CASE
OF
EXTRAVASATION OF BILE
INTO THE
CAVITY OF THE ABDOMEN,
FROM RUPTURE OF THE LIVER OR GALL-BLADDER.

By ——— **FRYER,**
SURGEON OF STAMFORD.

COMMUNICATED BY T. COPELAND, Esq.

Read June 8, 1813.

ON June 7, 1803, Mr. Simpson's son, of South Witham, ten miles from this place, aged about thirteen years, received a violent blow from one of the shafts of a cart, on the region of the liver, which was succeeded by pain, and frequent vomiting of bilious matter. He complained of great sinking, and coldness of the extremities, and his pulse was weak, small, and fluttering.

Mr. Costall, surgeon and apothecary, of Market Overton, (who had been sent for immediately after the accident, and from whom the above account

was received) ordered the abdomen to be fomented; and, as the patient's stomach rejected every thing, he directed purging clysters to be occasionally thrown up: at the same time desiring that he should be kept still and quiet, and supported by broth, milk-pottage, &c. &c., as soon as the vomiting ceased.

In this state he continued until the third day (June 9,) when symptoms of inflammation coming on, Mr. Costall requested that I might be sent for. Mr. Cooper, surgeon of this place, (who was in practice with me at that time) visited the patient immediately, and found him labouring under considerable pain about the region of the liver; there was great tension of the abdomen, which was extremely sore to the touch, and his vomiting continued as frequent as at first, his stomach rejecting both food and medicine. The pulse was very quick, small and weak; the skin hot and dry; the tongue much furred; the urine high-coloured; and he complained of some difficulty of breathing, and of great thirst.

Mr. Cooper ordered eight ounces of blood to be taken from him, and the fomentations to be continued, and, as he had yet had no proper evacuations from the clysters, directed that a few grains of calomel should be given every four hours, until it should effectually answer the purpose; after which, he was to take the effervescing mixture

with ten drops of laudanum every four hours; to be supported by beef tea, or whatever liquid food might agree best with his stomach, and to drink imperial, or toast and water to relieve his thirst.

The following day (June 10), he was much better, having had some motions; but his sickness still continuing, he was ordered one grain of opium every four hours, and was desired to go on, in other respects, as before.—Mr. Cooper saw him again on the 18th: he had, the day before, complained of great increase of pain, accompanied by vomiting, when Mr. Costall applied a blister, which appeared to relieve him. At this time he was completely jaundiced, and his stools were white: the swelling and tension of the abdomen were, however much diminished, his sickness and thirst were abated, and in other respects he was better.

The same treatment was pursued until I saw him on the 20th, at which time the swelling of the abdomen was increased, and on a strict examination an evident fluctuation was perceptible. I saw him again on the 28th (twenty-one days from the accident). The abdomen was now very considerably distended with fluid; he did not complain of much pain; he had the facies Hippocratica, and appeared to be sinking fast.—It was astonishing to see how greatly he was reduced in so short a time, being as much emaciated, as if he had been labouring under a long chronic disease. Under these

circumstances, it was proposed that he should be tapped, as affording the only chance of relief. It was agreed to, and thirteen pints of what appeared to be *pure bile* were evacuated. He bore the operation very well, but did not seem to derive much benefit from it.

On the 2d of July, the account received of him from Mr. Costall was favourable; he had felt more comfortable, his bowels were regular, and his appetite good. On the 10th of July (twelve days from the last operation) it was repeated, and fifteen pints of the same bilious fluid drawn off. He bore the tapping better than before, experienced great relief, and though he was still much reduced, was evidently better.

On the 19th of July, (nine days afterward) the operation was again performed, when thirteen pints of a similar fluid were taken away, with the same advantage. On the 7th of August the operation was repeated, and six pints only were drawn off. A purging had come on about a week before. His stools were of a natural colour; he was much improved in his looks, and his appetite and spirits were good.

From that time, there was no accumulation of fluid. He was ordered light tonic medicines, and very rapidly recovered his health and strength.

He is now a stout young man, living in London.

A case of very extensive division of the liver is recorded by Dr. Pearson, in the Third Volume of the Transactions of the College of Physicians, which caused almost immediate death.

Stamford,
May 14, 1813.

N. B. From an inquiry, addressed to Mr. Fryer, since this paper was read to the Society, it appears that no examination was made of the nature and composition of the fluid extravasated in the preceding case.