

Thoughts on puerperal fever and its cure by spirits of turpentine, illustrated by cases in the lying-in hospital, Dublin : also, cases of inflammation and spasm cured by the internal and external exhibition of that medicine ; with correspondence on the subject.

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THOUGHTS



ON

Puerperal Fever,

AND ITS

CURE BY SPIRITS OF TURPENTINE,

ILLUSTRATED BY

CASES IN THE LYING-IN HOSPITAL, DUBLIN:

ALSO,

Cases of Inflammation & Spasm

CURED BY THE

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EXHIBITION OF THAT MEDICINE;

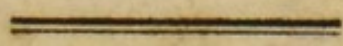
WITH

CORRESPONDENCE ON THE SUBJECT.



BY

JOHN BRENNAN, M.D.



LONDON:

Printed for the Author, by J. Moyes, Greville Street;

AND SOLD BY T. UNDERWOOD, FLEET STREET; J. CALLOW, CROWN COURT, SOHO; J. ANDERSON, WEST SMITHFIELD; AND E. COX, ST. THOMAS STREET, BOROUGH.

1814.



THOUGHTS

ON

Intermittent Fever,

AND ITS

CURE BY SPIRITS OF TURPENTINE,

ILLUSTRATED BY

CASES IN THE LYING-IN HOSPITAL, DUBLIN.

ALSO,

Cases of Angina pectoris & Spasms

CURED BY THE

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EXHIBITION OF THAT MEDICINE;

WITH

CORRESPONDENCE ON THE SUBJECT.

BY

JOHN BRENNAN, M.D.

LONDON:

Printed for the Author, by J. Rogers, Greville Street;
AND SOLD BY T. UNDERWOOD, Fleet Street; J. CALLOW, Crown
Court, St. Paul's; J. AKERS, West Smithfield; AND
E. COX, St. Thomas Street, Borough.

1814

THOUGHTS, &c.

THE disease incidental to lying-in women, called the Puerperal or Child-bed Fever, has engaged the attention of many, and much ingenuity has been exhausted in giving a rationale of the complaint. Perhaps in the history of disease there does not appear a malady more frightful in its symptoms, and more irremediable. It is a malady to which every woman after parturition is liable: its attacks are with little warning, and its progress is rapidly alarming. Certainly, till it assumes the character that seems to baffle art, it is seldom considered as very formidable, for its beginnings are like that ephemeral attack called by nurses the weed, which is so frequently relieved by common means; and which attack, when removed by the physician, is often put down as a cure of Puerperal Fever. The experiments that have been made in attempting the cure of this disease, are equal in number to the wild theories that have been entertained on the subject. It is useless to go back to remark upon the mistaken ideas that prevailed as to the cause of a complaint that has got no remedy. Whatever may have been the opinions of physicians as to its cause, their practice has received little assistance from them; for, when it has made any advance, the disease has been ever found too many for the doctor.

The Hotel Dieu, the Edinburgh and London Hospitals, have had the visitations of this malady; their reports on the subject can be easily read: the sum of the whole amounts to their having tried a variety of cure, all of which failed; and the desolation ceased only by having no patients in the hospitals. The Lying-in Hospital of Dublin has paid its tribute to this sweeping malady. Its records of the havoc which has been made by Puerperal Fever is truly terrific. In the month of December, 1812, it appeared there in great force, and the mortality it occasioned was general; whole wards were swept away; and the medicines given seemed rather to increase than mitigate the disease. The gentlemen connected with the hospital made use of all those means in general estimation for the cure of Puerperal Fever. The physicians of note in the city very humanely contributed their assistance, and still the mortality shewed no abatement from the opposition of all the learning and experience of those gentlemen; some of whom, as teachers of medicine and writers on disease, are justly esteemed the ornament of their profession, and of high authority through all Europe. From such sources it must have been expected that the sufferers would have done for them all that was ever done for persons so afflicted: and such was the case; for bleedings were tried, blisters were applied, purgations by different medicines were used: and with all, the malady was no way arrested. About this period I had been called to visit several patients in private life, who, I was informed, laboured under bilious fever. I was much astonished to observe in them all the symptoms that I saw in the patients

labouring under fever in the Lying-in Hospital. Those patients that I saw in private practice were such as had reached the last stage of the disease, and had been given over by the physicians who conducted their accouchement; and on examining them I found that the progress of the disease, as well as the attack, corresponded with that of the contagious distemper of the Lying-in Hospital. I generally found, that after even the most favourable labour the patient sickened on the third or fourth day with what nurses call the weed; that is, by severe chill, and aguish trembling; that the abdomen grew extremely sensitive, and pain in the intestines severe; that the stomach became highly irritable, and vomiting took place; that the abdomen swelled, and was acutely sensible of any pressure: and under these symptoms, death, in a few days, ensued.

Having had very extensive practice in the treatment of the poor of Dublin, and some reputation for skilful management of fever, I was indebted to the partiality of my friends for being called to see patients that were considered past hopes by the ablest of the faculty: and it was this circumstance that led me out of an error, which I fear physicians, who do not profess midwifery, very often lie under; and that is, that Puerperal Fever is a malady so essentially connected with parturition, that the treatment of it bears no analogy to the treatment of fever under its other various modifications, whether rheumatism, gout, erysipelas, &c. It struck me, that meeting the malady in the beginning was not so formidable an essay as it was considered, and that a proper attention to the bowels, in the early

stage of this disease, might prevent the Puerperal plague; and that the weed might be hindered from growing into Puerperal Fever, by properly treating it; as a slight attack of fever, by a little calomel or antimony early exhibited, might be prevented from assuming the type of what is called a putrid fever, or typhus. As my theories are always built upon my practice, not my practice upon theory, my conjectures cannot do much harm. My reasoning on the disease was somewhat thus:—In the present complaint I consider the patient labouring under fever, be it by cold, or infection, if you please. The patient has gone through the utmost exertion of which human nature is capable: this exertion has been made partially, although affecting the whole nervous system. The uterus is the seat of this exertion, and it has a close connexion with the peritoneum and viscera. The fever, as in the case of erysipelas, gout, or tooth-ach, is determined to, and deposits its matter in, the weakest part; the viscera have become inert from long gestation; the bile that has got into the intestines has been pent up with the fœces; the mesentery has been compressed and rendered partially quiescent from the situation of the fœtus. After delivery, all the intestines suddenly assume a new tone, and must be some time before they recover their free action. The absorption of the bile is not so rapid as in other fever, because the liver has been compressed, and the bile has not been effused in the usual quantity, and diluted through the intestines: and this may, in some measure, account why the tongue is so long white in this fever; though towards the close of this complaint,

when diluents have been used, and purges have passed the bile through the intestines, all the symptoms of bilious affection, the vomiting of greenish matter, and yellow tinge of the skin, take place.

It strikes me, that the mortality of this disease is the effect of fever, determined to a certain part of the uterine system and its connexion. I should think, that no woman has died of this complaint whose bowels have yielded to proper medicine : and I apprehend the whole error lies radically in that point. It is, I fear, a too general opinion, that every one who knows the purgative quality of medicines understands their administration to a salutary purpose. Doctor Hamilton's book on purgatives has not lessened the force of that opinion with me. Any purging was better than none, when purging was essential. Antimonial powders were said to have a specific effect in fever, and they did wonders in the age when spasm was the favourite opinion ; for they took off the spasm, and they purged also : though had they purged as calomel does, and left the spasm on the extreme vessels, and the watery part of the blood where it was to dilute the bile, the absorption of which undiluted makes the high putrid fever, and not to force it off by sweat, the antimony would be a much greater specific. In this complaint, the bowels should be solicited, as they term it, and not forced. Saline purgatives carry off merely watery stools : and the scammony and calomel, so frequently combined, I fear has not so good an effect ; as the scammony, we may say, runs away with the calomel, which has an effect chiefly from its gradual

operation, and nearly specific effect, on the duodenum or upper part of the intestine.

As I think this disease might be very much prevented by attention, I shall say what I think should be done before it makes its appearance. I know a physician of great eminence who says, that after you empty the bowels, (and he prefers saline purgatives,) and that the fever continues, you may set it down as Peritonitis, or Puerperal Fever. If this Peritonitis, which has been so formidable to the faculty, could be prevented, it would be very well; and for that purpose, if the bowels were not free before the labour set in, I would order some tinctura jalapii, as it operates the most quickly of any medicine. Injections also, previous to the labour, have always a good effect. For the three or four first days after delivery the patient should be kept from taking any irritating food, or drink so cold or acrid as might check the perspiration, and bring on the weed: and, by injections and care, I think it would seldom make its appearance.

But now, supposing the disease manifests itself, and that the weed is neglected, and that it actually assumes the type of Puerperal Fever, the abdomen is exquisitely sore, and inflammation is said to have set in. The reduction of the inflammation must take place, or the patient must die: and for this purpose, bleeding and purging are the only means that offer any hope: that neither will succeed at a certain stage of this sensibility of the abdomen is well known. That at a certain stage, and that a very early one, enormous bleeding has caused the patient not to die of the

malady, but has made her restoration to health doubtful, or at least very protracted, cannot be doubted: but, after a certain advancement of the disease, that bleeding never cured, I will be bold to assert, without fear of contradiction. This stage that I allude to is when the abdomen becomes swelled: at that period the blood taken gives a temporary relief merely to the chest, but the abdomen is never relieved by it. The acrid bile is still absorbed, and is still determined to the weakened part, and the mass of blood has lost in the circulation by the bleeding so much of the aqueous part, that would go to its dilution, and though there be ease from the bleeding, (and I say the ease is always more in the chest than in the abdomen), if it is not sudden in its good effects, I look upon it rather to hasten dissolution. I shall shortly mention a case that makes for this opinion.

My manner of treating this disease has been so marked with success, as to cause much astonishment. The exhibition of the spirits of turpentine in a disease termed inflammatory, was not without the tribute of censure that useful novelty never fails to extort: however, its effects have borne it through; and though theorists could not understand its mode of acting, and though some great men were not pleased that one not so great as themselves should make a discovery that revolutionizes medical practice, the application of it has met with success, and the good effects I have witnessed from it has consoled me for the displeasure that my success occasioned. I shall here mention a few cases that I have treated with the spirits of turpentine; and perhaps they may be considered valuable, as their

authenticity cannot be questioned, from the place they appeared; as it is well known that any false assertion made before so numerous and respectable a body as the establishment of the Lying-in Hospital of Dublin, would soon meet a due reprehension.

At several times I heard it thrown out to me, that if I could suggest any thing of utility, I should have the whole credit of it; for I believe it was suspected that I had done things privately, and could be of use, as there were some women whose restoration could not be accounted for, and some of the nurses had seen me talking to them in private. Accordingly, I told one of the assistants that I thought I could be of use, and I mentioned a case that was then in a lamentable state. It was Margaret Rogers, in the inner ward of No. 7. She had been bled to the amount of 30 ounces, in two bleedings. She was then sitting up, not being able to bear a supine posture. She was vomiting green and yellow bile incessantly; and the sensibility of the abdomen was such, that she could not bear the most gentle touch of the finger thereon. He told me, that he considered effusion to have taken place; and as this woman was in a rapid state of dissolution, from which no woman similarly affected ever recovered, he wanted to know what I would give her. I told him, the spirits of turpentine. He started, and asked me, how much. I told him, a table-spoonful. This appeared to him a madness: but, as the woman seemed dying, he said I might give a few drops, but that he would not stand by whilst I gave it. Accordingly, at the hour of two, p. m. I gave her three tea-spoonfuls of the spirits of turpentine,

in a little water. At five o'clock I returned, and the countenance of the assistant expressed the event: he remarked, that the woman was better; and he had the courage to stand by when I gave her a table spoonful, which he was much astonished did not burn her. He asked her, what she thought it was. She replied, Geneva and water. At nine o'clock we visited her. She lay at her ease. She never vomited from the time she took the turpentine, her abdomen was flaccid, and quite insensible of pain on the pressure of it, though very violent. The next day some pains returned; she took the turpentine; and they ceased. She called for food, and complained of hunger. She never after felt any uneasiness in the region of the uterus. In about four days after she began to spit pus, her pulse sunk, and she died. She was of an asthmatic disposition, and had come from the Lock Hospital, where she took much mercury. The turpentine cured all the symptoms that threatened speedy death. She had no symptom of her puerperal complaint after, and I put her death down to the bleeding.—This case has been objected to me as unfavourable. I cured all I proposed curing; all her puerperal symptoms disappeared: and I fancy the annals of midwifery does not furnish an instance of such relief, in such circumstances, or of any one cured, or even relieved, when the symptoms went to the extent of her case.

CASE II.

The second case I interfered with, was Margaret Conolly, servant to Mr. Grogan, of Merrion Square. She had labour for two days, and got the fever: the

usual remedy was tried, she was bled twice to the amount of thirty ounces: I suggested to the assistant, the application of the turpentine to her abdomen, which was tense and sore to an exquisite degree: he allowed me to apply it; for the fears he held about it, even as to its external use, were such, as that he would not venture to apply it himself, and he therefore allowed me the privilege of doing any good, that might turn out from its application. I poured it on her abdomen, covered with flannel. In about three hours after I saw her she said I had cured her: her abdomen was as flaccid as when in health, it could bear pressure to any degree, and her breathing was easy. From this circumstance I saw plainly, that the difficult breathing, for which bleeding is so frequently used, arose from the pressure of the diaphragm upon the lungs, by the inflation of the abdomen, which never relieves the belly, and which always sinks the patient. I gave her two tea-spoonfuls of the turpentine in hot water and sugar, and she said it disagreed with her stomach, (and I think cold water is a better vehicle); the next day her symptoms returned, and she was bled in the morning eighteen ounces, and in the evening eighteen ounces: the day after she begged me to apply the remedy I did before to her: I did so without permission, but for humanity sake: her abdomen became flaccid again, and she felt great relief, and could bear any pressure on it: she said, the only thing she complained of was her heart, but that could not rise: she sunk, but with no distress in the region of the uterus; and after death her abdomen

was flat. I put down her death to the bleeding. I must note, that I had no further interference in this case than one permissive act, which relieved her; and one assumed authority, which also relieved her. I think, and I believe they about her think, that if I had treated her alone, I should have been as fortunate as I have been with what I call worse cases. She was in No. 6, in the inside ward.

CASE III.

A woman in ward No. 7, her name I know not, she lay next bed to Mrs. Keefe's daughter, who died of the fever; she was seized with head-ach, sore abdomen, and a turning in her stomach: she complained severely, and moaned much: I gave her a table spoonful of the oleum terebinthinæ, and a sup of water after it. In about fifteen minutes I came to her; she told me she got ease. On coming into the ward the next evening, I went to her bed, and missed her; she was sitting at the fire very well.

CASE IV.

A woman in No. 8, who lay next bed to Mr. Allen of Dame-street's servant, who died, got the symptoms that were the usual forerunners of this disease. I contrived by stealth to give an ounce of the turpentine in some saline mixture. This abated all her pains, and the vomiting: and the consulting doctor, on coming the next day, said nothing was the matter with her. She went home that day; the symptoms returned; a person from the Hospital went to her, bled and blistered, and gave the usual remedies. She

died vomiting green bile, with her belly swelled. In this woman I stopped all the symptoms. She lived in Gloster Place, and was a smith's wife.

CASE V.

Mary Murray, wife to a soldier in the Fermanagh militia, from Kilnese, near Naas, was delivered on Saturday, 12th of the month: on Tuesday the fever set in with her most violently. I was allowed a latitude with this woman, on account of the surprising efficacy of the medicine with Rogers. She had a severe cough, and every time she coughed she screeched with the anguish of her belly, which was insufferably painful to the touch. I applied the turpentine to her abdomen, and gave her a table-spoonful of it in water and sugar. The next day she was free from pain, and able to eat bread and milk for breakfast: she took a drink of cold milk, and got ill as ever. I repeated the turpentine, and applied it to her abdomen. The next day she ate stirabout, and got a relapse from cold beer. She continued very ill till Monday, when the doctor showed her to me as a forlorn case. He showed me the blackness of her hands, which he said was the sure forerunner of death, and that Denman said no woman ever recovered that had it. Another doctor saw her, and agreed that she was one of the patients then moribund. Nothing was ordered for her this day, I suppose from the dreadful state she was in. This was Monday; she was sitting up vomiting green bile. I gave her an ounce of the turpentine, and repeated it in an hour, and applied it to her belly. The next morning I found her asleep. On Tuesday I gave her castor oil, tinctura sennæ, and

two drachms of the turpentine in the draught. This purged her much. On Wednesday she breakfasted on stirabout and milk; on Thursday did the same; on Friday she sat all day at the fire, and was put with the next case I shall mention, to sleep in one bed. On Saturday she requested to be left in the Hospital, and on Sunday she walked home to Barrack-street with her child in her arms. This woman was never bled. I shall make no commentary upon this case: I made the people of the Hospital remark it; and I believe, from its novelty and contrast with the Hospital practice, they will not forget it.

CASE VI.

Bridget Cullen, servant to Mr. Ennis, of Kingston, near Rathfarnham, was delivered of twins, on Saturday, 12th February: she had hard labour, and took ill on the couch: on Wednesday following she got severely ill with head-ach, turning of her stomach, and continued so all night: the next day she became a matter of serious consideration, and she had the turpentine applied to her belly by means of flannel sopped in it, and got a table-spoonful by the mouth: in about two hours after she began to roar with the pain of her abdomen: the flannel was removed, and it acted as a severe rubefacient: in some hours after she felt herself at ease: the next day her pains returned, and she got the turpentine internally, a table-spoonful; she occasionally got it for three or four days: and on the 25th she was put into the same bed with Mary Murray, above mentioned, and on the 26th went home very well. This is a very strongly marked

case; and it must be here noted, that she was not bled.

The above cases I treated in the course of about three weeks, in the Lying-in Hospital. I hope the efficacy of the medicine is as fully established to be a specific by these, as by any given number: but I shall mention a few other instances wherein turpentine was exhibited with equally wonderful effect. Mary-Anne F. had heated herself by washing, and to cool herself she stood with her bed-gown open before a window, and a cold breeze; in a few hours after she was seized with violent pain in the abdomen, and showed all the symptoms of violent inflammation. Her face was livid, pulse small, and panting for breath. I chanced to come into the house, and found her as ill as I thought possible. I bled her to the amount of twelve ounces, and went to the next apothecary and got some spirits of turpentine: I gave her a table-spoonful undiluted, and had her stuped. I repeated the turpentine in about two hours, when the violence subsided, and gradually vanished. She was perfectly well in two or three days. This case occurred in the house of Doctor Wade, the celebrated botanist; a gentleman to whose liberality I am singularly indebted for furthering the reputation of my discovery.

A child of the cook of the Chief Baron, living in Gordon's Lane, had been playing in the rain, during Sunday. On Monday he was seized with pain in his bowels that convulsed him, and his mother thought he was dying. A lady, a friend of mine, in the house, sent for two ounces of the spirits of turpentine, and gave him half of it undiluted. On my coming in, I

saw the child in great agony, his knees drawn to his mouth, and screaming with pain. They told me what was done, and said, that a few minutes ago his abdomen seemed drawn into his back. I immediately gave him the remainder of the turpentine, and put him into a warm bath, in which he was not five minutes when he called to be taken out of it; his bowels gave way; his pain ceased; he fell asleep: his fever manifested itself the next day. He lay for a week, and recovered by the ordinary treatment.

The Rev. Mr. K., curate of Francis Street Chapel, had been called to see a woman who had left the Lying-in Hospital through fear of the fever. She became so ill, that she sent for a clergyman. Mr. K. attended her, and declared that her anguish was such, from pain of the abdomen, that the persons present, nor himself, did not think she could live one hour. He knew I had left town that day; and as she could not be worse, he took courage and gave her three tea-spoonfuls of the spirits of turpentine. He called next morning and asked, "Was the woman dead?" He was answered by herself, "No, sir; I feel myself quite easy. I got relief immediately from the medicine you gave me, and I slept well all the night."

The infant of Mrs. B. had been visited by the attending accoucheur with another physician, both men of eminence. They declared the child to have trismus nascentium, or nine day fits, confirmed. The jaw was quite stiff. I ordered the infant an injection, and added half a drachm of the spirits of turpentine. On seeing the child the next day, they were much astonished to see a change that they never saw in one

with that disease : the trismus had disappeared, and the child got well.

The following letter from Mr. Wigglesworth, a respectable gentleman, is another confirmation of the power of the medicine.

“ TO JOHN BREMAN.

“ As thou desirest that I should mention to thee my case, as nearly as I can recollect I shall do so.

“ In the beginning of the first month I was in a delicate state of health ; and going from a warm room into a cold vault at night, I was seized the next morn, whilst in bed, with violent pain in the bowels. I took castor oil, and different things for it; still the pain continued, and I was obliged to get out of bed and roll on the floor through agony. At four o'clock thou camest to me, at which time thou found me in great anguish. Thou observed to Richard Pim, who was in the room, I will now show thee what turpentine can do.

“ Thou ordered me two small bottles. At half past four I took one of them : I felt instant relief : I fell asleep, and never felt pain after. At eight o'clock thou came out from dinner : I told thee what I just mentioned. Thou observed, that the pain might return about four o'clock, and in that case thou directed me to take the other draught. I felt a slight return of the pain : I took the draught, as thou desired, and I never felt uneasiness after.

“ JOHN WIGGLESWORTH.”

“ *City Quay, 35.*”

I could furnish several instances of the surprising efficacy of turpentine, both singly and in combination,

in removing pain of the intestines, arising either from inflammation or spasm: but as I mean shortly to publish a systematic essay on Puerperal Fever and the application of turpentine in the cure of that dangerous malady, and also my opinions upon what has been already written upon it, I shall not extend these observations further for the present. I shall merely subjoin to what I have already written, the letters of Doctor Burns, of Glasgow, and Doctor Douglass, of Dublin, omitting the testimonies of several other eminent men that I have beside me, but reserving them for a future occasion. I wrote to Doctor Burns to the following effect, enclosing him the pamphlet which I published in Dublin on this subject.

“SIR,—Your celebrity as a practitioner, as well as an author, and your well-known candour as a man, embolden me to offer you a production that was written under some circumstances of irritation, which give it an air that I could wish it divested of in going before you. Still, I am certain you will make every allowance, and judge the matter as it deserves: it is on that account that I would wish to have the opinion of such a man as Doctor Burns, upon a discovery that I perhaps over-rate. If, therefore, you would be kind enough to say, is the exhibition of turpentine, as I mention it, exclusively my own? you would oblige one who has the honour to be,

“SIR,

“Your most obedient servant,

“JOHN BREMAN.”

61, Great-Britain Street, Dublin,

July 15, 1814.

To this, Doctor Burns was kind enough to reply:

Glasgow, July 20, 1814.

“SIR,—I have been favoured with yours of the 15th, together with your pamphlet on the use of turpentine in Puerperal Fever. In reply to your question, I have no hesitation in saying, that I believe the employment of that remedy in such cases is new.

“From observing the excellent effect of turpentine when given to my horse as a remedy for colic, and from a knowledge of its safety in the human species, when exhibited for the cure of tenia, I have considered it as a remedy deserving trial in spasmodic affections of the bowels: but I confess I would not have thought of employing it where there was any reason to suspect the existence of inflammation.

“Your trials prove, at least, that it is not injurious in that state of the intestine which exists in Puerperal Fever. But I should like to know whether it has ever been given early, and trusted to alone, with decided success.

“As I am anxious for the advancement of my profession, and deem it my duty to attend to every suggestion for improvement, I should wish to be favoured with any well-marked case, substantiating the efficacy of turpentine.

“I regret the appearance of irritation in the pamphlet*, as it must retard the progress of improvement; and I have no doubt, that should you publish again on the subject, you will divest the question of all personal considerations, by which the real merit of the medicine will be best determined. Should further trials establish its efficacy, I trust, for the sake of

* This alludes to the pamphlet mentioned in page 21.

humanity, you will be able to carry cordially along with you some of the leading practitioners of Dublin, both to your and their honour. I hope you will excuse these suggestions, and accept of my thanks for your communication. I have the honour to be

“Your very obedient servant,
“JOHN BURNS.”

To DOCTOR BRENAN,
161, *Great-Britain Street, Dublin.*

Doctor Douglass, in reply to a letter much to the same effect, answered as follows:

“50, *Great-Britain Street, August 2, 1814.*”

“SIR,—I beg leave to state, that I find more difficulty in commencing an answer to your letter, on account of the terms in which you have spoken of myself, than from any hesitation I feel in lending my slender sanction to pronounce your discovery of the utility of turpentine, in the cure of Puerperal Fever, to be worthy of the attention of every physician who is not so absurd as to think that the profession has already arrived at an acmé of perfection.

“It is probable, however, that, like many other great discoveries, it will be little esteemed in its native country, until after it shall have received the sanction of foreign nations.

“I would here take the liberty to remark, that the habiliment in which you sent forth your offspring into the world, was little calculated to obtain for it that notice which its intrinsic value deserves. It is to be lamented, that whenever any remedy is pronounced to be useful in the cure of a disease, there is generally too much expected from it; and its indiscriminate and injudicious exhibition, sooner or later brings it into unmerited disrepute.

“There is scarcely a person who does not know that Peruvian bark is justly esteemed a specific for intermittent fever; but every person is not competent to administer it, as its doses and the periods of giving it must be varied according to circumstances. Neither can it be expected, although turpentine were admitted to be a specific for Puerperal Fever, that every accoucheur should know by rule of thumb, either the most proper periods, or the necessary repetitions for its administration. — And, likewise, as there are required adjuncta to bark, in the cure of intermittent fever, so are there required adjuncta to turpentine in the cure of Puerperal Fever.

“If you expect to receive from me a detail of cases, you will be disappointed, as I do not keep notes of my practice. I have several cases, however, in my recollection, in which I administered the turpentine with the most gratifying results. And I can even positively assert, that I never yet ordered it to any patient who did not recover. If any person should suppose that my senses may have deceived me, I can refer him to living tests, some of whom can speak to what medicine they themselves, as well as I, attribute their recovery.

“I have only to add, that I would feel more pleasure in making this communication, if you did not so frequently indulge your pen in personal abuse.

“I have the honour to remain

“Your obedient servant,

“JOHN C. DOUGLASS.”

To Dr. BRENNAN.

FINIS.