

ception of an enemy which we may find it impossible to keep at a distance.

NON-MEDICAL CORONERS are certainly the oddest mortals in existence, and are always amusing, if never instructive. Their peculiarities are without number. We thought long ago that we had run through the whole list of their drolleries, but now find that we are very agreeably mistaken. The medical public will be somewhat amused in perusing the following communication:—

“To the Editor of THE LANCET.

“SIR,—An inquest was held at this place a short time since, and the verdict, totally against the real evidence, and exhibiting most marked ignorance of the laws of the animal economy, evidenced most strongly that which you have so strenuously advocated—the impropriety of an attorney acting as coroner, instead of a practitioner in medicine. The deceased, in a fit of feverish delirium, went to the sea, and on being afterwards seen *floating*, was taken up, nearly lifeless. Measures for resuscitation succeeded. He conversed, drank tea, had alvine and urinary evacuations, remarked on his state, and then three hours and a half from his being taken from the water, died. You will ask, “From what?” So ask I.

“I had the satisfaction of leaving him in the care of his usual attendant, recovered from the submersion, and merely wanting the ordinary means of arresting the very great reaction that would ensue; but stimulus was continued, though he was in a marked perspiration, and the abstraction of blood was not had recourse to.

“I was surprised to hear of his death, and more surprised to hear that the jury returned a verdict, founded on the medical evidence, that “*he died from suffocation, from water having got into the trachea or wind-pipe, from having laid 'g in such a position.*” Now this suffocation, from water in the trachea, took place after conversation, drinking, &c., three hours and a half after having been taken out of the sea. What kind of a trachea could he have, for salt water to remain so long in it, and not produce irritation?

“I shall be glad to know what steps I can take to disturb such a verdict, which I objected to at the time.

“I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
W. HULKE, jun., Surg.
Deal, Oct. 25th, 1831.

We are unable to afford our correspondent any assistance in such a case, as the sea would care very little about an indictment for *manslaughter*. If there be ground for charging any person with having been instrumental in causing the death of the party in question, then we may show Mr. HULKE how he may reach the ends of justice without disturbing the verdict. We cannot, however, dismiss the subject on this occasion, without requesting Mr. HULKE to furnish us with a detailed account of the proceedings of the Inquest; and more especially anxious are we for that part of the evidence which induced the jury to return such an extraordinary verdict.

EXTRACTS FROM THE
PUBLIC NOTIFICATION RESPECTING
THE CHOLERA MORBUS,
ISSUED BY THE PRIVY COUNCIL AT THE
INSTANCE OF THE
BOARD OF HEALTH.

Whitehall, Oct. 20, 1831.

It is recommended that in every town and village, commencing with those on the coast, there should be established a Local Board of Health, to consist of the chief and other magistrates, the clergyman of the parish, two or more physicians or medical practitioners, and three or more of the principal inhabitants; and one of the medical members should be appointed to correspond with the Board of Health in London.

Every large town should be divided into districts, having a district committee of two or three members, one of whom should be of the medical profession, to watch over its health, and to give the earliest information to the Board of Health in the town, whose instructions they will carry into effect.

It is of the utmost importance that the very first cases of cholera which may appear should be made known as early as possible. Success in the treatment of the cholera mainly depends on medical assistance having been given in the earliest stage of the disease.

To separate the sick from the healthy, one or more houses should be kept in each town or its neighbourhood, to which every case of the disease, as soon as detected, might be removed, provided the family of

the affected person consent to such removal, and in case of refusal a conspicuous mark ('Sick') should be placed in front of the house, to warn persons that it is in quarantine; and even when persons with the disease shall have been removed, and the house shall have been purified, the word 'Caution' should be substituted, as denoting suspicion of the disease, and the inhabitants of such house should not be at liberty to move out or communicate with others persons until, by the authority of the Local Board, the mark shall have been removed.

In some towns it may be found possible to appropriate a public hospital or barrack to this purpose.

The houses from which the sick have been removed, as well as the houses in which the sick have chosen to remain, should be thoroughly purified in the following manner:—

Decayed articles, such as rags, cordage, papers, old clothes, hangings, should be burnt; filth of every description removed; clothing and furniture should be submitted to copious effusions of water, and boiled in a strong ley; drains and privies thoroughly cleansed by streams of water and chloride of lime; ablution of wood work should be performed by a strong ley of soap and water; the walls of the house, from the cellar to the garret, should be hot lime-washed; all loose and decayed pieces of plastering should be removed.

Free and continued admission of fresh air to all parts of the house and furniture should be enjoined for at least a week. Extreme cleanliness and free ventilation are points of the very greatest importance.

Those who may fall victims should be buried in a detached ground in the vicinity of the house that may have been selected for the reception of cholera patients. On the same principle, all persons who may be employed in the removal of the sick from their own houses, as well as all those who may attend upon cholera patients in the capacity of nurses, should live apart from the rest of the community. But few persons should be employed in these duties.

Avoid all unnecessary communication with the public out of doors; all articles of food, or other necessaries required by the family, should be placed in the front of the house, and received by one of the inhabitants after the person delivering them shall have retired.

Convalescents from the disease, and those who have had any communication with them, should be kept under observation for a period of not less than twenty days.

The occupiers of each house where the disease may occur, or be supposed to have

occurred, are enjoined to report the fact immediately to the Local Board of Health.

In every town the name and residence of each of the members of the District Committee should be fixed on the doors of the church, or other conspicuous place.

All intercourse with any infected town, and the neighbouring country, must be prevented by the best means within the power of the magistrates, who will have to make regulations for the supply of provisions; but such regulations are intended only for extreme cases.

Other measures may be rendered expedient, if disease should ever show itself in this country in a terrific way. It may become necessary to draw troops, or a strong body of police, around infected places, to exclude all intercourse with the country.

The poor, ill-fated, unhealthy, part of the population, and especially those who have been addicted to drinking and irregularities, have ever been the greatest sufferers from this disease, and the infection has been most virulent, rapid, and extensive, where the streets are narrow and crowded, and unclean and ill-ventilated. Magistrates, resident clergymen, and persons of influence or authority, should mitigate these evils. * * * *

It is evident that the most urgent and peculiar symptom of this disease is the sudden depression of the vital powers, as proved by the diminished action of the heart, the coldness of the surface and extremities, and the stagnant state of the whole circulation. It is important to advert to this fact, as pointing out the instant measures which may safely and beneficially be employed where medical aid cannot immediately be procured. All means tending to restore the circulation and maintain the warmth of the body should be had recourse to without delay. The patients should always immediately be put to bed, wrapt up in hot blankets, and warmth should be sustained by other external applications, such as repeated frictions with flannels and camphorated spirits; poultices of mustard and linseed (equal parts) to the stomach, particularly where pain and vomiting exist; similar poultices to the feet and legs, to restore their warmth. The returning heat of the body may be promoted by bags containing hot salt or bran applied to different parts of it. For the same purpose of restoring and sustaining circulation, white wine whey, with spice, hot brandy and water, or sal volatile, in the dose of a teaspoonful in hot water, frequently repeated, or from five to twenty drops of some of the essential oils, as peppermint, cloves, or cajeput, in a wine-glass of water, may be administered; with the same view, where the stomach will bear it,

warm broth with spice may be employed. In very severe cases, or where medical aid is difficult to be obtained, from twenty to forty drops of laudanum may be given in any of the warm drinks previously recommended.

These simple means are proposed as resources in the incipient stage of the disease where medical aid has not yet been obtained.

In reference to the further means to be adopted in the treatment of this disease, it is necessary to state that no specific remedy has yet been ascertained; nor has any plan of cure been sufficiently commended by success to warrant its express recommendation from authority, but the greatest confidence may be reposed in the intelligence and zeal which the medical practitioners of this country will employ in establishing an appropriate method of cure.

Signed by HENRY HALFORD,
the President of the Board.

CASE OF
INDIAN CHOLERA,

WITH REMARKS.

By WILLIAM BIRTWHISTLE, Esq., M.R.C.S.,
London.

THE extensive ravages lately committed by cholera morbus on the Continent of Europe, and its present prevalence so near to this country, have naturally directed the attention of the profession, and the public in general, to its progress. Every circumstance, therefore, tending to illustrate this fatal malady, cannot but be highly interesting to your readers.

It has been doubted by many whether the disease now raging in Europe be really the same with that which has been so long the scourge of India. The following well-marked cases of Indian cholera occurred during my late residence at Calcutta, on board one of the Hon. Company's ships. The disease was then raging on shore, and in several of the neighbouring ships, with destructive violence.

CASE I.

Gunner William Turner, ætat. 70, complained to me on the morning of the 3rd of December last, of feeling himself somewhat unwell. He stated that he had passed a restless night, having been frequently disturbed with painful twitchings in his fingers and toes, accompanied with some degree of nausea and oppression of the præcordia. There was also an appearance of languor and lassitude about him, with a blanched, heavy, and anxious countenance, a slow,

weak, and labouring pulse, oppressed breathing, and the skin occasionally breaking out into cold clammy sweats.

These precursory signs of cholera were quickly followed by the most alarming symptoms of the disease. The spasms now attacked the extremities and abdominal muscles, gradually increasing in strength and duration, and producing indescribable agony. The vomitings and purgings were frequent, indeed almost incessant, and most distressing, the discharges being first of a mixed character, afterwards watery, and then assuming a bilious aspect. The pulse was now small, quick, and contracted, varying however somewhat in frequency and power, according to the absence or presence of the spasms. During the intervals of the spasms, the appearance of the patient was prostrate, and scarcely exhibiting any signs of life—indeed many of the by-standers thought the man dead. I immediately had him placed in a bath at a very high temperature, gave him large doses of laudanum, and strong brandy made warm, which were at first rejected, but after persevering some time, retained, and had six men to rub him with mustard, hot flannels, and stimulating embrocations over the whole body. By these means some degree of reaction took place, when I opened a vein in the arm, and abstracted fourteen ounces of blood. This at first flowed with difficulty, indeed only in drops, but in a short time it came away in a full, continuous, stream, affording the most decided relief to the symptoms. The stomach having now become tolerably tranquil, I administered a scruple of calomel, combined with two grains of opium, with a view of still further allaying the irritation of the mucous lining, and stimulating the gorged liver to relieve itself by a flow of secretion.

He continued easy until the next day, when the symptoms returned with increased violence. By the use, however, of the same means, and a further abstraction of blood to twelve ounces, complete and permanent relief was obtained. He gradually regained his strength, requiring only small doses of ol. ricini, and on the tenth day after the attack was convalescent.

Two days after the preceding case, I was called to attend a seaman on board the "Susan," in the absence of Mr. Lawson the surgeon. He was twenty-eight years of age, and of a remarkably stout and healthy appearance. The symptoms were similar to those related above, the same remedies were employed (bleeding being of course carried to a much greater extent), and I am happy to say with the same fortunate result.

Remarks.—The hot water bath is a most important remedy in this disease; it excites the arterial system, equalises the cir-