

employed the Tr. Cinchonæ Comp., one drachm or half a drachm at a time, for I have found that the arsenic is less apt to cause gastric disturbance when given in this manner than when administered simply in water. It has been my custom, nevertheless, to largely dilute even this mixture with water, since I deem it a matter of great moment to take every available and harmless precaution—even though it may often be superfluous, especially in children—to prevent any decided irritation of the stomach.

Four of the six cases were cured after attaining a dosage of seven drops three times daily, while five drops thrice daily sufficed for another, the remaining one recovering with two drops given at the same intervals. In three individuals of the twenty-seven the medicine could not be pushed to the proper extent. The mother of one of these children, a very stupid woman, insisted that the little patient would vomit immediately after being given one drop, but I had reason to doubt whether the parent could measure so small a quantity. In the second patient, likewise through the blunder of the parent, dangerous symptoms were induced, while there supervened a decided nausea, cephalalgia, and gastralgia in the third, which speedily passed away upon the discontinuance of the remedy. I would have it borne in mind that every case was cured that was retained under treatment for the adequate period of time, which I shall specify in a moment, and that in no one of those uncured because of insufficient length of treatment did signs of improvement fail to appear, the more marked in proportion as the medicament was longest continued. The exclusive treatment in all these cases was by the Liq. Potass. Arsenitis. No directions whatsoever were given in regard to hygiene or food; and as all these patients were seen at my clinic in the out-door department of the Long Island College Hospital, neither the hygiene or food could have exerted any material influence upon the result.

The average duration of the six cases, from the beginning of treatment to the absolute cessation of the movements, has been 24 days, the maximum 38 days, the minimum 13 days; while the average period from the earliest symptoms to their disappearance has been 55 days, the maximum 103, the minimum 21.

An attempt has been made of late, with earnest ability and an imposing array of clinical material, to prove that the duration of chorea treated upon the so-called "expectant" plan is no greater than it is under the exhibition of any drug; or, in other words, that when a choreic patient is surrounded with the favorable hygienic influences of a hospital or an infirmary, and at the same time supplied with wholesome, nourishing diet, the cure will be effected as speedily as when arsenic, iron, zinc, and others

of this ilk are administered. In 1862 Dr. Wilks,* inaugurated this era of doubt by citing four cases which he had managed in this manner. The subject seems to have passed out of memory for upwards of a decade. In 1871 Drs. Gray and Tuckwell† again enthusiastically lauded the merits of the "expectant" method, publishing eighteen cases in support of their views, to which they added twenty in 1876,‡ making a total of thirty-eight. Up to the present day these claims would seem to have been accorded a general acceptance; or, at least, I am not aware that any public opposition has been made to them. Are they valid? is a question which I have long been asking myself, which has prompted me to an investigation of this subject, and to which, I think, an answer can be found in my own observations, of which I have just spoken. The average duration of Dr. Wilks' cases under the "expectant" treatment was 50 days, while if the duration after admission to the hospital be computed in the cases of Drs. Gray and Tuckwell, it will be found to be 36 days. As the average duration of my cases treated with arsenic was 24 days, there is evidently a difference in favor of the latter of 15 days as against the cases of Drs. Gray and Tuckwell, and of 26 days as against those of Dr. Wilks. It may be objected, seemingly with force, that my six cases are so disproportionate in number to the thirty-eight of Drs. Gray and Tuckwell as to render the comparison unjust to the latter. The objection, however, is more apparent than real. In the first publication of these gentlemen Dr. Gray gave the details of six cases, Dr. Tuckwell those of twelve, while in their last paper Dr. Gray narrated the histories of nine cases, Dr. Tuckwell giving those of eleven. It is clear that if the average be reckoned in each of these groups, and compared on the one hand with the average obtained from all these cases while on the other hand it be compared with the average of my cases, a very correct idea can be obtained of the discrepancy that may exist between the averages of a small and a large number of cases. If this be done it will be ascertained that Dr. Gray's first six maintained an average duration under treatment of 38 days, his later nine cases of 36 days, while the earlier twelve cases of Dr. Tuckwell lasted 32 days, the eleven more recent ones 36 days; or, in brief, the difference between the lowest average of any individual group, thirty-two, and the average of all the cases, thirty-five, may be 3 days. This possible source of error being admitted, as I am perfectly willing to do, there still remains a balance of twelve days in favor of the arsenical treatment of chorea; this balance, by comparison with some of the groups,

* Med. Times and Gaz., March 22, 1862.

† Lancet, 1871.

‡ Lancet, Feb., 1876, p. 710.