Now, Mr. Meddler errs in every particular. The wood-spider bring forth their young in "perfect form." We have shown that one of the articles removed on the 20th of March was a *sacculus containing ova*. Again, his idea of their passage into the eye at the moment of accident is disproved, because I have stated the extreme care with which I repeatedly examined that organ and all its appendages; and *surely if the extraordinary number discharged from first to last had been lodged therein, they could not have escaped observation*. They were not in the nostril, for I have also said that due exploration was there made; moreover, the communication between the nose and eyes *even in a healthy condition*, could not possibly have admitted the passage of bodies as large as many of these spiders were, much less under the high state of inflammation and swelling in which they were almost constantly found. Lastly, Mr. Meddler, deriving his history of the case solely from newspaper reports, originating with persons unacquainted with its character and progress, errs in thinking that the spiders were only "at different stages of maturity," and not of different species. The spiders removed from the eye were subjected to close microscopic examination by myself, assisted by several professional gentlemen accustomed to scientific investigations, among whom was the Rev. Dr. Bachman, whose reputation precludes all doubt, and we discovered at least *three different species*, distinguished by the anatomical classification of *Latreille, Walkenar, and Hentz*. But even supposing them to have been lodged "in perfect form," the fact that they were subjected to a residence in depraved secretions unfit to preserve the lives of insects, forbids the belief that they could have reached the different stages of size and maturity which they presented, much less so then could we suppose them to have been hatched by incubation either in the eyes or nostrils. I am, then, constrained to discard from my mind the presumption that they were lodged and perfected *previously to their discharge*, or that they were placed there by the patient in a *healthy condition of feeling*, and with a desire to impose.

The only suggestion left for my adoption is this:—That from all the preceding history of my patient, there existed a want of nervous integrity, so operating upon the mind as to produce the form of disease which I have distinguished in my text as *hysteric monomania*; and I am induced to think that the various types of mental irregularities, which an unbalanced nervous system is so familiarly known to produce, sustain the belief. It is needless, on this occasion, to investigate the diversified operations of the human mind in its physical and pathological relations, or to refer to the multifiform phases it is capable of assuming under the excitement to which it is subjected by the agents which are perpetually at work upon its impressionable nature; suffice it to say, that the history of the different forms of insanity, from the highest degree of concentrated fury to the most subtle shade of the mind's day-dream, present arguments and examples sufficiently numerous to render my view of this case at least plausible.

At the incipency of the case, I do not for an instant doubt the presence of those fragments of spiders, and perhaps one or two entire, but my opinion is, that

subsequently terror, superinduced upon the idiosyncrasy described, dethroned the judgment; hallucination usurped its seat; a morbid concatenation was excited, and the patient, under the control of this influence, was urged irresistibly to introduce them from day to day, until the morbid series was exhausted. I cannot express myself more forcibly than by adopting the language of M. Ollivier addressed to the court at Paris, in behalf of a young girl arraigned for the murder of an infant. She confessed to *have given it ten pins to swallow from time to time*. M. Ollivier said, "he was inclined to attribute the present act to *one of those unaccountable perverse impulses which are not unfrequent in certain females, more especially about their menstrual periods*." (*Lancette Francaise*, 1839.) M. Dupuytren says, "I have seen, at the Hotel Dieu, a great number of women and children who *had been affected with the strange mania of swallowing pins and needles*." He then gives the case in detail, and concludes by saying, "On examining the body after death, *several hundred pins and needles* were found scattered through the viscera, muscles, cellular substance, &c."

I will, lastly, merely refer to that extraordinary form of insanity described in the "*Journal de Progres*," for 1828, under the title of *Periodical Vino-Mania*. It is reported by M. Pierquin, who says, "The disorder commenced fifteen years ago in the shape of an *irresistible impulse* to swallow wine day and night without the possibility of satiety. The *paroxysms* last from two to three months, with an interval of equal duration, when it returns again *without any prodrome* that might indicate its approach."

I here close this case, extraordinary in its character under any aspect, and, if my view of it be a correct one, it will afford another to the many which are to be found in nearly every work professing to analyze the yet inscrutable character of the human mind.—*Amer. Journ. Med. Sci.*, July 1843.

Mobile, Ala., April 26, 1843.

ON THE USE OF BLEEDING IN SOME CASES OF MENTAL DERANGEMENT;

WITH CASES.

No. II.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL
JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—There is another class of cases of mental derangement, to which I would draw the attention of the practitioner, requiring the use of the lancet more or less freely, according to circumstances; and these are cases which appear in the first beginning to be traceable to some mechanical injury. But as they are not all distinguished by the broad lineaments which mark the approach of other diseases, or even other forms of this disease, they in some measure challenge his foresight to detect them, or rather, to anticipate them; for the admonition of Dr. Graves, which I took the occasion to allude to in my last paper, comes into bearing with equal, if not with increased, force in the cases now to be considered. The after consequences of some of these cases are often most distressing, the

mental malady being combined with so much bodily infirmity, and the chances of cure being so painfully remote. A person in ascending a ladder, or standing upon an eminence, or pulling from a horse or carriage, receives a blow which produces no apparent injury, beyond a slight discoloration of the soft parts, and perhaps even this trifling mark of the injury that has been done to the general system is absent; no bone is broken, no symptoms of concussion ensue, and except that a slight feeling of faintness takes place, there is no reason to suppose there will be any further consequences. Happy would it have been for many a poor creature, who has passed years of his after life without the use of his reason, having previously been exposed to such an accident, had the active symptoms of concussion obliged him to be bled as soon as those of faintness had passed over, or that the injury of the nervous matter of the brain had been quieted or broken by the concurrence of a simple or even a compound fracture. Probably in such a case as I have stated, no medical assistance is sought after. This is the plan adopted in some instances, while in by far the greater number of the remainder the surgeon does not feel that he is called upon to abstract blood where there are no symptoms to require it. The person on whom the accident has fallen remains well for a week or two, or probably longer, and with the exception that the bowels are torpid and the appetite not very great, nothing occurs to create alarm or even suspicion. After this, if symptoms of acute mania come on, we have the various concomitant symptoms of that malady to direct our treatment, which, if active and judicious, is often far more frequently successful than when other causes give rise to the disease. But if it assume a more marked, or a more chronic form, we have often great change of character and a peculiar singularity of symptoms, which are not referred to the true cause and are often regarded as characteristic of spinal irritation, or classed under that safe receptacle for all unknown diseases—that opprobrium of nosology—hysteria. These latter cases in young females are most distressing and complicated, often leading to a weakness of mind, which makes them the tools of others; while their liberty, such as it is, is secured to them as a consequence of the inoffensive nature of the case. I am sorry to bear testimony to the fact of such cases being made use of, to further the ends of charlatans and Mesmerists, as a multitude of published, and I fear unpublished, cases fully prove. The dupes of the Romish priesthood, too, are often required to listen to such marvellous accounts, which, to use the words of Dr. Binns, “*oppose phenomena which are inexplicable by any of the known laws of nature*” (not even excepting those of the nervous system, of which we know quite enough to be satisfied that the phenomena, though inexplicable, are not, therefore, supernatural). They are accordingly referred to *divine* causes. The case of the Estatica of Monte Sansavino, mentioned in the “Anatomy of Sleep,” is one to the point. The poor girl fell down stairs at the age of sixteen, and from that time all the wonder working performances which she went through commenced, and may, in the strictest pathological sense, be traced and referred to a decided injury which the brain received at the time of the accident alluded to. The proof of that injury was

clearly shown by the immediate occurrence of a convulsion. Was this case bled, or brought under any medical or surgical treatment? If she fell among priests, the question is answered. Nor must we be surprised at any consequences, however marvellous or calamitous. If the brain were really to recover its healthy function, after such convulsions as occasionally follow concussion of the brain in scrofulous children, the patient not having been bled, we might with greater reason give vent to our surprise, than that such consequences as followed in this case should have been the return for such neglect. In such cases I have seen the convulsion yield to the flow of blood, and never recur, the patient being perfectly well a fortnight after the concussion. But we do not always have such beacons as these to mark the dangers that threaten us, as the following case will show:—

CASE IV.—A farmer's wife and her daughter were riding home in their gig, when some accident occurred to throw them both out; the mother dislocated her shoulder, but the daughter received her chief injury in the head and face. She was eighteen years of age, of a sanguine temperament, and rather stout. As the outward bruises were not serious, her medical attendant did not at the time see any necessity for the abstraction of blood. The bruises healed, and she went on tolerably well for two months, with the exception of her feeling very weak and nervous. At this time she was attacked with mania. Her excitement was very great, and she continued for several weeks unconscious of any one about her. Still she was not bled. After the attack had subsided, and her senses had partially returned, she consulted a physician, who placed a seton in her neck, and this was kept in for nearly a twelvemonth, when she was thought to be well. A few months after this she became excited while riding in a gig, but she was not at this time brought under any medical treatment, but continued on occasionally subject to hysteric fits, for two years. She now for the first time was brought under my care, in consequence of the disturbed state of her mind. She could not sleep, or if she dozed off for a few minutes, she awoke in the greatest fear. She complained of pain in the head. She fancied every one was unkind to her, although she was the anxious care of every member of the family. Her appetite was very fickle, and at times, after she had taken food, she had a sensation of sinking, and felt that she could not possibly rally. Her spirits were painfully low, and she could not occupy her mind, or employ herself in any way; yet she did not lose her consciousness as on the former occasion. She was treated with active depletion, for she was stout and florid; and after the bowels had been freely acted upon, and leeches repeatedly applied to the temples, the pain in the head left her in some measure, and her sleep returned. She was also less restless, and the sinking feeling was less painful; yet she was not herself, and I placed another seton in her neck. It is now three months since the seton was made; but though depletion has been carried to a prudent extent, I find there is not the corresponding improvement in the mind. She cannot fix herself to any occupation, and there is a little wandering. I have sent her away for change of scene, but I have the greatest fear that

this case will end in the loss of mind. My belief is, that had blood been abstracted four years ago, when she was thrown from the gig, no further mischief would have ensued. To confirm this, I will state another case, which came under my treatment a few months ago, and which is now quite recovered, though it occurred under much more unfavorable circumstances.

CASE V.—By occupation a groom, twenty-one years of age. Insanity is hereditary in the family. Sanguineous temperament. Four years ago he received a violent kick in the face from a horse; the hæmorrhage was so great that I had fears of his recovery. The wound, however, went on favorably, and he was well enough to work as usual in three weeks after. On the 8th of July last he was again kicked in the chest by a horse. He was not bled; and after several days, as he manifested a great alteration in his manner, his master sent him home. I saw him exactly a fortnight afterwards. He was quite deranged, talking very incoherently, and indulging in every extravagance within his reach. His pulse was full, and he was bled to twenty ounces. The bowels were well purged, and I gave him the infusion of hop. He improved from this time. His sleep became tranquil, his talkativeness left him, and in a month from the time he was bled he was able again to go to service, and is now doing very well. The following case is also instructive, inasmuch as it shows the advantage of bleeding in mania when the cause arises from a mechanical injury, while at the same time it urges upon us the necessity of abstracting blood after the body has been exposed to a great shock, though no outward sign appears to denote its necessity or to point to the impending evil.

CASE VI.—A respectable tradesman, aged about thirty-eight, of a spare habit, was getting up into a loft, when the top rail of the ladder gave way, and he was precipitated backwards about eight feet on the stone, pitching below. He broke no bone, and I could not ascertain that he struck his head. There was a considerable bruise on his arm and side, but he felt no inconvenience beyond the bruise. He applied to a surgeon, who did not think there was sufficient necessity for the abstraction of blood, and he went on for a week apparently as usual. There was, however, a little more excitement than he usually showed, although it was unheeded by the family, and there was no action of the bowels during the week. On the eighth day I was called to see him, when I found him laboring under an acute attack of mania. He was very violent, and foaming at the mouth, and he required the assistance of several persons to keep him from doing mischief. I put a graduated lancet into his arm, and while he was in an upright position I abstracted thirty-four ounces of blood before he fainted. Having recovered this shortly afterwards, I placed his head over a foot-pan, and avoiding his face I poured about a gallon of water in a stream over the calvaria, the hair being previously shaved off. After this operation he was as quiet as a mouse. The pulse, which was before not very easily to be counted, now beat about 60. He did not close his eyes during the night, but there was no return of the paroxysm for more than thirty hours. On the following day there was a return of the paroxysm, when I placed a row

of cupping-glasses along the sagittal suture and down the occiput, but he fainted at the loss of four ounces of blood, his diet having been nothing but toast water since the first attack. For several days the paroxysms returned. The cold application to the head in the manner above stated was continued, and his bowels were well purged; and I considered him so much improved, that on the thirteenth day I gave him a strong infusion of hop, with a saline aperient, which kept his bowels acting. His sleep was now quite returned, and in three weeks from the day I was called in I pronounced him to be well. His intellect was so far returned that he recollected all that had occurred, talked rationally and calmly, and was recovering his usual state of health. The danger, however, of these cases, in spite of remonstrances, is often when the medical attendant ceases to overlook the patient; and in this case, I am sorry to say, there was so much confidence in the amendment produced, that the friends became careless, and, being exposed to several exciting scenes when he ought to have been quiet, he became more wandering in his mind, and the necessity for his removal from home was obvious, if a restoration of mind was desired, and he accordingly left his home; since which time he has been gradually improving, though his mind at the time I am writing is not strong enough to bear the excitement of the family.

I cannot, therefore, from the experience which I have had, too strongly urge the necessity of bleeding in all cases after severe falls, though no symptoms may appear to indicate it, unless it is contraindicated by any delicate state of the constitution. If one fellow creature is spared the misery of passing years of his life without the use of his mind, by such a method having been adopted, and these observations have been the means of prompting such a mode of treatment, I shall not consider I have done an unnecessary thing in making known my opinion. Moreover, if many of those cases of hysteria which are generally so lightly regarded, were subjected to timely and judicious depletion, and brought under a more lengthened process of treatment, than in multitudes of cases they are thought to require, I am confident we should hear less of those cases of suicide in young females which alike disgrace the public journals, and disgust the public mind.

The cases of insanity which I have given, as connected with the division of the vessels of the throat, are instructing, and ought not to pass without some further observation. It is evident, in the first case, that if length of time only is necessary to constitute organic disease of the brain, it ought to have been well established here. Yet, how can we reconcile the total removal of the disease after thirty years' standing, by the flow of blood from the throat, if the disease had amounted to a lesion of the cerebral structure. We are, therefore, led to entertain ideas that are contrary to all published tables, and apparently opposed to the experience of the most practical members of the profession in this department—namely, that length of time does not form so complete a barrier to recovery as many are disposed to think. I am not anxious to convey the idea that bleeding from the arm in this case would have effected so desirable an issue as the more hazardous course that was pursued—so effectually achieved. But I think it establishes two facts that

require strengthening by further experience—namely, that organic disease does not necessarily exist after thirty years of mental derangement, and that the immediate removal of blood from the vessels of the brain in the most chronic forms of the disease, is not always attended with those unfavorable results which many suppose are the consequence of depletion when the disease has been so long standing. I am inclined to believe, though I say so without any experience of that particular mode of treatment, that if Dr. Wallis's* method of counter-irritation, in which considerable hæmorrhage takes place, were brought to bear upon some old cases of mental disease, that the hope of recovery would not be entirely shut out, as in their present position it must continue to be.

The other case, No. II, unequivocally shows how completely the disease was arrested at the first outbreak by emptying the vessels of the head. Yet in this case I would not be understood to infer that general bleeding could have accomplished the same favorable results. Knowing the paradoxical position into which pathologists have been placed, by the results which have followed recent experiments to ascertain the true physiology of the cerebral circulation, it would be culpable in me to attempt any explanation. These are the cases, faithfully stated, and I leave them as they are without further comment.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

C. M. BURNETT.

Westbrook-house, Alton, Hants, Sept., 1843.

PROVINCIAL MEDICAL JOURNAL

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1843.

In some of the earlier volumes of the "Medical and Physical Journal" will be found an account of the application of cold water in the treatment of gout, rheumatism, and other affections. This, however, by no means constitutes the earliest record of the effects of this method of treating disease. Hydropathy, like Mesmerism, seems to have had, at different times, its phases of increase and decrease, and to afford one of those periodical, or rather paroxysmal, aberrations of the human intellect which the annals of imposture and credulity rejoice in. Therapeutics, equally with pathology, has its theories and systems, which for a time prevail; and if certain epidemic constitutions seem to conduce to and regulate the types of disease, there are corresponding, if not equally well founded, variations in the mental constitutions of those who are, or conceive themselves to be, called upon to direct the treatment of disease.

The therapeutic constitution, to which these observations more immediately refer, took its rise about the close of the last century, and was at its height at the commencement of the present; and the hydro-

pathic notions which form its prominent feature seem to have then originated with a member of the medical profession, and, divested of the empiricism which has characterised and disgraced the later exhibitions of a similar nature, to have undergone full investigation at the hands of competent observers. The utility of the cold affusion and aspersion with cold water, in fevers of various types, had been pointed out a short time before by Dr. Currie, and the extension of the application of cold water externally and internally to other diseases was, perhaps, a natural sequel to the researches of that eminent physician. Accordingly, as early as the year 1799, we find Dr. Kinglake reporting a case of what he terms inflamed glutei muscles, for the relief of which wet bandages were constantly applied to the inflamed parts. The case is headed "A Case of Inflammation on the Glutei Muscles, &c., of a threatening tendency, and accompanied with violent symptoms of general irritability, speedily repressed and cured by the combined internal and external use of Cold Water." It presents nothing novel or interesting; the local inflammatory symptoms had been obviously aggravated by improper treatment in the first instance, but were quickly removed by the substitution of cold water for warm cataplasms and stimulant embrocations, the cure being evidently much aided by the use of saline aperients. The practice, in such a case, is only alluded to here to show that the application of "folded cloths, moistened in cold spring water," to an inflamed part is neither the invention of Preitsnitz and his disciples, nor a novel mode of treating inflammatory disease.

Dr. Kinglake, however, was not content with the treatment of simple external inflammation by the cooling process, so well known and estimated by surgeons of the present and past times, but proceeded to found a theory thereon, to erect a system of therapeutics, and to extend the application of it to other diseases in which increase of temperature was manifested. The modern hydropathist, it will be observed, goes still further, transferring the cold-water treatment into a nostrum, or universal panacea, applicable also to diseases in which there is no elevation of temperature, local or general, and, to the exclusion of all other remedial means, adapted to remove or alleviate every ailment which human flesh is heir to. In the year 1802, Dr. Kinglake first gave to the public some cases of gout treated by the external application of cold water, and the simplicity of the treatment, the immediate relief to pain, the benefit apparently derived from it, and the plausible manner in which its presumed advantages were set forth, soon procured for Dr. Kinglake a succession of patients, upon whom fresh trials might be made, and induced other medical practitioners to test its powers. Cases bearing testimony to the efficacy of cold water in this

* See the last volume of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Transactions, p. 307.