

INDUCTION OF LABOUR BY THE WATER-DASH.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The following case shows that the water-dash to the uterus will excite uterine action in the early months of pregnancy as well as in the latter, and is thus a confirmation of the value of the plan of inducing premature labour, advocated by Dr. Tyler Smith, in a recent number of *THE LANCET*. It also suggests a caution to those who recommend douching in leucorrhœa during pregnancy, a practice which is evidently attended by the risk of producing unintentional abortion.

Mrs. C—, aged twenty-seven years, a tall, good-looking, person, mother of three children. Since the birth of the last, about three years ago, has suffered from leucorrhœa, which increased on her becoming pregnant last March. She sought medical advice in June, and was treated by caustic applications to the uterus, and advised to pass a stream of warm water into the vagina daily. However, she only did so on alternate days. A stable-pailful was used on each occasion, and allowed to pass from a long tube, the water being elevated some feet. She derived benefit from the treatment until July the 29th, (then pregnant four months,) when severe uterine pain came on, of an expulsive character. She now sent for me under the idea that miscarriage was approaching. The os uteri was dilated so as to admit the extremity of the fore-finger with ease, and she was suffering extreme pain. I ordered her to bed, and prescribed small doses of opium every two or three hours. In a couple of days she quite recovered. The following week she attempted to repeat the douche, but pain came on in the womb so suddenly that she desisted after passing up two or three pints of water. Expulsive pains again returned, and threatening abortion continued for twenty-four hours. She was treated as on the former occasion, and the abortion with some difficulty prevented. It now became evident that the douche produced the uterine disturbance, and it was ordered to be discontinued; and although she continues to suffer from leucorrhœa, the pregnancy continues, and she anticipates being confined in December. Perhaps I should state that she has never had any return of the uterine pains.

Your obedient servant,

Grove-place, Lisson-grove, Oct., 1852.

HENRY OBBE.

BOURN VERSUS COX.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—On what do you found the so-called *facts* given by you in your comments on the case Bourn v. Cox in this day's *LANCET*?

Your statement of *facts* is an almost verbatim copy of the opening address of Mrs. Bourn's counsel, which contains statements which were on the trial totally disproved.

The *fact* that a bill of £2 3s. 6d., or any bill at all, was delivered to Bourn, was entirely rebutted.

It was not a *fact* that the ship was to sail on the Tuesday following the arrest on the Saturday, but was to have sailed that very day.

It is not a *fact* that the judge remarked that a gross fraud had been committed.

I have already answered the charges against me in the *Provincial Medical and Surgical Journal*, and also before the Bath and Bristol Branch of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association.

I am quite sure, if you knew the means now, and for some time past, in operation here to damage one who has always endeavoured to conduct himself honourably and respectably as a member of an honourable profession, you would not lend the columns of the *LANCET* to such a purpose.

The whole subject is now under consideration by the District Council of the Bath and Bristol Branch of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association, and I do not fear being able to show that I have acted neither dishonourably nor unprofessionally.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Bath, October 30, 1852.

W. A. COX.

. In giving insertion to the letter of Mr. Cox, we beg to inform him that the report of the case upon which our remarks were founded, was published in several of the newspapers. We shall, however, reserve any further remarks upon the case until the report of the Bath and Bristol Branch Association be made. Mr. Cox's "answer" in the *Provincial Journal* did not escape our notice.—SUB.-ED. L.

INFLUENCE OF VACCINATION AND RE-VACCINATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Having read with interest the case adduced by Dr. Richards, in your journal of the 23rd October, proving the influence of vaccinia in modifying variola, occurring in one and the same person at the same time, I beg to forward the following statement of cases, for the authenticity of which I can vouch, although they did not occur under my own cognizance.

A family of four children, whose ages varied from twelve to three years, became exposed to the contagion of variola from a man (whether vaccinated or not I am not aware) failing with that disease when lodging in the house. Up to this time the parents had pertinaciously refused all attempts at vaccinating their children, with the exception of the eldest.

About the seventh day after the appearance of the disease in the lodger, the following was the state of affairs when the medical man was called in:—

No. 1. The eldest, who had been vaccinated successfully when an infant, was attacked with variola, but in a very modified or varioloid form, the constitutional disturbance being but slight, and the convalescence speedy.

Nos. 2, 3, and 4, were immediately vaccinated.

Nos. 2 and 3 had vaccinia very favourably, and did *not* take variola.

No. 4 failed at the first vaccination, but on its being again tried it succeeded, and ran its usual course; during its progress variola made its appearance in a very mitigated form: the constitutional symptoms were slight, and no trace of the child ever having had the disease remained.

Hoping these details may prove interesting to your readers, I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Reigate, Oct. 1852.

C. HOLMAN, M.D.

THE COBRA DE CAPELLO POISON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In reference to the unfortunate occurrence that has lately happened at the Zoological Gardens, I may mention the following circumstance that passed under my own personal knowledge, and which I think, when known, may be of benefit to others, particularly to young men going out to India in the medical line or otherwise. I had seen in a Madras paper a letter from a Bengal surgeon, in which he mentioned that the Ganges, on whose banks his regiment was stationed, had, in consequence of heavy rains, risen and deluged the adjoining land. The snakes had in consequence forsaken their hiding-places, and found their way into the Sepoys' huts. About twenty men were bitten, and brought into hospital, with all the symptoms of suffering from a cobra's bite, apparently beyond hope. The surgeon gave to each hot brandy-and-water, with peppermint and laudanum; and he did not lose a man. At the time I speak of I was stationed at Bellary, and I was in the habit of keeping greyhounds, one of whom, about nine o'clock at night, was bitten by a snake. The dog gave a cry of terror, and ran off. The night being dark, he was not to be found for some time—a quarter of an hour; he was cold, the limbs quite stiff, the eyes fixed and glassy, and not a pulsation could be found. As the animal was a valuable one, I was anxious to save his life, and had him brought into the house; and remembering the surgeon's success, I lost no time in mixing a comfortable tumbler of brandy-and-water (not to be sneezed at), with the laudanum; the dog's mouth was forced open by straps, and a tablespoonful of the mixture given every ten minutes. For a very long time no change in the animal was perceived, but at length I thought a slight pulsation might be felt, which gave some hope of ultimate success; in short, at about three o'clock in the morning, the dog was able to stagger and be removed. As well as I remember, he must have taken two large tumblers of the mixture.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

October, 1852.

H. S.

EAU-DE-LUCE AS AN ANTIDOTE FOR THE SERPENT-BITE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—From the testimony of Indian practitioners and others, there would appear to be no agent which has proved so extensively useful against the effects of serpent-poison in the blood as ammonia. The case of Dr. Mac Rae in your last number is especially interesting. But the object of my note is to add confirmation to the value of this remedy. The late distinguished Lisfranc informed me that his father, who practised in the south of France,