

**BROMIDE OF POTASSIUM.**

By S. W. D. WILLIAMS, M.D., L.R.C.P., L. & C.

Seeing some remarks in a late number of the *Lancet* on the action of bromide of potassium, and having tried the drug extensively for the last five months, it has occurred to me that a few observations on its action may not be unacceptable to your readers.

Through the kindness of Dr. Wing, the superintendent of the Northampton General Lunatic Asylum, I have been enabled freely to try it in as many as thirty-seven cases. These were all epileptics; and I append a table showing in one column the number of fits registered during the last five months of last year, when they were taking no medicine; and in the other the number registered during the first five months of this year, when each case was taking on an average ten grains of the salt twice daily.

I may premise that the greatest care was taken that, for the whole of the ten months during which these thirty-seven patients were under observation, their lives, with the exception of taking the Bromide during the last five, should be spent under as near as possible the same circumstances.

From the following table it will be seen that the number of fits amongst the males decreased by 306, and amongst the females by 157; that all the patients but five males and six females were benefited more or less; that the improvement was, however, more apparent amongst the males than the females; but that no patient of either sex was entirely cured. It is right to remark that all these patients are more or less insane, and many of them extremely violent at times.

Males' Names.	Fits during the five months of 1873.		Females' Names.	Fits during the five months of 1874.	
	1st five months of 1873.	1st five months of 1874.		1st five months of 1873.	1st five months of 1874.
W. M.	148	107	E. H.	23	12
J. R.	25	24	L. K.	23	12
J. B.	22	21	M. N.	23	12
J. J.	24	21	F. H.	23	12
W. L.	55	37	E. W.	50	11
S. L. B.	19	24	C. S.	17	11
C. H.	40	24	S. A.	22	11
G. H.	72	43	M. L.	20	11
C. H.	112	102	A. S.	41	11
G. M.	47	31	E. G.	48	11
W. W.	36	27	H. W.	1	11
J. L. M.	33	25	W. L.	57	11
T. G.	13	4	A. C.	11	11
R. G.	31	9	M. P.	1	11
J. K.	25	16	S. A. P.	57	11
E. E.	8	14	S. A.	1	11
W. G.	16	10	S. S.	13	11
W. M.	29	14	E. G.	13	11
J. J.	8	13			11
	1022	706		1127	970

Mr. Henry Behrend, the writer in the *Lancet*, confines his remarks to the powerful effect this drug has on "insomnia and restlessness, accompanied and dependent on nervous excitement and irritability," and his statements my own observations fully corroborate; but I have not the same confidence in recommending, as he does, the untempered use of half-drachm doses, for in several of the cases recorded above it was found necessary to reduce even the average of ten grains twice a day, and, in the majority, the first use of the drug was accompanied by sickness and lassitude.

Those patients on whom the drug seemed to take the most effect in this way were seven in number;

after using it for a few days the action of their hearts became slow and fluttering, the eye lost its lustre, the skin was cold and clammy; they had a worried, anxious look, and complained of headache and sickness, and shivering, and of unusual weakness at the knees, and invariably sat or crouched up by the fireside all day, evidently devoid of all energy and resolution. Curiously enough, in all the cases thus powerfully affected, the fits were increased instead of diminished.

The drug excited hypercatharsis in two patients, which was repeated again and again each time it was renewed; the fits in both these cases were diminished; in the case of the female from 41 to 22.

One patient, S. A., was apparently, five months ago, one of the most healthy persons in the house, fat, strong, and rosy; but soon after taking the bromide, the peculiar symptoms, described above, developed themselves, and the medicine was immediately omitted; but, although she rallied a little, her system never thoroughly recovered itself; tubercles became developed in the lungs, and she died towards the end of April. Truth compels me to confess that I have my doubts whether the bromide of potassium had not something to do with this poor girl's death; at all events, the occurrence has made me very watchful when using it.

On the other hand, considerable benefit has arisen from its use; in some cases it undoubtedly exercises a most powerful influence on the nervous system, and often soothes the irritability of epilepsy, even if it does not diminish the frequency of the fits, when no other medicine will take any effect, and in this way will be found a most valuable adjunct to the repertory of an asylum dispenser. I cannot think that it has much effect, however, on the sexual system, for in some cases where it was used more especially with that view, there was no apparent result; but of its power of inducing sleep in cases dependent on nervous irritability there can be no doubt, and often from ten to twenty grains twice daily will suffice to effect this — *M. D. Times & Gaz.*

**FLOODING AFTER DELIVERY.**

By ROBERT CURRIE, Esq., of Weymouth.

A patient, resident in the country, in labour with her second child, was found, on my arrival, standing by the bed and holding the bed-post for support. The nurse had just extracted the placenta, which was in a chamber utensil placed between her legs, the child having been born a few minutes previously. I at once placed the patient in bed, and, on examination, found protruding from the vaginal part of the membranes, which extended into the uterus; these I removed. The uterus itself was contracted, and all was apparently going on well. In ten minutes from this time she complained of great pain in the back, and looked very pallid. On external examination, the uterus was found to be flaccid, but it contracted under pressure of the hand, and ejected about a pint of clotted arterial blood from the vagina. A pad and bandage were carefully applied, and all clothing, excepting a chemise, was removed. In half an hour, symptoms of hemorrhage again returned. On passing my hand into the vagina, I found the superior part of it filled with coagulated blood, the os uteri open, with its lips perfectly flaccid, and conveying the impression that I was handling part's as soft as flabby as the external labia vagina. The body of the uterus was fairly contracted, the internal part