

truss for the last seven years. In consequence of its being improperly applied she has constantly had it on with the rupture down, but has not experienced much inconvenience, and has always been able to reduce it, in the recumbent posture, until this afternoon at three o'clock. I was requested to see her at half-past eleven, p.m., April 12, and found her extremely exhausted; countenance very anxious and shrunk; constant vomiting; pulse small and thready; hands and feet cold; breathing hurried; abdomen very tender, but not tympanitic. On examination I found a protrusion of intestine through the femoral ring, larger than I could cover with my two hands, very tender, and excessively tympanitic (giving the sensation of a bladder distended with air), and no impulse on coughing. I endeavoured by very gentle manipulation, for nearly half an hour, to reduce it, without success, and as she was in a very small room, and without the possibility of having a warm bath, I advised her removal to the hospital. To this she positively refused to accede, as she was resolved not to submit to an operation. Under these circumstances I determined to adopt the plan of treatment recommended, and successfully practised, by Dr. O'Beirne. I introduced the elastic tube of the stomach-pump into the rectum, and passed it the distance of twelve inches. I then attached the syringe, and slowly injected two quarts of warm water. When half of that quantity had been thrown up a gurgling was distinctly heard in the tumour, and it gradually became less tense. Having injected all the water I removed the syringe, and allowed it to run off by the tube; I then reapplied the syringe and continued exhausting the air, when, after a few minutes, I had the gratification to find the hernia gradually subsiding, and, by keeping up gentle pressure, the contents were returned into the abdomen. My patient immediately pronounced herself relieved; her countenance became cheerful, and the sickness abated; she was ordered a brisk aperient of magn. sulph. and aqu. menth. pip. and a dose of calomel and opium. The bowels acted freely on the following morning, and she is now as well as usual. I remain, Sir, your most obedient servant,

CHARLES COLLAMBELL.

Canterbury-place, Lambeth,
April 18, 1843.

ON THE
TREATMENT OF AGUE WITH
CARBONIC-ACID GAS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In the number of THE LANCET for April 8th, page 38, it is said that "a physician in the south of France has found the means, in certain cases of intermittent fever, in which the quinine is inert, to restore its

active powers by associating it with carbonic-acid gas." Believing that the benefit derived in these instances is to be ascribed, not so much to the combination of carbonic-acid gas with the quinine, as to the agency of the gas itself, I am compelled to state, as briefly as possible, my reasons for this conclusion. These are, that I have found the gas, alone and uncombined, not only sufficient for the cure of ague under all circumstances, but what is more, have effected cures in cases in which the quinine and all other remedies had previously failed. This was more particularly the case in Spain some years since; for having visited that country during the prevalence of the epidemic cholera, for a specific object, I was induced, on the subsidence of the disease in the north, to retrace my steps to Alicante, where I understood intermittent fever was prevailing epidemically. This I found to be the fact on my arrival; two-thirds of the inhabitants in the town and surrounding districts having been brought under the malign influence of the operating cause, while a large number had suffered from the attacks for several months, the usual mode of treatment, with the largest possible doses of quinine, being insufficient to prevent the return of the accessions. As my only object in taking this journey was the hope of being able to try, on a large scale, a medicine that I had found efficacious before in a limited number of cases, I lost no time in waiting on the physician of the hospital, and by his kind permission I was enabled to administer the remedy in question (*carbonic-acid gas*) in a number of old and obstinate cases. The first was that of a woman who had been in the hospital some weeks, but the disease had existed between ten and eleven months,—the quinine having only produced slight and temporary relief,—although it had been given in large and repeated doses at different periods of the malady. The paroxysms of the disease, which was quotidian, were shorter and less violent than before, but there was great debility, with emaciation, want of appetite, &c. On the following day the gas was administered to her a short time previous to the accession, a draught being administered every quarter of an hour, until three doses had been taken, when symptoms of fever presenting themselves, the medicine was discontinued. The paroxysm was shorter and less severe than the preceding day. The same plan was pursued on the following day, when coldness of the extremities and temporary heat of surface were the only symptoms experienced. On the third day, the medicine being previously administered, the accession was entirely prevented, and the patient not only continued free from the disease afterwards, but rapidly regained her appetite, strength, &c. The same result was obtained in all the cases in which the gas was administered in this town, and I attended a great many,

not only in the hospital, but also in private ; so many, in fact, that being annoyed by the daily importunities of numbers of such sufferers, and fearing that I might give offence to the resident practitioners by attending private cases, I hastened my departure, and proceeded on to Madrid.

In the following autumn, by the kindness of the Minister of the Interior, who assigned me a ward in the general hospital in that capital, I was enabled to resume these clinical experiments, being anxious to have a further opportunity of testing the efficacy of the remedy *in another district*, and in the *endemic* as well as epidemic form of the disease ; and, at the same time, of ascertaining the best mode and most proper time for its administration, not only for practical purposes, but in order to afford some evidence of the probable truth of the theory I had formed respecting the cause of the intermittency. This theory has been given in my work on the Cholera, while considering the physiology, or rather pathology of that disease ; but as the subject is of little importance at the present moment, I have merely to state now that the result of these trials confirmed me in a conclusion I had previously formed, as to the proper time for the administration of the remedy, which I found to be immediately previous to the accession, so as to have sufficient time to administer four or five doses of the gas before the cold stage has fairly set in. When thus administered I have generally found it to shorten the paroxysm, even on the first accession, and to arrest it altogether, *upon the average*, at the third administration of the medicine, —corresponding with the expected return of the disease,—no matter whether the form was quotidian, tertian, or quartan. The same result was experienced *in old* as in recent cases,—in those in whom the disease had existed twelve months, and in those who had only been attacked as many days or weeks, as well as with those who had previously taken quinine, or other tonics, and those who had not been subjected to any previous treatment. This circumstance is not only remarkable, but is at the same time entirely different to the result obtained from the administration of all other remedies, quinine included, for the effect in these instances generally bears some relation to the previous duration of the disease.

I have said general average, in giving the result of the treatment, which is hardly a fair term ; for, although there were some few cases in which the disease was not arrested until after the third accession, there were a greater number in which no return was experienced after the first administration of the remedy ; while, in some few cases, the expected attack was not experienced at all. This will be evident by a reference to the cases Nos. 2, 3, 5, and 6, detailed in the pamphlet that I have now

forwarded for your satisfaction, and which was published in 1836, shortly after my return from Spain.

If any deductions, therefore, are to be drawn from the above results, we must infer that the carbonic-acid gas is as efficacious alone and uncombined, if not more so, than in combination with quinine. At least this is the conclusion at which I should arrive, in the absence of all direct evidence to the contrary, for the actual result obtained by the above combination has not been given ; while, as regards myself, I have had no experience of its effects ; for, although I have frequently given the quinine combined with carbonic-acid gas in other cases, and occasionally during the convalescence from intermittent fever, I have not tried the combination during the continuance of the fever.

It would have afforded me some satisfaction to know if the administration of the gas in this way was caused by my previous employment of the same remedial agent or not, for the treatment adopted by me in such cases was not only well known in the north of Spain, but must have been also to many practitioners in the south of France, particularly to Dr. Dunal, of Montpellier, the translator of the Spanish edition of my work on Cholera. I should, however, be glad to learn that such was not the case, and that the individual referred to had been induced to adopt this remedy independently of my example, and for different reasons from my own, as his evidence in this case would not only be more valuable to me, but, doubtless, more satisfactory to others.

Allow me to add, in conclusion, that brief and imperfect as this detail is, it will, I trust, be deemed sufficiently conclusive to induce some of your subscribers in tropical and malarious districts to give the remedy a further and more extended trial, not only in intermittent but in remittent and continued fevers ; for, although the effect of the remedy is not so prompt or so apparent in the latter as in the former, it is yet sufficiently so to entitle it to rank high in the list of remedial agents for the cure of fever, and more particularly of typhus. The pamphlet before referred to having been translated into Italian and published during the past year, some evidence will, I would hope, be derived from Italy, with respect to the efficacy of the remedy in intermittent fever. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. PARKIN.

Dover-street, Piccadilly,
April 12, 1843.

CHOREA.—M. Person, of St. Petersburg has lately employed chloride of tin for this affection, with a very salutary effect. It has the advantage, he says, of not primarily exaggerating the symptoms, its action being strictly sedative.