

The Press and General Review

REVIEW OF NEWS.

Our Parisian neighbors have approached no nearer a state of rest than when we last wrote. Another election for Paris abundantly suffices to keep up the excitement, and to no party can such excitement be more unpalatable than to a party in power which feels its inefficiency, and that its tenure of office is extremely precarious. Their coercive measures, for the repression of Socialism, see it upon themselves producing in effect the very reverse of that which they were intended to accomplish. The President himself, elected as he was by the unanimous voice of the nation, met with a very disrespectful reception at the hands of some of the suburban populace.

The Stage of France may very generally be regarded as an accurate index of the state of popular opinion. At the Vaudeville, the other night, a new piece was produced, entitled *The Restoration*, containing allusions in favor of the Bourbons, and prejudicial to the Republic, both of which, astonishing to say, were received with marks of indignant reprobation—a fact which shows clearly, that however discontented the people may be with those who at present guide the helm of State, they are by no means prepared for a restoration of Monarchy. At length the Pope has actually set out for Rome, which he will reach by easy stages. The Minister Gili seems a most enlightened statesman, and proceeds most brilliantly with the work of financial reform. We have had a good many instances of beginning at the wrong end, as is usual in such cases, but not one equal to this. The two transparent clocks lighted at the expense of some half-pint of oil per diem, are ordered to remain dark to save the oil! A singular story is in circulation of a priest, Monsignor Gazzola, who was tried by the Vicar-General's Tribunal, soon after Dr. Achilli's escape, on divers charges; the one he was committed on, and for which he was sentenced to pass the remainder of his natural life in the *Engastolo*, was for publishing in the *Positivo*, in the time of the Republic a recommendation to His Holiness to abdicate the Pontifical Throne. The Inquisition claimed him for contempt of religion, and he was lodged, for the present, in the Castle of St. Angelo, whence he has just escaped!

In Ireland misery still reigns; but there is comparative peace. As we have to-day elsewhere stated, the work of emigration goes on rapidly; but under circumstances far from satisfactory. The intelligence, the industry, the small opulence is going; the ignorance, the indolence, the poverty remain behind. For this, of course, there is no legislative cure.

The working of the Encumbered Estates enactment proceeds, and some of those who were the foremost to oppose, are among the first to avail themselves of its provisions. The Commissioners have made a return pursuant to an order of the House of Commons, stating the number of petitions lodged in their Courts, the total rental of the property proposed to be sold, and the gross amount of encumbrances stated to be chargeable thereon. By this return it appears, that the number of Petitions lodged to the 15th day of February (inclusive), is 481; the total rental of the property, £608,327 8s. 7s.; and the gross amount of the encumbrances stated to be chargeable thereon £12,671,049 13s. 6d. Of the 481 Petitions, 14 have been dismissed, and 27 are duplicates. If these dismissed, and duplicate petitions, and the rental encumbrances stated therein, are deducted from the foregoing, the result will be as shown by the return:—

Petitions, 440; Rental, £581,409 16s. 8d.; Encumbrances, 10,219,772 10s. 8.

How lamentable a picture this gives of the Aristocracy of Ireland! Nothing could more clearly show the necessity of some measure similar to this Act being had recourse to for the sale of encumbered estates in Ireland, instead of the tedious process of the Court of Chancery, than this return. If this Act had not passed, each of the estates, the subject of the 440 Petitions, must eventually have found its way into Chancery, and enormous expenses would have to be borne out of the proceeds of the land, to the grievous injury of the inhabitants.—*Ban.*

THE JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.

The editor of the *Journal* makes no objection to endow a Professorship of Agriculture out of the funds of the University, but proposes to attach it to the Normal School instead of the University. Now we really cannot see either the propriety or justice of this idea. The real student of agricultural science ought to make himself acquainted with many departments of science, such as natural history, natural philosophy, general chemistry, mineralogy and geology. The Professor of Agriculture might very well give most abundant instruction to the Normal School students, without being particularly attached to it, instead of to the University.—We fear that this expression is indicative of a slight falling we have formerly noticed in the Reverend Chief Superintendent, but which must be held in check. Why may not the two institutions be nourished from the same source and flourish side by side, without any endeavors to bring up or pull down either, for no earthly good that can be imagined? *Eheu, jam satis! Daily Patriot.*

EPIDEMICS.

Upon the above, which generally accords with our views, we have only to observe by way of further elucidation, that although cholera does not appear in all places where deleterious gases are present, the difference occasioned by altered currents of electricity would seem merely to be one of greater or less intensity.— We are not to suppose that sulphuretted hydrogen can be breathed with impunity, either in diluted or concentrated doses. It has been rendered abundantly evident by the sanitary reports, that the elements of putrefaction, wherever they are breathed, will produce diseases of varying types and degrees of malignity. It has been asked why cholera should have been absent, both in 1832 and 1849, from Lyons, one of the most ill-cleaned towns in France, the lower parts of which are subject to annual inundations; the town being situated at the confluence of two rivers. But Lyons is rarely free from typhoid fever, and at the present moment (December 1849), it is raging there in so severe a form, that its identity with cholera is beginning to be asserted. To account for apparent exceptions, we have only to remember that the greatest danger is not necessarily in the place where the gases are evolved, if rapidly disengaged by heat and dispersed by winds, but where the mist which they impregnate lodges at night, and this, although generally in the plains, may sometimes be on hill sides, or in the hollows and ravines of a mountainous country; or again it may be at sea, as in the case we have quoted of the attack of the crew of a steam-boat on the Goodwin sands. It appears by no means improbable, that the coast of Africa, at the embouchure of its great rivers, would not be found sickly to Europeans, if those who visited it adopted the precaution of sleeping at night in an elevated region. They are safe above what is there called the "fever level," whether by night or day; and the high table lands of South Abyssinia, although within ten degrees of the line, are stated by Dr. Beke to be as salubrious as any parts of England.

Following out these conclusions, we think it will be found that the mortality of hospitals has always been greatest, other circumstances the same, where they have been situated in a low and marshy neighborhood, or near the banks of a river, as the Hotel Dieu at Paris.

In the cure of epidemics, the first step obviously is to escape from the cause that produces them. Where we are breathing a poisonous vapor no remedies can avail: to continue to breathe it must be death. The first care, therefore, of the patient should be, to change his lodging; and he will not require any table of levels for this purpose. A view about sunrise, from the top of any church steeple will show him at a glance the level of the night mist. He should avoid that especially during the summer heats, as he would the white pall of the grave.

When a patient cannot change his lodging, or be suddenly removed, the next care should be to raise at night, by a fire in an open chimney, the temperature of the room in which he sleeps, sufficiently to dry up the vapor and rarify any deleterious gases that may be present. Upon the more medical part of the treatment that should be adopted for cholera patients, we again avail ourselves of the pen of Dr. Kelsall.

"In the cases which I have observed where the patients did not sink irrecoverably at once, from inhaling an inordinate dose of the poison, the prognosis seemed to depend on one symptom, viz., the violence or long continuance of the serious purging and vomiting; other bad symptoms serum was poured into the intestines, then the cramps, &c., were proportionately severe; the sufferer became blue, and sunk to a certain point, when a crisis took place, and he gradually and slowly rose again—the stage of recovery progressing according to his ability to bear the great depletion he had undergone; providing always that this stage was not officially meddled with by the exhibition of food or physic. But if, with sufficient constitutional strength to bear safely the depletion, the alimentary canal was burthened with the weakest ailment, or what is more, with indigestible drugs, than the patient's only chance was often destroyed. In other words, a patient imbued with visceral disease and enjoying a bodily vigor, being seized with cholera, serious depletion, with its consequent symptoms, would continue until the whole of the poison was evacuated from the blood, and then a crisis would take place, and a restorative action commence. Such, I think, would be the course of the disease if the patient were left entirely to himself, and no impediments in the shape of ailments or drugs placed in the way.

"Throughout every phasis of this disease from the premonitory diarrhoea to collapse, and throughout the typhoid stage which too often succeeds the state of collapse, the digestive function is totally suspended. The nausea, rigors, disgust at the sight of food, the rapid passage of indigested aliments, &c. through the intestines, are sufficient indications of the condition of the alimentary apparatus at the commencement of an attack of cholera. The dreadful sensation of sinking at the pit of the stomach, so invariably mistaken by the patient for the pangs of hunger, during the state of collapse, and subsequent typhoid stage, is known to be a morbid symptom and not hunger, by the

immediate rejection of the ingesta in most cases, either by vomiting or purging—if the cold white tongue, or bilious vomiting, were not already a sufficient guide to the state of the digestive organs. To attempt to force nutrition while this state of things continues, is absurd as it is pernicious; for as nothing which is introduced into the alimentary canal can be assimilated, it must act only as a cause of irritation, and aggravate the mischief already going on.

"If the stomach is not in working order, we may as well expect sawdust to be digested as beef-tea, arrow root, &c. and to the irritation of these aliments (?) during collapse, and subsequent typhus, I am persuaded that many persons owe their deaths, who would have survived had their stomachs been kept perfectly empty and at rest: indeed, it would be easy for me to quote some decided instances of the fact.

"The presence of a little milk and water in the stomach of a person suffering under this stage of the disease being productive of such aggravation, it would not appear to require much arithmetic to calculate the effects of the chalk, calomel, turpentine, iudanum, aromatics, astringents, brandy, &c., which have been so extensively "exhibited" for the cure of this morbid state of the alimentary canal. All that need be said on the matter is, that it would have been far better to have left the unfortunate patients alone than to have complicated their cases with the sufferings of indigestion, by stuffing them with these abominations. Those who survived this treatment have little to thank it for; they got well in spite of the drugs, and should rather rejoice that the attack was originally a mild one (perhaps aggravated by the physic), and that their constitutions could withstand the combined effects of cholera, and the empirical means used to cure it.

"Chalk mixture, &c., may do very well as palliatives, and even cure diarrhoea when this is occasioned by the presence of an acid in the intestines; but in malignant cholera the mucous membrane of the bowels is too busily engaged in pouring out serum to have time to think about manufacturing acids; and as to the stoppage of this flow of serum by means of astringents, the thing is impossible, their very presence adding to the irritation and increasing the flood of serum, whereby the chalk and astringents are quickly swept away. Opium is indicated, perhaps, because the patient suffers, or is expected to suffer severe spasms, but as these spasms are merely one of the symptoms of the disease, to give laudanum is only to oppose a symptom, while the blood-vessels of the bowels may continue to pour forth their serum.

"The exhibition of calomel is equally empirical and injurious, for besides that its presence in the stomach is a mechanical cause of irritation, it has no power whatever to alleviate any symptom: I have seen six or seven unfortunates during the stage of reaction, in a state of severe ptyalism, in whom the symptoms were just exactly the same as in others who had taken no mercury. That is to say, they still suffered from retching and vomiting of green bilious liquid, then bilious purging, extreme prostration, and superadded, the miseries of salivation, which might well have been spared, for they would have recovered without the use of mercury at all. One patient who had been under similar treatment ten days and was then (when I first saw him) in a state of ptyalism, still continued to suffer, not only from retching and bilious purging every half-hour, but the cramps had not ceased, and though taking a daily abundant allowance of rice, sago, &c., he was rapidly losing strength. On stopping this man's allowance of food, the cramps disappeared in a few hours, and he absolutely gained strength on no diet at all. Observing a rigid fast for four days, the stomach and bowels became tranquil, and then an occasional tea-spoonful of beef-tea was allowed, or which he thrived, and soon convalesced. Here, then, is an example, both of the inutility of mercury, and the impropriety of harrassing the disordered stomach of a cholera patient with food.

"The premonitory symptoms of cholera generally commence by loss of appetite, sometimes attended by chills and flushes of heat. Thirst—a peculiar sensation of sinking at the pit of the stomach—rumbling in the bowels, like "the fermentation of yeast"—slight nausea—sometimes faintness—the tongue moist, flabby, generally whitish, and the point of the tongue cold to the touch; these are the premonitory symptoms of cholera, and if at this time camphor is had recourse to, it rarely fails to remove them speedily. If these first symptoms be disregarded, the patient soon becomes affected also with diarrhoea (often painless,) occasional eructations, and disposition to vomit; but even when the disease has advanced thus far, camphor will yet be often the best remedy. It will, at all events, arrest the diarrhoea with more certainty than other aromatics and astringents, without the disadvantage of imposing any labor on the disordered stomach, because of its volatile property. But, from the first moment a patient observes the peculiar sensation of fermentation in the bowels, he should be cautioned to cease immediately from taking any kind of food whatever, and content himself with an occasional sip of cold water until all disorder of the bowels has disappeared."

The use of camphor in epidemics is of very ancient standing. It was recommended at the time of the Black Death by Gentiles of Folig-

no, an Italian physician of great celebrity. His theory of the epidemic of that period appears to have been the sound one—that it depended upon a pestilential state of the atmosphere, the effects of which might be best counteracted by disinfectants. He ordered, therefore, the cleansing of houses, sprinkling the floors with vinegar, and the healthy to wash with vinegar, to smell frequently of camphor and other volatile substances, and to maintain fires of odoriferous woods. Like other followers of Galen, however, he relied too much upon bleeding and purging at the commencement of an attack, and fell himself a victim to the disease, or to this mistake.

Upon the necessity of a total abstinence from food in cases of cholera, Dr. Kelsall further remarks that—

"While cholera prevailed in London, the sufferers were almost universally recommended to take food, to strengthen them of which we have seen the result; for this cause, conjoined to the liberal exhibition of indigestible drugs, much of the late mortality is due; and many a case of cholera, which ran to extreme length, would speedily have been cut short, had the digestive organs been left in a state of perfect rest. Among the premonitory symptoms of cholera, loss of appetite is a common one; which of itself is a strong hint from nature to abstain from food; but the English are a people who regard with instinctive horror the slightest allusion to this remedial measure, so that the very man who would complacently bare his arm to the lancet, and submit to the loss of some two or three pounds of his vital fluid, contemplates with surprising dread the imposition of a few days' fast, even though he may have no appetite to eat.

"If the disease continues to gain ground the patient will suffer from intense thirst, heartburn and the feeling of loss or appetite will degenerate to an intense feeling of sinking at the epigastrium, which increases till it amounts to perfect anguish, a sensation which the patient mistakes for the pangs of hunger, and is probably owing to some morbid condition of the nerves composing the solar plexus. Sometimes even an intelligent patient is aware that this feeling is not hunger, yet he impudently demands oranges, apples, ginger-beer, milk, broth, water, &c., in large draughts, and if these be given to him they aggravate his suffering by causing increased purging and vomiting, and anguish at the epigastrium. They must be denied and withheld with firmness, a teaspoonful of plain water only being allowed him every few minutes, besides his teaspoonful of medicine. In a few hours, if his constitution be sufficiently strong to hold out under the trial, a crisis will take place, when the whole of the poison having been ejected from the system, the purging will cease, and with it the cramps; the pulse will begin to regain a little power; warmth will return to the extremities, and to the tongue; the extreme thirst and craving for food will diminish, and the first step towards recovery will have taken place, which must not be marred by giving him food. The tongue will at this stage be found more or less furred (generally loaded and flabby), a sufficient indication that the stomach is still not in working condition, and that it must be left for a while in a state of perfect rest that it may recover itself; and be it remembered that this cannot be effected by any medical legerdemain, for there is no drug in the pharmacopœia capable of conjuring away this atony of the alimentary canal. The poison of cholera is ejected through the mucous coat of the stomach and the bowels, and by the liver; in its passage through these surfaces, it acts on them as it acts on the ejected serum which it coagulates, and nothing but perfect rest will enable the surfaces to resume their healthy condition. Abstinence from every kind of aliment must therefore still be persisted in until there is a decided constipation of the bowels, and the tendency to retching has entirely ceased, small quantities of weak beef-tea may then be given in tea-spoonful at a time; but even then we must feel our way with great caution, and not commit the folly of attempting to force nutrition. If the tongue begin to clean the more nutritious aliment may be given, disregarding entirely the constipation of the bowels; for these two things, viz., constipation and cleaning of the tongue, will be found to proceed together, notwithstanding any preconceived prejudices to the contrary, and the bowels will in due time open a passage for themselves without the use of purgatives.

"The worst and most fatal cases are those where the patient is overtaking with cholera on a full stomach (perhaps after eating a hearty supper), and is suddenly attacked with faintness coldness of the tongue and surface, cramps, retching and purging of rice-water dejections, and other dangerous symptoms. In dealing with such a case the treatment had better be commenced by exciting full vomiting of the undigested aliment, by means of draughts of tepid water in which a few drops of camphorated spirit have been mixed. But with the single exception of clearing the stomach of undigested aliments by means of draughts of tepid water, the patient should not be allowed to drink, however urgently he may entreat. The stomach must be kept empty; the prime object being to check the vomiting and purging, but this will not cease if the stomach be distended with water, or, what is worse, by gruel, arrowroot, drugs, &c.