

tection against delinquent debtors. The plan adopted is as follows: The physicians make out and exchange lists of patients who are delinquent debtors. All agree to refuse medical aid to such delinquents except for cash. The plan has worked like a charm, and many old debts are being paid."

**WANTS RECHRESTENING.**—*Montreal Gazette*: Canadian old rye is not all that it seems. A good deal of it is neither old nor rye. The statistics of the inland revenue department show that during the year 1887-8 of the 94,243,866 pounds of grain used in the manufacture of spirits (which is whiskey) only 11,622,004 pounds were of the kind that gives the name to the greatest part of the production. No one buys corn whiskey, yet 74,285,000 pounds of Indian corn was consumed in the process of distillation. The other material used was 4,606,000 pounds of malt, 2,256,000 pounds of wheat, 92,000 pounds of barley, and 1,380,000 pounds of oats. Oat whiskey must be something truly terrible in its effect upon human constitution.

**TAPPING THE CEREBRAL VENTRICLES.**—At a recent meeting of the Philadelphia County Medical Society (*Medical News*, 9th), Dr. Keen, the president, read a preliminary report on a case of tapping and irrigation of the ventricles, a procedure which he had advocated last autumn, and which he had since learnt had been suggested by Wernicke in 1881. The case in question was one of marked double choked disc, with complete blindness, dating from Christmas. He tapped the ventricle five weeks before reporting the case, reaching it by the "lateral route," at a depth of an inch and three-quarters from the Jura mater. From two to four ounces of fluid escaped daily at first, but the discharge became freer when a rubber tube was substituted for the horsehair drain at first employed. He explored the left occipital lobe with a probe, and also the cerebellum, but could find no tumor; and subsequently he tapped the opposite ventricle and washed both ventricles out with boracic solution. The sequel of the case is to come, as indeed are the full details of the symptoms and treatment of

the case. The publication of these will be awaited with interest.

**TOOTHACHE DROPS.**—Morphine acetate,  $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 grain; oil of peppermint, 5 drops; phenol, 20 drops; collodion, 1 drachm. Apply with cotton.—*Jour. de Med.*

**TEAR BLANKET TREE AND STENOCARPINE.**—During the past month or two many of the medical journals gave accounts of experiments made with a substance claimed to be an alkaloid and to possess properties closely analogous to those of cocaine. The history of this substance is given as follows: "During the past fall, Mr. M. Goodman, veterinary surgeon, in traveling through West Feliciana Parish, La., had occasion to apply a poultice to the fetlock of one of his horses. Having none of the customary means at hand with which to make it, he raked together a number of leaves from the ground, and having saturated them with hot water, applied the mass as a poultice to the inflamed part. After the swelling had arrived at a proper condition, he made a free incision into the part without the horse giving any evidence of pain. It occurred to him that the leaves might have anæsthetic properties; and a few weeks after, having occasion to open an inflamed bursa on the elbow of another horse, he made a similar poultice, applied it as before, and again made the incision without any pain to the animal. Mr. Goodman states that the tree is known in the locality mentioned as the *Tear Blanket Tree*. It grows to the height of 35 to 40 feet, with a diameter to the bole of about 18 inches, and a spread of foliage of about 30 to 35 feet. The leaves resemble those of an acacia. The bark is smooth. From the ground up, the tree is furnished with clumps of forked spines or thorns, the parent spine springing at right angles from the bough or trunk. Though Mr. Goodman is a native of the region, he has never seen the tree blossom. As fruit it bears pods 8 or 10 inches in length, flat and slightly curved, containing seeds and a viscid juice. The spines are very tough and highly polished, and the wood is extremely tough. It grows in clumps and singly, and is abundant in Louisiana.