5. In all classes where the boys change places, the height of the seat is to be regulated in proportion to the average height of the pupils.

6. In all girls' schools, in all those boys' schools where the children do not change places, in boarding schools, and in private school-rooms, the seat of each child should be accurately regulated in proportion to its height.

To make this important arrangement practicable, I have invented a chair, the seat of which can be raised and lowered by means of a screw, while at the same time the back is brought forward in proportion. Such a chair will be a suitable seat for either a child or a grown-up person at the same desk, will follow the growth of the child, and enable it to be, whether reading or writing, in a comfortable and healthy position, which facilitates instruction and discipline.

REPORT OF FIFTEEN CASES OF ARSENICAL POISONING WITH UNUSUAL SYMPTOMS.*

By JOHN MORLEY, Esq., Barton-on-Humber.

As it seldom occurs for one individual to have suddenly thrown upon his hands so large a number as fifteen persons suffering from acute arsenical poisoning, I thought it would be interesting to you to place on record a few of the observations which I made and recorded at the time.

About two o'clock in the afternoon of February 21st, 1872, I was requested to proceed with all haste to Saxby, five miles distant, to attend two men who had been attacked with sickness whilst at dinner, and were considered to be in great danger. Having provided myself with sulphate of zinc and a stomach-pump, I found, on my arrival, fifteen persons ill, nearly all of whom were vomiting violently and frequently. The dinner-party consisted of seventeen relatives and friends of a deceased woman aged 80, whom I had attended six weeks for chronic inflammation of the lungs. All except two had partaken of pudding as well as meat, and these were the only persons who escaped. Upon testing the baking-powder which had been used in the composition of the pudding by sprinkling some of it on a red-hot poker, the alliaceous odour of arsenic was unmistakably present.

To those who had not already vomited freely, I gave sulphate of zinc, which acted quickly. Most of them had already taken mustard emetics; and I encouraged them all to drink freely of milk, whites of eggs, and gruel.

All complained of faintness, uneasiness about the stomach, with intense pain in the middle of the back. On the occurrence of vomiting, they were much relieved, and comparatively well for a short period, until the above mentioned symptoms returned, and did not finally cease until near midnight.

One girl, aged 14, became blind, lost her speech, and fell down in a state of syncope; but was restored by laying her on the bed and the application of warmth to the extremities.

A child three years old, in a state of collapse, was restored by a lady nursing it before the fire in a blanket; both its parents being among the sufferers, and unable to leave their bed. Several had severe rigors, which were relieved by placing them in bed and applying bottles of hot water. In only one case did I see blood vomited, and then only a few drops. In all, the conjunctivæ were injected.

At 6 P.M., four of the patients felt able to ride to Barton. Two of them went on to Hull. The others were obliged, on their arrival, to call in Mr. Sissons, by whom they were attended.

At 8 P.M., I was joined in consultation by Messrs. Eddie and Bennett; after which I returned home, leaving the patients in charge of the latter, who kindly remained in the village all night, and subsequently analysed the pudding, baking-powder, and the contents of the canister out of which the supposed rice-flour had been taken for the manufacture of the baking-powder. All of these yielded arsenic by the usual tests, which were performed in my presence.

February 22nd. We visited the patients remaining at Saxby on the following morning, and observed in all, except the children, that the congestion of the conjunctivæ had disappeared, and given place to a yellow tinge, in which the skin did not participate. There had been no diarrhoea, except in two women, one of whom had taken aperient medicine on the previous morning. Some of the patients complained of flickering of the muscles and disturbance of vision, preventing them from knitting, sewing, or reading; and, when they closed their eyes, they were troubled with shining particles floating backwards and forwards. One of them also complained of a nauseous taste.

On February 28th, Maria S. informed me that she had been tormented for the last two days and nights with irritation of the skin, which she compared to being in a bagful of fleas. On March 1st, the irritation of the skin had ceased.

Very little treatment was required after the first day. It consisted of bismuth, with soda and magnesia, in peppermint-water. All the patients happily recovered.

REPORTS

OF

MEDICAL AND SURGICAL PRACTICE IN THE HOSPITALS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

REPORT ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF ETHER.

[Continued from p. 62.]

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, BRIGHTON.

Mr. NOURSE, one of the surgeons to this hospital, writes:—I have given ether twice here, once for opening a deep-seated abscess, once for examination of a diseased hip. In the first case it answered well; the child woke up smiling, three minutes after the incision was made, and was quite unconscious of what had been done. In the second case, that of a nervous hysterical girl, opisthotonos came on when the inhalation had continued a short time. It was, therefore, suspended; but, on resuming it, the same effect followed. The ether was consequently withdrawn, and the next day chloroform was given, which acted as well as it usually does in such subjects. The quantity of ether inhaled in the first case was about three drachms; in the second case, about five drachms.

HOSPITAL FOR SICK CHILDREN.

For some time past ether has been given here by Mr. FLETCHER BEACH, the registrar, as an anæsthetic. The apparatus used is simply a cone of felt covered with oil silk or Lister's protective; and in the cone is inserted, after having been wrung out in hot water, a sponge, which can be changed from time to time, if necessary. Sufficient ether is poured on the sponge to saturate it, and the cone is applied as closely as possible to the face of the child. By pushing the ether from the first, struggling is considerably reduced. Two or three minutes suffice for the production of anæsthesia. Air is excluded as much as possible at the commencement, but admitted afterwards, according to the state of the patient and the length of the operation. Ether is added, from time to time, as it is required. There is often excitement on the return of consciousness, and the child is usually sick, but the sickness does not continue. Even in weakly children, at the end of a prolonged operation, the pulse is full and regular, showing the good effect of ether as a stimulant to the heart's action.

MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL.

CASE OF SUICIDAL POISONING BY OXALIC ACID; CYSTITIS; MORBUS RENUM; RECOVERY.

(Under the care of Dr. HENRY THOMPSON.)

It is difficult, in the following case, to estimate the exact relation between the renal and cystic symptoms and the effects of the oxalic acid. The notes are, however, of sufficient clinical value to deserve publication. It appears, from the woman's history, that fourteen years previously she had suffered from symptoms of ulcer of the stomach, during which she brought up a quantity of black blood. She had since suffered from pain in the epigastrium, and a year ago with a return of the vomiting, but without hæmatemesis. Her urine, though at times scanty, gave her no trouble, and no reliable symptom, pointing to disease of the kidney, was obtained from her. She had been much troubled for the past three years with a varicose ulcer of the leg.

A. G., a woman about 30 years of age, was brought to the Hospital, at 7.30 P.M. It was stated that she had taken, at 5.30 P.M., a pennyworth of oxalic acid in tea. This was afterwards ascertained, at the chemist's who had supplied the drug to her, to amount to half an ounce. She stated that, almost immediately after swallowing the mixture, she felt a burning sensation at the pit of the stomach and in her throat. She was violently sick, fainted frequently, and had severe pain in the abdomen. The surface of the body became cold, and purging of very offensive matters ensued; the vomited matters contained no blood. These symptoms increased up to the time of admission.

* Read before the East York and North Lincoln Branch.