

other to ride into power upon the suggestions of his brother, without giving him credit for it. We are led to these remarks from noticing in your weekly edition of the 16th inst., an extract from a letter in the Charleston Medical Review, conferring upon M. Briquet the honor, we infer, of curing rheumatism combined with cardiac disease, by full doses of quinine. If it was the design of the writer to create the impression that M. Briquet was the author, or that the treatment was even *novel*, we beg him to be undeceived. If the writer will look into Dr. Reese's Gazette for 1850 or 51 (we speak from memory), he will find a case recorded of the successful management of rheumatism by full doses of quinine, with its suggestion in cardiac disease incident to rheumatism. We laid no claim to the discovery of the remedy; we were the first, we believe, to report it in this country, and we are the last man to permit another to steal "*our thunder*," or bear off our laurels, before our eyes, however unimportant they may be. The first patient we cured and reported for Dr. Reese is alive yet, and living not many miles from us, and can easily be found to testify to the cure. We recollect, not many years ago, Velpeau received great praise for suggesting *copperas water* in erysipelas, when actually every old woman in the South had used it years before he ever thought of it. We say this in no disparagement to the great Parisian, whose genius we admire, and whose ability it would be the height of folly for any man to deny. But it is a fact which cannot be too strongly and forcibly reprobated, that European physicians often secure renown for things which do not justly belong to them, and we are not sure our own countrymen are not to blame for it to some extent. We do not pretend to say that we are the discoverer of the quinine treatment in rheumatism; but we do say we have a better claim to it than M. Briquet, and we appeal to the Medical Journal referred to, to our medical brethren here, and we can maintain it by a most reputable surgeon of the United States Army from the State of South Carolina.

We hope the writer in the Charleston Review will take the matter in no unkind sense, for we act upon the square and adopt the motto—" *Let justice be done if the firmament fall.*" We do not know that it is the design of the writer to convey the impression that the remedy and the practice are novel and original with Briquet, of Paris; but if it is, we have shown that he is laboring under an egregious error; and we can further say to him, that so far as progress in medicine is concerned—the Young Physic of the age, on this side the Savannah—it is not to be advanced "*by mousing owls to be hawked at and killed,*" particularly by transatlantic birds.

Respectfully, H. A. RAMSAY.

Thompson, Colum. Co., Geo., March 22, 1853.

BITE OF THE RATTLESNAKE.

BY THOMAS A. ATCHISON.

I WAS summoned in haste on the evening of the 20th of September, 1852, to see Miss R——, a young lady aged 17, living five miles in

the country, who (I was informed by the messenger), while taking a stroll in company with her mother, was bitten by a rattlesnake. I arrived at half past 7 o'clock, two hours and a half after the accident. I found my patient almost moribund, pulse wavy and scarcely perceptible at the wrist, surface cold and bathed in perspiration, face swollen, with a besotted expression, mind wandering, pupils dilated, could not see, declaring it was very dark although candles were burning in the room, asked frequently if it was not raining hard, although the night was calm and clear. Upon examination, I found that the bite had been inflicted upon the instep of the left foot; two little punctures were very perceptible, around which there was a greenish areola, with some puffiness.

Having heard of the marvellous efficacy of "spirits" in the relief of similar cases, I at once determined to give the remedy a full and fair trial. Reason and analogy sustained it. The nervous system was overwhelmed by a swift and deadly sedative poison, it must be supported by an equally powerful *diffusible* stimulant; accordingly I gave half a glass of whiskey, which was swallowed with avidity. Meanwhile the wound was freely scarified and cupped, and the extremities placed in a hot saline bath; twenty grains of carb. ammonia was then given, which was immediately thrown up, together with the contents of the stomach, colored a bright grass green. A common-sized glassful of whiskey was now given, the patient draining with eagerness the last drop, and begging with the energy of instinct for more; thus a glass of whiskey and twenty grains of carb. ammonia were given alternately every half hour; until three pints of the former and eighty grains of the latter were taken; and what is remarkable, not the slightest intoxication ensued; on the contrary the urgent and alarming symptoms gradually gave way, warmth was restored to the surface, the pulse returned to the wrist, the mind was called back from its wanderings, and she fell into a quiet sleep, from which she awoke at 5 o'clock, A.M., complaining of intense pain in the foot shooting up the inside of the leg to the knee. Ordered morphia, one fourth grain; fomentations of laudanum and camphor, followed by poultice of linum lini, with the effect of entire relief of pain. The following day castor oil was given to move the bowels; from that hour she suffered no further inconvenience from the bite.

The instinctive avidity and impunity with which this delicately-nurtured young lady took so large a quantity of spirits, sufficient under ordinary circumstances to have killed a regular *habitué*, would excite astonishment, if we did not reflect that it was antagonized by the depressing effect of the poison on the nervous system.

But the most interesting feature in this case remains to be stated: Miss R——, at the time she was bitten, was the subject of well-marked hooping cough, which was then epidemic in the neighborhood; she had had the disease about three weeks, consequently it was at its acme, but on recovering from the effects of the poison, to her great surprise and gratification her cough had disappeared also, nor did it return; being essentially a spasmodic disease, it was swept away by the powerful impression made upon the nervous system.—*Southern Journal of the Medical and Physical Sciences.*