

since ranked him among the first of his profession, he is outvied by the meanest charlatan ; and has the daily mortification of seeing empirics, of every name, luxuriating in ill-gotten wealth, while as a practitioner he is neglected and almost unknown. At last, whether discouraged or disgusted, I know not, he has stricken the title of doctor from his door-plate, and nothing now remains but his simple but respected name. His present position, however, fully shows that he is appreciated by those who are capable of doing so.

From what precedes, it is plain that a remote but efficient cause of empiricism is the crowded state of the profession ; and that the only remedy is to check the rapid increase of numbers. This can be done in no better way than by raising the standard of requirements for a medical degree. Every student should be compelled to *attend* the prescribed number of lectures, and pass a rigid and searching examination before he receives his degree. If the American Medical Association, instead of discussing the question "whether the lecture term should be lengthened?" would turn their attention to this point, they might confer a favor upon the cause of medicine.

I have thus spoken, with freedom, upon a point on which as yet little has been said, with the hope of inducing some abler pen to take up the subject.

Yours respectfully,

Lynn, November 29th, 1849.

I. F. GALLOUPE, M.D.

IODINE IN BITES OF VENOMOUS REPTILES

[Communicated for the Boston Med. and Surg. Journal.]

My first use of iodine in a case of bite from a venomous reptile, and which led to its general use in such cases, was accidental to me, and occurred some three years since. While then practising medicine and surgery in Ohio, I was one day sitting to have my daguerreotype taken, when one of my patrons came in haste to have me see a friend, a young lady, who had been bitten, as she supposed, by a black snake. Not having my medicine case with me, and being at a loss what to do, as it was the first case of the kind I had ever attended or seen, I proposed to the artist that he should lend me his iodine bottle ; and in a jocular manner he answered, in return, that if I wanted to kill the lady, he would lend it to me. I however took it with me, not intending to use it, but only for a show. I found the lady sitting up, but unable to inform me what her feelings were. The snake had been killed during the messenger's absence, and proved to be a large black rattle-snake. She was bitten about four inches above the ankle, on the anterior part of the extremity. There were two points of entrance to the teeth of the snake. This was about four hours after she had been bitten. I immediately made a free incision into the integuments, about three inches long and three fourths of an inch deep. It bled freely. I then put a ligature about the extremity below the knee, not knowing what else to do. It had, however, previous to this, commenced swelling above that joint. I

applied a pledget of cotton to the wound, well saturated with the "tinct. iodine," which was twice the common pharmaceutical strength. I also gave her five drops of the "tinct. iodine," and also washed the extremity with a weaker solution of it, as far as the extremity was swollen, and left, advising them to continue the treatment. I called again in eight hours; found her insensible, entirely so, with occasional vomiting and hiccoughing. I had, in the mean time, procured a strong decoction of the "mouse-ear plantain," as it is usually called, and intended to use it. Finding the lady, however, in this situation, and the tumefaction increasing with less rapidity than it had two or three hours before, I concluded to continue the same treatment, giving it in larger doses of from ten to twenty drops once in five hours. After about two hours, she gradually came to her senses, to the great joy of her friends, and no less chagrin of a homœopathist, "who declared several times that she was dying." In about twenty hours she felt perfectly easy, eat a hearty meal of victuals, and with the exception of an unpleasant sensation from the extension of the integuments from tumefaction, felt perfectly well. The swelling had risen above the hip some six inches, and even extended to the other extremity. I then left her in the care of the nurse, recommending them to use only remedies to reduce the extensive inflammation. In three days she visited me at my office, although she had not regained the entire use of the limb. The corroding effect of the iodine was quite perceptible, as there was considerable desquamation of the cuticle wherever it was applied.

I may be mistaken, but after using the tincture in this and every other case that I have had, and which were of all ages, from 4 to 60 years, I have come to the conclusion that it is the only sure antidote to the poisonous bites of all species of reptiles. My faith in the specific effects of iodine is so strong, that could it be applied soon, say five hours, I should feel willing to test it at any time on my own person. I have come to the conclusion that its power rests in its being equally distributed by the absorbents of the skin with the venom, which acts as a strong congestive power, and being thus brought into contact with it destroys its morbid influence by combining with and forming a new agent, viz., a venomo-iodide, which is subsequently carried off by the exhalant organs as refuse matter.

Yours respectfully,

Flowerfield, Mich., Nov., 1849.

S. L. HENRICK, M.D.

THE BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, DECEMBER 12, 1849.

Statistics and Reports on Cholera.—So much has been said and written, the civilized world over, on the subject of cholera—its origin, mode of extension, treatment and fatality—that some medical men actually loathe an article that bears a cholera caption. Others, however, feel the importance of preserving the collected facts and statistical records of

The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal as published by

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