CASE
OF
ULCERATION OF THE INTERNAL
JUGULAR VEIN,
COMMUNICATING WITH AN ABSCESS.

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COMMUNICATED BY SAMUEL LANE, Esq.

READ FEBRUARY 28TH, 1843.

As the following case appears to be one of an unusual character, if not unique, I take the liberty of presenting it to the notice of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society.

On the 20th of October 1842, I was requested to visit a child in the neighbourhood of Golden Square, who had been under the care of a medical gentleman for three weeks previous with an attack of scarlatina. On the decline of the eruption, one of the glands on the right side of the neck, under the angle of the jaw, became inflamed, and suppurated freely.

This abscess had opened itself externally for five days, when a discharge of blood took place from the aperture, small at first, but becoming gradually more copious and of a venous character.

Three days after the first appearance of the blood I saw the case.

The child, five years of age, was very pale; indeed, I might say almost exsanguine; her pulse rapid, extremities cold, and the hæmorrhage existing to a great extent. This was much aggravated by coughing or moving, and being a child of extraordinarily irritable temper, every time she was excited the blood poured forth in an alarming manner.

Having consulted with the gentlemen who were in attendance on the case, we agreed to plug the abscess with lint, and to endeavour to restrain the bleeding by pressure.

This was done: a graduated compress and roller were applied, and the hæmorrhage then ceased, and did not return for twelve hours; when, in the evening, the child became very restless and intractable, and consequently the hæmorrhage recurred: and, though the compresses were several times re-adjusted, she was so irritable that they were almost immediately displaced.

This state of affairs continued from time to time, and the child died on the fifth day from the first occurrence of the hæmorrhage.

On examining the neck after death, an immense quantity of semi-coagulated blood was effused beneath the integuments of the throat and fore part of the chest.

The abscess was carefully laid open, and the internal jugular and carotid artery were transversely

divided some distance lower down the neck ; and on passing a probe upward to the abscess, an ulceration of an oblong shape, of about five lines in its long axis, was observed in the inner side of the internal jugular vein, opening immediately into the sac of the abscess.

The perforation, which may be seen in the preparation accompanying this paper, furnishes a satisfactory explanation of the source and quantity of the hæmorrhage.