simply or in combination with other remedial measures, shall have afforded no *essential relief*, then let him be "*bloody, bold, and resolute.*" I should not deem either abatement of pain or arrest of vomiting, individually, to constitute *essential relief* in themselves, but if the subdual of those two distressing symptoms were combined with considerable constitutional relief, (I do not mean narcotic stupor,) then, although defæcation should have taken place, some further delay would surely be justifiable.

I will not further trespass on the valuable columns of our Journal, but trust that what I have written may induce some of those to whom the field of surgical experience is more widely open than to myself, to give a trial to the opiate treatment, fairly examine its merits, and faithfully report the results of extended experience.

Ewell, Surrey, May 1, 1849.

ON THE

USE OF THE EXTRACTUM COTYLEDONIS UMBILICI IN EPILEPSY.

By JOSEPH BULLAR, M.D., Southampton.

The large number of epileptics who are not treated at all, is one of the strongest proofs of the insufficiency of our present means, and the best apology for bringing forward a new remedy, and as this remedy is an indigenous plant which is now in full leaf, and grows plentifully in many parts of England, many of the members of our Association may be induced to try it. I will, therefore, shortly state my experience.

Several years ago the expressed juice of the cotyledon umbilicus or napplewort was recommended to a lady who had compound epilepsy, which had not yielded to medical treatment, and under its use the disease was entirely removed and has not returned. The patient was under the care of my friend Mr. Salter, of Poole, who watched the case with much interest, and mentioned the fact to me. Subsequently, my brother, Dr. W. Bullar, recommended the juice for a child in this neighbourhood, where the plant grew, and the epilepsy was cured. Rather more than a year ago I requested Mr. Randall, chemist, of Southampton, to prepare an extract of the expressed juice, in order to give the remedy a trial, and from the experience I have since had, I have no doubt in my own mind of the anti-epileptic power of the medicine, although sufficient time has not yet passed to bring forward cases as perfect cures. Mr. Salter, having, however, published the case just mentioned, in the *Medical Gazette*, and alluded to the use which I have made of the extract, which has interested many, I am rather anxious to state what results may be fairly expected, in order to prevent disappointment to those who may use it.

From the experience I have had in a considerable number of cases, (several of which were of a very hope-

less kind,) long perseverance is necessary, and if the number and violence of the fits are lessened, there are good grounds for hope and further perseverance. In all the cases there has been a marked diminution in the violence and frequency of the attacks; and as, in two cases, (one of which I heard to-day,) it has first increased the violence of the fit, and as in others there have been transient symptoms of increased nervousness and headache, requiring a short suspension, I am in hopes that it may prove a true anti-epileptic. It is certainly in many cases *nervo-tonic*, as the improved nervous tone is shown by quieter sleep, fewer dreams, better spirits, more ability to take exercise, and a consciousness of general improvement. It has no other action on the body that I am aware of. It certainly produces no action on the bowels, for when there has been costiveness (which is so commonly the case in epileptics) the usual medicines to keep up a natural action have been required. I have used it with the precautions quinine requires in ague, attending to the general health, and endeavouring to remove and rectify faulty secretions, or any obvious local disorder. Some of the patients to whom I have given it have been in fair bodily health; in others the nervous system has been weak and excitable; in others weak and exhausted. In children it is advisable to begin with a few brisk purgatives, in case the epilepsy may depend on worms; and in young men the state of the urethra should be examined, as that state of debility kept up by seminal discharges, consequent on an irritable urethra, which so disposes the system to epilepsy, counteracts the beneficial influence of the medicine. If there is habitual costiveness, a simple dinner pill (as the compound rhubarb,) is necessary. When, with an excitable nervous system, there is a foul tongue, yellowish eye, turbid acid urine, and offensive motions, the state of the blood on which this depends must be corrected by a course of aperients, which excite the gastro-intestinal mucous membrane, liver, and kidneys, to throw off the impurities, without weakening the general powers, (aided by diet and hygienic means,) for unless the fluids are thus filtered and purified, no specific remedy can with any reason be expected to have a fair chance. I will briefly relate two cases which have impressed me strongly with the powers of the medicine, and the importance of steady perseverance.

One of these patients had been epileptic for some years; she was of an excitable nervous system, and had suffered much anxiety. During the year which preceded the use of the cotyledon, she had attacks of epilepsy every three weeks, the attacks consisting of eight or nine fits, lasting from twelve to twenty-four hours. She has, with few intervals, taken the cotyledon since April 1848, and she has had but one fit during the last seven months, and that a slight one. Her health was improved.

The second was a younger woman, about 22, who had been epileptic since she was six years old. She was muscularly strong, and her general health good, except costiveness, and slight leucorrhœa. The fits occurred once or twice a week, occasionally (but rarely)

there was an interval of three weeks. No remedies had been of any use. She began to take the extract in April, and continued it until October, with a few intermissions. The fits had become very few, and more like short fainting fits, in which she did not lose her consciousness. In November she went to France, and I learned a fortnight ago that she had had but two of these slight fainting fits since, and six months have elapsed.

Now, neither of these cases can be strictly said to be cured, the fits may return, but yet they are sufficient evidence to justify perseverance in other cases; for epilepsy does not wear itself out, but wears out the brain and the mind.

Through the kindness of the attendant surgeon I had an opportunity last year of trying the extract of cotyledon in five patients who were incarcerated for life in the workhouse, on account of epilepsy; they had been epileptic for 5, 8, 12, 30, and 58 years, and in all, the mind was weakened. I did not persevere more than three months, as the attacks, though fewer, still returned. Subsequent experience having shewn me that much greater perseverance was necessary, I examined the notes of these cases, and found on comparing the difference between the number of fits which the patients had before the use of the extract, and those which occurred during its employment, so striking a diminution as to supply confirmative evidence of its power.

The juice is prepared by bruising the leaves and leaf-stalks in a mortar, and expressing the juice from the bruised mass through a cloth. One teaspoonful twice a day of the juice. I have prescribed five grains of the extract, (which is made by evaporating this juice,) twice a day, and occasionally three times. It may happen that the disease may be much shortened by increasing the dose. This is matter for further trial. With a new remedy I have been cautious.

The cotyledon umbilicus grows very abundantly in Great Britain and Ireland; it is now in full leaf. It grows in Hampshire and Dorsetshire, on road-side banks and on stone walls. It has a thick, fleshy, light-green leaf, almost circular, with its fleshy foot-stalk inserted in the centre of the leaf, so as to give it a shallow cup-like or umbilicated depression. I have heard of it as matlock, in North and South Wales, and at Ilfracombe. Mr. Jones was kind enough to send me a considerable quantity from Jersey. The friends of a lady, (who is now taking it in Dublin,) have found it abundantly near that city, where the poor use it as poulitices. Professor Balfour, of Edinburgh, tells me that he has gathered it in many places on the west coast of Scotland, and near Galway, in Ireland, as well as in England.

I should be very much obliged if any member of our Association, who may try this remedy, would favour me at some future time by sending the particulars of his cases, as I hope, when time has added confirmation to my experience, to communicate more in detail to the Society the results.

I cannot finish this communication without repeating that disappointment will surely follow, if the patient

and the practitioner are not willing to persevere, and unless, besides the assumed specific, each case is not treated for its individual peculiarities. But as epilepsy is an intermittent, with intervals often of six months, a short cure is not to be expected, and no treatment is rational in any case unless strictly individualized.

REMARKS, HISTORICAL AND PRACTICAL, ON DISEASES OF INFANTS.*

BY E. COPEMAN, M.D., NORWICH,
Consulting Accoucheur to the Norwich Lying-in Charity.

In 1767 an account of the diseases most incident to children was published by Dr. George Armstrong. It does not appear that the diseases of children were much studied or understood in this country before the publication of Dr. Armstrong's work, for he speaks of hydrocephalus almost as a novelty, and the possibility of its being cured but just ascertained. In his remarks on the diseases of children in general, he ably refutes the opinion, at that time very prevalent, and even now by no means universally discarded, that because infants have not the means of expressing their feelings, or describing their complaints by words, there is nothing to be done for them when ill, owing to the difficulty the physician has to encounter in endeavouring to ascertain the nature of their diseases. It would be out of date now to enlarge upon this subject, the prejudice against the medical treatment of children's diseases is confined almost to old women, and but few of the present race of educated medical practitioners will not acknowledge that, to say nothing of the interest necessarily connected with the power to contribute to the relief of the most helpless and interesting part of creation, there is but little more difficulty in distinguishing and treating the diseases of infancy than those of adult age; indeed, in many respects, there is less. In infancy there is no guile, there are no evil habits to counteract; in infancy disease runs a more natural course, is less biased by the counteracting powers of moral and physical intemperance; in infancy there is more certainty in the action of medicines, less disappointment in their effects, so that if the use of them be properly understood, their beneficial influence may be more safely relied upon. It is true that ignorance renders the treatment of infantile diseases not only difficult but extremely hazardous, but knowledge is power, to the effectual relief of many little sufferers.

Dr. Armstrong considers *inward fits* the most common complaint incident to infants. "The child appears as if asleep, only the eyelids are not quite closed; and if you observe them narrowly, you shall see the eyes frequently twinkle, with the white of them turned up. There is a kind of tremulous motion in the muscles of the face and lips, which produces something like a smile, or sometimes almost the appearance of a laugh. As the disorder increases, the