A CASE
OF
ENLARGEMENT FROM MELANOID TUMOUR
OF THE
PROSTATE GLAND,
IN A CHILD OF FIVE YEARS OF AGE.

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As I believe an enlargement of the prostate gland, and of its third lobe, in a child of 5 years of age, is of very rare occurrence, I have thought an account of a case where this disease was found on the post-mortem examination, might not be considered uninteresting by the Fellows of this Society.

November, 1838, I was requested to see W. Mathews, aged 5 years, in the Children's Ward of the St. Marylebone Infirmary, who had what was supposed to be a tumour in the abdomen. There

was a considerable projection, which reached full two inches above the umbilicus, and the edges of it could be distinctly defined by the fingers. On closely examining it, I found it to be a distended bladder, which had been in this state for some time. The boy felt no pain on pressure, nor could anything be found such as a diseased spine, causing paralysis of the bladder, &c., to account for his symptoms; neither could I elicit anything from him to throw light on the affection. All he complained of was, that he could not make water, and that he had tried several times and could not succeed. His mother, however, informed me afterwards, that for three or four months previously, she had observed his bladder was very irritable, and he was continually wishing to void urine, and that his abdomen was large and tumid. His health was not materially affected, excepting that he was thin, and not as lively as other children, but he could eat, drink, and sleep well.

At the period when I first saw him, he appeared to have suffered greatly from the retention of urine, being very restless and irritable, and having an anxious and distressed countenance. His pulse was quick, his tongue furred, and there was considerable fever. A small gum elastic catheter was passed, without difficulty, and 25 ounces of a natural coloured urine were drawn off. In the evening the bladder was again distended, and it contained nearly the same quantity.

The boy had entirely lost the power of voiding his urine naturally, so that the catheter was used twice

every day, and at length, from the urine accumulating so quickly, it was left in the bladder altogether. Leeches were applied on the perineum, and a blister on the loins. Aperients, opiates, &c., were given as often as required, and the Tinctura ferri muriata administered. No abatement of the symptoms took place, and still there was no pain (excepting when it was distended,) in the bladder, on pressure, nor in the abdomen, nor any other symptom indicating disease of any particular organ. The boy became weak, so that it was necessary to support him. He took bark, wine, and nourishing food. The weakness increased, and in 8 days from the time I first saw him, he gradually sunk and died, his intellects being unimpaired to the last.

Post-mortem Examination.—The viscera of the thorax and abdomen were healthy.

The brain was healthy, excepting that there was a small quantity of fluid in the ventricles.

The kidneys were large and flabby, but there was nothing that could be considered disease.

The bladder was contracted to about the size of a turkey's egg, and on opening it, it contained about an ounce of urine mingled with purulent matter. The mucous membrane of the bladder was somewhat thickened; in other respects this organ was sound.

The prostate gland, according to a dissection made by Mr. Stanley, was equal in size to the largest walnut; its form was somewhat globular, as is often the case with the enlarged prostate in advanced life. There arose from the prostate into the bladder

immediately behind the orifice of the urethra, a rounded nipple-like projection, nearly equal in size to a small hazel-nut, and exactly resembling, both in its appearance and situation, the projection of the gland usually ascribed to an enlargement of its third lobe.

On making an incision through one lateral lobe of the prostate, the cut surface exhibited none of the natural texture of the gland; it was decidedly encephaloid in colour, consistence, and texture, and one part of the cut surface exhibited so dark a colour, as to present the idea of there being melanotic, mixed with the encephaloid matter.

It may be necessary to observe, that the prostate gland in a child of five years of age, is about the size of a small hazel-nut; consequently, its increase of volume, in this case, was immense, and even its third lobe alone was as large as the normal size of the whole gland itself at that period of life.