

ON THE USE OF EUPATORIUM VILLOSUM AND NERVOSUM IN THE TREATMENT OF CHOLERA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A gentleman holding an official position in Jamaica, who is a frequent correspondent with the Royal Dublin Society, and a liberal contributor to its museum of natural history and botanic garden, has, in his recent communications, called my attention to a remarkable and, I believe, novel addition to the remedies used in the treatment of cholera. I may premise that his statements are confirmed by a friend, also holding a high official station in the island. The following is quoted from his letter:—

“I have put up a box of the bitter bush, *Eupatorium*, for this packet; and, should an opportunity offer, I hope it will be tested, as I am satisfied it will be found a safe and sure remedy in cholera. I have given it, with remarkable success, in every stage of the disease, even after collapse, and have not heard of a single death when the remedy has been administered in time, and persevered in. It is used by making a strong decoction by boiling about two drachms in a pint of water, and giving a small teacupful, cold, every half-hour until the symptoms abate. In severe cases it is given alternately with the saline powders recommended by the Board of Health. In simple diarrhoea, one dose is generally found sufficient. The first dose often produces vomiting; in such cases repeat the dose immediately. It is certainly a wonderful remedy, and the effect of it sometimes appears to be magical. I have used two species of it, which appear to be *Eupatorium Villosum* and *E. Nervosum*. That used in St. Ann's is, I believe, the *E. Rigidum*. We have several species here, all of which appear to possess the same active properties, but those I have named appear the best. The box I have sent contains the two species I have used; they are very similar, except that one (which I think the best, *E. Nervosum*,) is inodorous, and that the other possesses a strong fragrance, which we think to be *E. Villosum*. The *E. Odoratum* is also common here.”

It is right to state that the writer of the foregoing is not in the medical profession; still his observations on this plant should not, on that account, be disregarded. We know that several of the *Eupatoria* possess very active properties. Some are emetic and purgative, as our native *E. Cannabinum*; while others are powerfully astringent, or even styptic, as the *Matico E. Glutinosum*. Probably, the *E. Nervosum* and *E. Villosum*, and others whose efficacy has thus been stated in cholera, are powerfully astringent, and on that account may have a decided effect in restraining the choleraic diarrhoea, and thus give time for using the other remedies for restoring the heat and vital powers, which, from the continued drain of the fluid part of the blood, would otherwise inevitably end fatally.

Not having as yet received the box, I am unable to give any account of the drug from actual inspection.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

WM. EDWARD STULO, M.B.,

Royal Dublin Society,
Kildare-street,
July, 1854.

Assistant-Secretary to the Royal Dublin Society
Fellow and Registrar to the King's & Queen's
College of Physicians.

THE CHOLERA.

It becomes again our painful duty to record in a specific manner the increasing progress of malignant cholera, which is reappearing with considerable virulence in different parts of Great Britain, and in some cases assuming a character of great intensity and rapidity of symptoms. That we are partakers in the fatal influences of a simultaneously very widespread epidemic force, is clear from the ravages the disease is making in distant parts of the globe. We last week drew attention to its fatal effects at Barbadoes and the Mauritius, and now we may, *en passant*, remark, that a despatch from Genoa announces that, at Leghorn, Florence, and Naples, the disease is prevailing to a considerable extent; at the former city above 124 cases occurring in one day. Turin and its vicinity are as yet healthy.

In ENGLAND the disease has been very fatal in a colliery village called Trimdon, (in South Durham,) lying between the Ferryhill station of the York and Berwick railway and Hartle-

pool, during the past fortnight. Its outbreak was very sudden, and many of the cases are said to have occurred without any marked premonitory symptoms, and ended fatally very quickly. The principal portion of the village is situated on a hill, and is rather favourably placed for draining. The disease has been most fatal amongst the poorer and least prudent portion of the pitmen, though temperate, regular-living persons have fallen victims to it. On Sunday morning week, a Primitive Methodist local preacher conducted divine service in the chapel belonging to that denomination in the village; without any marked premonitory symptoms, he was seized with the disease at midnight, and was dead in four hours. There was one death on Monday, and the disease appears to be quite epidemic. Though surrounded by colliery villages, no cases have appeared in any of them but Trimdon, and it is thought, therefore, that the epidemic must have its origin in some unhealthy local condition not yet discovered. Great complaints have been made, arising out of the apparent negligence of the General Board of Health in London. Immediately upon the appearance of the cholera in a fatal form, Mr. Wood, the overseer of the colliery, wrote to the board, informing them of the circumstance. Down to Saturday night last no answer had been received to his communication. The cases had been attended to by Mr. Scott, the colliery surgeon; Mr. Gordon, his assistant; and Mr. Ruddock, the union surgeon. The colliery surgeons instituted a “house-to-house” visitation immediately on the appearance of the disease, and have continued it without intermission. The other parts of the county are reported to be healthy.

We regret to say that the cholera has also appeared in a virulent form, during the present week, in Canterbury; and that fatal cases have occurred at opposite points of the City. At Fulham, Kennington, Chelsea, Lambeth, Whetstone, Southwark, Limehouse, Stepney, and Romney, fatal instances have likewise been recorded.

The following account of its outbreak on board a troop-ship was received on Monday night by electric telegraph from Plymouth:—“The teak-built barque, *Lord Auckland*, which left Gravesend on the 25th ult., bound to Kurrachee, East Indies, having on board 186 men of the 10th, 24th, 60th, and 87th regiments, put into Plymouth this afternoon with twenty-seven ill of the cholera. One private of the 24th, and two of the 87th, have died since leaving. It was deemed advisable to bear up for this port on Friday evening. The *Lord Auckland* is an old ship, and the breaking out of the fatal disease is attributed in part to bad ventilation. The authorities here have sent a hulk into the Sound to receive the cholera patients; five are now dangerously ill.”

In IRELAND the disease has also had its victims, as the *Belfast Banner*, of a few days back, states that twenty-four cases of cholera have occurred since that day week, and that the disease has assumed a very aggravated character, and proved unusually fatal. The home of the disease is, as hitherto, the ill-ventilated and filthy alleys of the town.

As regards SCOTLAND, we extract the following from the *Edinburgh Witness*:—“We have to announce the occurrence of two deaths from this disease in the course of last week, although we are happy to believe they may be considered sporadic. The parties were Mr. Livingstone, of Danube street, and a son of about four years of age. Mr. Livingstone had gone to attend the funeral of his mother in Wishaw, who had died of cholera. On his return home on Tuesday, he felt a little out of order, and took some medicine, but did not call in a medical man till Thursday, by which time all the symptoms of cholera had set in. He died on Friday morning. His boy took ill in the course of the week, and died on Saturday of the same disease.”

According to the *Alloa Advertiser*, the pestilence has shown itself in Coalsnaughton, in the immediate vicinity of Alloa. Two cases occurred on Saturday week, and one on Monday, all three terminating fatally within less than twelve hours' illness.

An interesting question connected with the pathology of cholera is that of its relation to the lower animals. Contemporaneous with the prevalence of the disease in different districts and towns of India and Europe, certain partial or distinctly localized epizootics have been observed, and believed by many to be examples of cholera in the lower animals.* But in reference to the majority of the examples which have been collected together of local epizootic disease, more or less coincident with and resembling cholera, the authority we have referred to below remarks, that it unfortunately happens that neither the symptoms nor the post-mortem appearances have been made the subject of accurate medical investigation. We

* See an able paper on the subject, by Mr. Marshall, in the eleventh volume of the British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review.