as to the power the patient has to contend against the depressing effects of suppuration and irritation; the surgeon feeling satisfied that, if there be sufficient stamina to withstand the effects of the discharge, the patient will recover. Where, however, the injury is of such a character as to preclude the possibility of saving the limb, and amputation becomes a mere question of time, the first favorable opportunity must be embraced for the operation.

CONVULSIONS

DURING

DELIRIUM EBRIOSUM.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—In Dr. Lynch's paper on Delirium Ebriosum, accompanied with Epileptiform Convulsions, published in the last number of your Journal, he states it as a curious circumstance that the only cases we can discover "of recovery after epileptiform convulsions are these alluded to in this article," &c. As recovery is confessedly rare, perhaps another instance or two may not be unacceptable; I therefore forward the following cases, which prove that recovery may, and generally I think does, take place when the attack is ushered in by convulsions, accompanied with a strong and full pulse, indicating the propriety of using depletion; and so far from considering them a fatal indication at the commencement, I should be more inclined to the belief that convulsions are not to be viewed as invariably dangerous; it is, however, far otherwise when they come on later or towards the termination of the disease.

On the 5th of April, 1839, I was summoned immediately to see Mrs. B., the wife of a publican, of well-known intemperate habits, whom I found sitting up, or, at least, supported on the sofa, laboring under the most frightful paroxysms of convulsions I ever witnessed; the features were most horribly distorted and dreadfully livid, presenting a most unnatural appearance; upon inquiry from her husband I found, to use his own words, "she had been at her old tricks again;" in fact she had been, for several days, indulging freely in the use of her favorite beverages—porter and brandy. As she was a stout and gross personage I did not hesitate to abstract about sixteen ounces of blood from the arm, which had the effect of quieting the paroxysm. When she rallied a little her eye fell upon her husband, and, suddenly grasping my arm, cried out, "Oh, doctor, there!—there he is, the old devil! Oh, for God's sake! keep him from me—keep him from me—he'll tear me to pieces!" &c., and other such wild and extravagant expressions; this was immediately followed by another attack more severe than the first, so much so as to require several persons to hold and prevent her from inflicting serious injury upon her own person; her tongue, however, was severely bitten, and the bandage torn off the arm, &c. After this she was conveyed to bed, had a mustard plaster to the nape of the neck, and a bolus containing eight grains of calomel, five of camphor, and two of opium, made up with a sufficient quantity of the extract of hyoscyamus; an evaporating lotion was directed to be applied to the head, and hot bottles to the feet, &c. A turpentine

enema with assafœtida and castor oil was immediately thrown up, which had the effect of producing a most copious and flatulent evacuation. The patient had no return of the convulsions, but decided delirium ebriosum set in, which required the repeated use of the calomel, camphor, and opium, in diminished and frequently repeated doses, washed down with an effervescing saline mixture, containing hydrocyanic acid and morphia, the stomach being in a very irritable state. The daily history of the symptoms would only prove tedious; suffice it to say, that on the 8th (the third from the commencement of the attack) I found her up and attending to the duties of her bar, as unconcerned as if nothing had happened. I remonstrated with her on her conduct, stating the danger she had escaped, &c.; she only replied that her "poor mother suffered dreadfully from the same complaint at the time she was born, and that she must always expect to have those nasty convulsions!" I have reason, however, to believe there was no truth in this statement, as she merely made this as an excuse for her intemperance, which few ladies are willing to admit themselves guilty of. I am not aware that she has since had any return of the disease, as her husband has long since given up business, and she has returned to service in a gentleman's family, where, of course, the temptations are not quite so great, besides being obliged to be more guarded in her habits; she never had any children, and had before served most of her life in a nobleman's establishment as house-keeper.

I am, also, occasionally in the habit of attending a respectable tradesman, who indulges very freely in the use of spirituous liquors, and who frequently is attacked with delirium tremens or ebriosum; in his case the attacks are invariably ushered in with convulsions, but not of so violent a nature as in the first case, being more of an universal tremor or shaking of the whole body which continues for several minutes accompanied by complete insensibility, twitching of the mouth, and rolling of the eyes, &c., followed by delirium tremens; this state generally yields to the application of several leeches to the head, a mustard cataplasm to the nape of the neck and pit of the stomach, followed up by full doses of calomel and opium. In the first attacks I used generally to bleed him, but I now trust to leeches, cupping, and cold applications to the head, &c.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

WILLIAM GRIFFITH,

Surgeon to the Oswestry Dispensary.

Feb. 14, 1843.

MORTALITY IN FOUNDLING HOSPITALS.

The mortality in the Foundling Hospital at Vienna was at one period 60 per cent.; in the year 1812, as high as 69 per cent. Since then, however, the mortality has gradually fallen; in 1823, only 20 per cent. died; in 1826, only 14 per cent.; in the year 1829, 23 per cent. During the last ten years the mortality never exceeded 20 per cent.—*Ost. Wochen.* No. 52, 1842.