

hospital twelve days. Nine months afterwards he had another attack, and six months ago a third, for both of which he remained at home, and treated himself by freely taking spirits and beer.

Nov. 14th.—For the past week he has been, as he denominates it, “out on the drink.” During the whole of to-day he has been indulging, and he has taken seven glasses of hot rum, besides gin and beer, and incessantly smoking. He has taken no solid food to-day. Towards evening he got into a row, and received a wound over the temple, which bled rather profusely. He applied at the Charing-cross Hospital for this, and, his wound being dressed, he was admitted an in-patient under Mr. Canton, who prescribed an opiate. In appearance he is the very picture of a man who is addicted to intemperance. His face is bloated; his eyes are expressionless, and have a peculiar unsettled stare; his hand trembles very much, as also his tongue (which is coated white), and his whole aspect betokens the enfeebled constitution of a confirmed drunkard.

15th.—Very feeble. He has obtained no sleep. He spontaneously assures the house-surgeon that he apprehends another attack of delirium tremens if he is not allowed some spirits; and when told that it was intended that none should be given him, he was much astonished, and feared he would not recover. Ordered ammonia and bark, with chloric ether and opium, every four hours, and, as his stomach was irritable, some beef-tea; to have an opiate at bedtime.

16th.—Better. He has had some sleep. He is not so nervous, and is more tranquil in his mind. To have full meat diet daily, but no beer or spirits. Ordered a grain and a half of quinine, twenty minims of chloric ether, and fifteen of tincture of opium in water every four hours.

17th.—Feels much better. He says he experiences the same sort of relief from taking his quinine mixture as he usually does from imbibing his dram of spirits.

21st.—Still improving. The wound in the temple is almost well. The nervousness he complained of has almost departed.

A few days afterwards he left the hospital cured.

ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL.

THREE CASES OF DELIRIUM TREMENS, TREATED WITHOUT STIMULANTS; FATAL RESULT IN TWO.

(Under the care of Dr. ALDERSON and Dr. SIBSON.)

IN the annexed cases no alcoholic stimulants were given after the patients were admitted into the hospital, as will be seen by the details, but some one of the preparations of opium, combined with ammonia, instead. In two a fatal result ensued, probably mainly brought about by the mechanical restraint employed. The prohibition of this terrible source of exhaustion cannot be too stringently enforced; for, as was recently observed in some clinical remarks on this disease made by Dr. Brinton at the Royal Free Hospital, “no matter to what degree reason may be degraded or dethroned, the delirious patient always seems sensible of the debasement and brutality implied by straps and bands.” (THE LANCET, vol. i., 1860, p. 592.) If attendants cannot be procured to gently restrain and watch the patient, it were better under such circumstances to administer chloroform, which we have known to do more good than all the strait waistcoats; and we have in our “Mirror” recorded cases which, sleep having been induced by its employment in the London Hospital, terminated in recovery. (Ibid., vol. ii., 1858, p. 449.) The notes of the subjoined cases were kindly furnished by Dr. W. H. Broadbent, medical registrar to the hospital.

Robert S—, aged forty-five, butler, was admitted into the above hospital, under the care of Dr. Alderson, May 16th. He had been engaged in his occupation as butler up to the date of his admission, enjoying good health, but drinking largely. When brought to the hospital, his countenance had a wild expression, there was general tremor, and he was apprehensive of some intention to injure him on the part of his fellow-servants; the skin was perspiring; pulse quick; tongue white and creamy. He was ordered two grains of opium at once, and a grain every hour till sleep should be induced.

May 17th.—In much the same condition; can answer a question rationally, but is unable to fix the attention on any subject. The following mixture was substituted for the crude opium:

sesquicarbonate of ammonia, four grains; solution of morphia, twenty minims; tincture of lavender, fifteen minims; and acetate of ammonia mixture, one ounce, every four hours.—Eleven P.M.: Very noisy; sweating profusely; in other respects about the same. As it was found that he and another patient suffering from phrenitis were mutually exciting each other, and disturbing the ward by responding in loud shouts, he was removed to a separate ward. During the night he became violent, and the attendant, without consulting the house-surgeon, put on the strait waistcoat. At four A.M. the house-surgeon was called. His struggles had suddenly ceased, and he was found unconscious; pupils fixed and dilated; surface cold and clammy; slight convulsive movements of the extremities, and twitching of the mouth; pulse imperceptible; respiration suspicious. He died in ten minutes.

At the post-mortem examination nothing was found beyond slight sub-arachnoid effusion.

Thomas C—, aged thirty-six, admitted, under the care of Dr. Alderson, June 4th, 1860. He is a pipe-maker, and, in carrying round his pipes to public-houses, has been in the habit of drinking much gin and beer. He has had several attacks of delirium tremens. When admitted, had not slept for two or three nights, but had imagined that people were jumping about outside his window, and deriding him. Hand and tongue unsteady; skin cool; pulse 88; tongue white and moist; no actual delirium. Ordered two ounces of compound senna mixture, to be followed by twenty minims of solution of muriate of morphia, with three grains of sesquicarbonate of ammonia in camphor mixture, every four hours. He had a pretty good night, continued to improve, and on the 12th was discharged cured.

Thomas M—, aged thirty-four, admitted, under the care of Dr. Sibson, March 16th, 1860. For the last six months has been suffering from cough, with pain in the side and expectoration, and he has been in the habit of taking half a pint at least of brandy daily. When admitted, he was agitated, tremulous, apprehensive, but not delirious. Skin moist; pulse 90; tongue white and moist. He was ordered ten grains of colocynth pill with calomel, and mixture of the acetate of ammonia, with excess of ammonia; at night he had forty minims of Battley's solution, and twenty minims every three hours till sleep was produced. Diet, broth, with a pint of porter.

March 17th.—He had a little sleep in the night, and seemed about the same. The opium to be repeated at night.

18th.—Did not sleep, and now insists on going home, imagining that some mischief to him was intended. He was easily persuaded to return to bed; but he required constant watching during the day, and towards evening became violent. Battley's solution to be given every two hours.

19th.—Very much excited, and with difficulty kept in bed; imagines that he is to be punished for some crime. Hands tremulous; skin perspiring freely; pulse 98; respiration 24. As he became more and more violent, and as he was an exceedingly powerful man, and could not be restrained, he was removed to a separate ward, and the strait waistcoat was put on. His efforts to free himself were fearful, and though the opium was increased in quantity, and given at shorter intervals, he had no sleep.

At about six A.M. on the 20th he ceased to struggle, and seemed to sleep; but it was soon seen that this was not sleep, and before the house-surgeon could be called he was dead.

On post-mortem examination, both lungs were found universally adherent and greatly congested. There was slight subarachnoid effusion, and both lateral ventricles of the brain were greatly distended by fluid.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE HOSPITAL.

HISTORY OF A CHILD FIVE YEARS OLD, BROUGHT IN WITH SYMPTOMS OF POISONING BY RUM; RECOVERY.

(Under the care of Dr. PARKES.)

DR. TAYLOR, in his work “On Poisons,” gives an instance of three ounces of brandy proving fatal to a boy of seven years in thirty hours; and another of a child of the same age who swallowed eight ounces of undiluted rum, during the absence of her parents from the room. In the latter a recovery ensued, although the quantity of alcoholic liquid taken was so much larger; but this desirable result was brought about by the early use of the stomach-pump, with other energetic treatment. The