

least 90 per cent. of all cases treated." By a reference to his first article on the subject, published in *The Lancet* of Aug. 21st, 1875, it appears that, during several trips across the Pacific, Mr. Clapham treated altogether 124 cases. In 121 of these he tells, success was evident and complete. The drug was administered by inhalation, three drops of the nitrite being poured on a handkerchief held close to the nose of the patient, the inhalation being conducted rapidly. A caution is added, to the effect that not more than three drops should be used in the absence of medical advice. In July, 1878, we published an article on the same subject by Dr. J. Rudd Leeson, who was successful in about three-fourths of the cases treated, the remaining fourth complaining of a feeling of sickness, but without vomiting. One or two cases did not improve in any way. Dr. Leeson thinks that three drops for women and five for men is the minimum dose, but that caution is required. Mr. Clapham says it is not a dangerous drug, except of course in cases where the arterial system is more or less rigid from osseous deposits. In August last Mr. Clapham and Dr. R. Leeson each contributed a letter to our columns, in which the former quotes some favorable experiences of Dr. Crichton Browne in crossing to Sweden, and Dr. Leeson gives a very empathic proof of the comparative harmlessness of that drug, for the particulars of which we must refer our readers to *THE LANCET* of August 10th, 1878. On the 3rd inst. Mr. Dingle, surgeon to the Peninsular and Oriental Company's ship *Mirzapore*, gives a favorable account of the remedy, saying that in one day he administered it in at least a dozen cases, and in all the effect was markedly successful, though in some instances it was necessary to repeat the dose, which he limited to three drops. But one of Dr. Dingle's patients has written to us, and says that, according to his observations on the occasion referred to, the drug ought to be administered with very great caution, and always under medical supervision. Later, as our readers will have observed, one or more favorable reports have appeared in these columns. Under such circumstances, and with such an accumulation of evidence, we consider it right, as Mr. Clapham suggests, to draw the attention of those who often "go down to the sea in ships" to the remedy. And we should recommend ship surgeons to take Mr. Clapham's standard—as a rule, to limit the dose to three drops, and not to take it unless under medical advice. He also recommends that the patient, when under treatment, should be in bed, because a good sleep is generally the first result, from which the person awakes wanting to eat. It is usually better to allow one fit of vomiting to occur before the treatment is commenced, "to ensure the *bona fide* character of the seizure." Some, however, do not vomit at all, but are very ill, and with these he considers the nitrite to be equally successful.—*Lancet*.

THE THERAPEUTIC VALUE OF CROTON-CHLORAL.

—In a very interesting paper read before the Ulster Medical Society, Dr. Riddell *Dublin Medical Journal*, April 1879) reports his experience of the great therapeutical value of croton (butyl) chloral. He mentions first a case of severe paroxysmal headache ineffectually treated for many years by all the great guns of the *Pharmacopæia*, but cured by five grains of butyl-chloral twice daily and ten grains taken at night dissolved in spirits of wine and glycerine, with a little acid and syrup of orange to cover the flavour. The patient continues the five-grain doses at night, and now enjoys better health than she has done for years. Since that case, Dr. Riddell says he has used it largely—sometimes failing, sometimes relieving—till, by keeping an account of all his cases, it began to be clear which were most benefited by the drug. Since then, the number of cases relieved (some permanently) has increased. These cases are: headaches in females arising from mental distress; those cases of headache frequent at the menopause—in fact, all those called neuralgic, except a few arising from internal mischief, are benefited, and in many instances cured. In that distressing species of neuralgia called *tic douloureux*, he has found it in many cases acting like a charm. Of course, he does not include any arising from cranial or intracranial causes. He has tried it in neuralgia of the ovaries, but no good resulted. In insomnia, it is not so reliable as the hydrate; but in some cases, where the loss of, or inability to, sleep is accompanied by a weak or fatty heart, it is to be preferred, as it has no weakening effect on the central organ of the circulation. In one case of delirium tremens, where the circulation was very feeble, the combination of croton-chloral with digitalis had a wonderful effect, and it seemed as if the drugs could be given together in much smaller doses to produce the same results than singly. In this, he pushed it from ten to thirty grains every three hours, with drachm and two-drachm doses of the infusion of digitalis. In pain arising from caries of teeth, he has found it useless in most cases, and in all inferior to Richardson's "tinctura gelsemini"; but in one case, of a nervous young lady, by giving her two ten-grain doses, he was able to extract a tooth next to painlessly, to her great satisfaction. In these cases, it is in affections of those parts supplied by the fifth pair of nerves that it is of most use; but, to be of service, the drug must be given in far larger doses than prescribed in the *Pharmacopæia* for adults, five grains three or four times daily, gradually increasing if required; if stimulants be wanted, dissolve it in rectified spirit; if not, dissolve it in glycerine. In all cases complicated with hæmorrhoids give glycerine. If anæmia exist, combine it with iron, or what he believes better, arsenic; then gradually lessen the chloral. In all cases, he has found it better to give it in solution than in powder