

ligature being left hanging out of the wound, and the remaining omentum was returned, so as to leave a small portion in the divided ring, hoping the ligatures might more easily be removed, and that a plug might adhere, and prevent any future return of the hernia. Singultus continued at intervals for about thirty hours; the bowels, however, acted freely, and the man has since perfectly recovered. I think, had I been in the situation of the patient, I should have requested the removal of the testis, that a truss might be more easily worn should one become necessary. We left it, however, in its former situation.

SCARLATINA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The following case of scarlatina is interesting as an instance of the great length of time which may elapse between the cessation of the complaint and the communication of the disease to a new-comer. In this instance it amounted to twenty-eight days. Such, at least, appears most probable, from the circumstance of the disease not appearing in the infant till the sixteenth day after its birth, and also from the mother not having been attacked by the disease in any shape, she having had no pyrexial, tonsillitic, or cutaneous affection. The case terminated fatally in an unusual mode, namely, by bleeding from the lips, nose, and mouth. I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

CHARLES GRAVENOR.

1, Rolls Buildings, April 7th, 1834.

On the 10th of February I was requested to visit a child that was suffering from pyrexia and enlargement of the cervical glands; there was also desquamation of the cuticle. It was stated to have been ill for five or six days previously, and to have had soreness of the throat and redness of skin, from which there was reason to conclude, that the disease was scarlatina. On the 22nd I delivered the mother of this child of an infant, the term of utero-gestation not having been quite completed. On the 11th of March the new-born infant was attacked with scarlatina, the eruption being limited to the extremities. There was no affection of the throat. On the 16th desquamation occurred, accompanied by œdema, and at the same time hemorrhage took place from the lips, mouth, and nose, to a very great extent, under the continuance of which (the blood also escaping from different parts of the surface where desquamation had occurred) the infant sunk.

REPLY TO OBJECTIONS AGAINST THE USE OF

TEA AND COFFEE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have read the papers of Mr. Coles and Dr. Bent on the use of tea and coffee, as well as what has been said on the same subject elsewhere, with some surprise, as each of those gentlemen seems to me to imply, that the beverages in question more generally disagree with our constitutions than other aliments of daily consumption. To this I can by no means assent. It is well known that there is no one species of diet which invariably suits all constitutions, nor will that which is palatable and salutary at one time be equally so at another to the same individual. For instance, the most nutritious, the most simple, and, I think, the most natural food provided for us is milk; yet I will engage to produce twenty instances for each one adduced by Mr. Coles or Dr. Bent, where milk disagrees more than tea or coffee. How very general is it for us to hear, when we recommend milk to our patients, the following exclamations—“Why, Sir, milk will kill me; it lies like lead in my stomach.” “It binds me so, I dare not take it.” “It purges and gripes me in such a way that I can’t bear it.” “It makes me sick.” “It makes me sleepy.” “It fills me with wind.” In short, all kinds of poisonous effects are attributed to this best of nature’s beverages, new milk. Nevertheless how very absurd it would be in any one to attempt to persuade mankind that milk is unwholesome, because it will occasionally disagree with some of us.

Again, barley and its products equally disagree with some persons. I myself, for instance, thirty-six years ago, when walking St. Bartholomew’s Hospital, used to derive more refreshment and comfort from a glass of “Whitbread’s Entire” after the toils of the day than from any other beverage; but now if I were to take even a wineglassful of the same liquor, it would produce a severe attack of catarrh and urticaria, as would also a little barley-water, or even a few grains of barley. Yet “John Barleycorn” is a real and substantial friend to thousands, who would laugh at me heartily were I to try to persuade them that malt liquor was deleterious when taken in moderate quantity, merely because it does not agree with me.

The same may be said of medicines as of articles of diet, for we all know that there is no one medicine that invariably pro-

duces the same effect on the same person, or a similar effect on another, though labouring under the self-same disorder. For instance, a lady whom I saw this very day was for many years (both before and since her marriage, with an increasing family) a great sufferer from constipation of the bowels, accompanied with the most distressing hemorrhoids, and nothing which the materia medica could furnish, with the aid of surgery to boot, would keep the bowels in order, until, at last, merely half a dram of Epsom salts, and a few grains of magnesia, were prescribed, ever since which, now four years ago, this minim dose of an aperient has always kept her in the enjoyment of health and comfort. Sixteen times the quantity of the same medicine had frequently been taken before, without producing any aperient effect. The same will occur with all other medicines. Such is the idiosyncrasy of some persons, that a very few drops of laudanum, two or three, will often procure sleep, when a full dose will have a contrary effect. I know a gentleman who always finds thirty drops act as an emetic.

I therefore presume to observe, in reply to what has been said of tea and coffee, that however these articles may (as they no doubt do) disagree occasionally with some of us, they are, nevertheless, as a part of general diet which is easy of attainment, as much to be commended as any other that could be substituted. I may here remark, that when I have thought tea or coffee has disagreed with a patient, I have requested the usual allowance of sugar or milk to be omitted, which has generally corrected the pernicious effect.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
 WILLIAM ENGLISH, Surgeon.
 Denmark Hill, Camberwell,
 2nd April, 1834.

CHROMIC ACID.

Mr. W. H. BULMAIN requests the Editor of *THE LANCET* to honour this paper with a place in the pages of his journal.

University of London,
 April 7th, 1834.

Chromic acid is at present prepared from the mixed solution of chromic and hydrofluoric acids, which is obtained by conducting the terfluoride of chromium into water, driving off the latter acid by heat, or by decomposing a strong solution of bichromate of potass with fluosilicic acid gas, separating the solution of chromic acid from the sparingly soluble hydro-

fluat of silica and potass, evaporating to dryness, redissolving the chromic acid in a small quantity of water, and separating it from any remaining hydrofluat of silica and potass, by decantation. Both these processes must be conducted in platinum vessels, and as the difficulty of obtaining such vessels may sometimes be an objection to them, I have ventured to propose the following process as more easy of execution, and capable of being conducted without the aid of such expensive apparatus.

Decompose the terchloride of chromium by water, and agitate the resulting solution of chromic and muriatic acids with recently precipitated chromate of silver, until all the muriatic acid is separated, avoiding an excess of chromate of silver, as it is soluble in chromic acid. In this process the chlorine of the muriatic acid unites with the silver—the oxygen of the oxide of silver with the hydrogen of the muriatic acid—and the chromic acid that was united with the oxide of silver is set free, together with the chromic acid that was previously in solution. The pure chromic acid is obtained by decantation from the chloride of silver. If terchloride of chromium be not at hand, the chromic acid may be obtained by acting upon chromate of silver with muriatic acid.

STRENGTH AFTER RECOVERY FROM MOLLITIES OSSIIUM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In the last lecture of Sir Charles Bell, which I read in your journal with much gratification, the lecturer mentioned in the course of his valuable remarks, that persons who have recovered from the disease called mollities ossium, have become possessed afterwards, in a singular degree, of immense strength, which he accounted for by the increased density of their bones rendering them better fitted for powerful efforts.

I should be glad, Sir, however, with deference, to suggest that the increase of strength may be better accounted for by considering that the density of the bones in such cases is so great as to make them at once a species of permanent structure, only imperfectly subject to the laws of absorption and deposit—processes which are, in fact, almost unnecessary to their character at all. The bones of these persons seem to have been formed by nature of such an imperishable structure as to be perfected at once for all the purposes of