minnesota, August 7th, 1858.

BELLADONNA IN ARRESTING THE SECRETION OF MILK.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

MESSRS. EDITORS,—In the number of your JOURNAL for August 5, I noticed two communications upon the efficacy of the extract of belladonna in arresting the lacteal secretion, which hardly seem to present much positive proof—or at least *such* proof as is usually requisite to establish the efficacy of any drug.

Several months ago, I saw the suggestion in your JOURNAL, and since that time have used the extract of belladonna in four cases; in the first three it gave satisfactory results, but they were mild ones, and there was no reason to suppose that the secretion would

not have been arrested without medical interference. The fourth case was of a different nature, and one well calculated to test the efficiency of the remedy. Two months since, I was consulted by Mrs. F., on account of a "nursing sore mouth," and an inordinate lacteal secretion. I directed her to use a solution of chlorate of potash and saline purgatives, together with the external application of extract of belladonna, and the use of a nourishing diet. This treatment was continued for ten days. At the expiration of this time, as the mouth grew worse, resisting all remedial measures, and as her strength was failing rapidly, I advised the weaning of the child, and continued the use of the belladonna for two weeks longer, without any sensible diminution of the secretion. I then became convinced of the inutility of the drug in the case in question, which was one of well-marked "galactorrhœa."

Of all the cases in which I have used belladonna, the last seemed to be the only one suitable for testing its efficiency—as it is only in cases of such a nature that the aid of a physician is needed. In most cases of nursing women, little or no remedial treatment is required; and in those belladonna may be as efficacious as any other article in the Pharmacopœia, and my experience convinces me that it is no more so.

In the reports of Drs. Seyffarth and Harris there is nothing to show that their cases were those of genuine "galactorrhœa," or would not have yielded to the ordinary remedies; but in the case of Mrs. F., above cited, she had been under the care of a physician in an adjoining town, who had tried all the usual remedies, but without success.

I do not write in the spirit of a medical skeptic, on this point, but simply detail the effect of belladonna in my hands, as it is only by the collection and collation of facts that the science of medicine is to be advanced.

CHAS. H. SPRING, M.D.

Holyoke, Mass., Aug. 6th, 1858.

ON THE USE OF THE SPECULUM IN UTERINE DISEASES.

[AN esteemed correspondent, distinguished for his signal devotion to "rational medicine," and whose successful practice demonstrates his faithful appreciation of the combined powers of "Nature and Art in the cure of Disease," desires us to re-publish the following article, cited in *Braithwaite's Retrospect* for July last. Our friend has seen, he says, the abundant evils of the practice it condemns, in his own neighborhood.]

In the last volume of "Medico-Chirurgical Transactions," Dr. Lee published the details of eighty cases in which the speculum and caustic had been employed by other practitioners, which, with 220 cases previously published, make up 300. Upon the use of this instrument he remarks:—