GRINDERS' ASTHMA.

By CHARLES V. FAVELL, M.D.,

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It is doubtless known to the majority of the readers of your valuable Journal that the grinders in Sheffield suffer much from a pulmonary affection known by the name of "*grinders' asthma*." This disease most frequently affects those who are employed in what is called *dry grinding*, and amongst this class of persons it occasions a fearful mortality. There has hitherto been considerable difficulty in obtaining an examination of the bodies of those who have fallen victims to this distressing malady, and to this circumstance we are to ascribe the fact of the pathology of the disease being very indifferently understood. Before any general conclusions can satisfactorily be drawn, a great number of facts, in the shape of cases accompanied by *post mortem* examinations, ought to be accumulated. Hasty generalisations from insufficient data are calculated both to mislead the profession and to prevent accurate inquiry.

For a long time past the general and physical signs and morbid appearances of grinders' asthma have occupied a considerable share of my attention, and I purpose, whenever the Provincial Association visits Sheffield, to bring the subject fully under their consideration. It appears to me to be expedient to postpone the exposition of my own views till I have the opportunity of illustrating them by an adequate number of pathological specimens, and, of course, their removal from Sheffield would be attended with difficulty and danger. In the mean time, however, I shall probably forward to you the particulars of such cases as may henceforth occur to me either in public or private practice, *but such communications will not be accompanied by any comments.*

I attended the post mortem examination of the following case on the day of my return from the anniversary meeting of the Provincial Association, at Leeds:—

H. Hugil, a stout, robust man, aged thirty-five, was apprenticed to a razor-grinder at thirteen years of age. As a boy, he always enjoyed very good health, and, in fact, never suffered from any complaint, except such as are incident to childhood, and from those he speedily recovered. During his apprenticeship he became affected with a hard, dry cough, which never entirely left him. Several years ago he had an attack of pleurisy on the left side, for which he was bled and blistered; and at a subsequent period he suffered from cholera. Except on these occasions, he was never confined by illness; for a long time past he led a very dissipated life, drank very hard, and sometimes for a week together, but was never absent from work on any account for a longer period. His mother says that, whilst he was in his usual health, he occasionally "*spit blood*," but she also says that he was very subject to epistaxis, and she cannot tell whether the spitting of blood usually happened when there was hæmorrhage from the nose or not. He never made any complaint of dyspnoea or palpitation of the heart. About ten days ago he was seized with an acute attack of pleuro-pneumonia on the right side, and died after a few days' illness. His father and mother are both living in the enjoyment of good health at an

advanced age. No member of the family ever had phthisis.

Post-mortem Examination.

The chest, as well as the rest of the body, well developed. No emaciation. On opening the chest the pleura on the right side were partially united by adhesions which were easily broken down, and manifestly of recent origin. The right cavity of the chest contained a few ounces of sero-sanguinolent effusion, and the pleura covering the lung on the same side was partially covered with recent lymph. The middle lobe of the right lung, the two inferior thirds of the superior lobe, and nearly the whole of the inferior lobe, were in a state of red hepatisation. The upper portion of the superior lobe was slightly emphysematous, and in the centre of it was a portion, about the size of a hazel nut, which was dark colored, and offered considerable resistance to the knife.

On the left side the pleura were very firmly adherent, and it required considerable force to separate them. The left lung was congested, but quite pervious to air, except in a circumscribed portion of the superior lobe, in the centre of which there was a space, two inches long by an inch and a half broad, where the pulmonary tissue was extremely dense, of a dark grey color, and had the hardness of recently formed cartilage. There was no gritty deposit in any part of either lung, nor the slightest appearance of tubercle. The bronchial glands were neither enlarged nor indurated. The heart large and flabby, and the pericardium contained a quantity of bloody serum.

Sheffield, August 7, 1843.

CASE OF CRIMINAL ABORTION.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—I beg to enclose the following case of criminal abortion, which, if you deem it fit for insertion in your valuable Journal, by so doing you will oblige your most obedient, humble servant,

GEORGE WEEKES.

Hurstpierpoint, Sussex, August, 1843.

About midnight on the 28th of December, 1842, I was summoned to attend Jane Hole, about four miles distant, whom the father (who came for me) thought had taken poison. She was seventeen years of age, unmarried, of a healthy disposition, short and corpulent, and about seven months advanced in pregnancy. She had ate and drank well during the day, and was cheerful; had gone to bed about ten, apparently well; was suddenly seized with vomiting; shortly after it was very severe, and violent convulsions succeeded it, and she became gradually insensible. When I arrived I found her vomiting, comatose, with stertorous breathing, with paroxysms of convulsions recurring every ten or fifteen minutes. The vomiting was very severe and incessant; the pulse very frequent. I opened the veins in both arms; she was a fat subject, and the veins were very diminutive, and did not bleed freely. I examined, *per vaginam*, the os uteri; it was not dilated; there were no labor pains. She frothed at the mouth, breathed hard through the nostrils, and with