of the force, of which a given material substratum is the medium, is most directly and absolutely determined by the physical condition of such substratum. When the manifestation of force is similar to any given prior force, the character of the material instrument is also similar; if the manifestation of force be changed, there is also undoubted change in the material substratum. An exposition of the nature of such changes in the nervous system belongs to the future—if, indeed, it ever be possible.

[To be continued.]

CASE OF PRURIGO ALTERNATING WITH MELANCHOLIA.

By C. HANDFIELD JONES, M.B., F.R.S.,
Physician to St. Mary's Hospital.

A CLERGYMAN, aged 64, had an attack of melancholia about 1850, which lasted two years, leaving him quite well. When seen in October 1859, he stated that he had had varicose veins in the left leg for a long time, which on one occasion gave rise to troublesome rash and itching. The use of a bandage and aperients had kept him from suffering any annoyance from them for some years. At this date there was a threatening of a renewal of pain and itching near the left ankle; the veins were enlarged. His health was good. After a few weeks, one or two small ulcers formed; from these a blush of erythema radiated, accompanied by much itching. In spite of the best devised management, the itching, clearly of a pruriginous character, increased in extent and severity. About the end of the year, his condition was really distressing. The itching he described as intolerable, precluding sleep, or rest of mind or body. The surface of the whole leg was bright red, and covered with a very thin cuticle, through which innumerable papulæ could be seen; but there was no raw discharging part, save two little ulcers. The only relief obtained was from keeping the leg enveloped in lint soaked in strong infusion of tobacco, with the addition sometimes of powdered opium, sometimes of a large proportion of hydrocyanic acid. Latterly, faintness after eating came on. The mind all the time was perfectly sound. On morning early in February, a hasty message was brought, that Mr. — had gone out of his senses. When Dr. Palmer visited him, he found him wildly excited, and irrational in his talk; but the prurigo was gone. The previous evening, he had been itching as usual; this morning, the skin was only a little red, and he said it was quite well. He gradually became melancholic, and has so remained to the present day (November 1865). The prurigo has never returned.

For this case, as for several others of much interest, I am indebted to the kind thought and acute observation of Dr. Palmer, who, amid the pressing calls of a large practice, contrives to find time to preserve records of noteworthy cases. *O si sic omnes!* Believing, as Romberg does, that prurigo is essentially an hyperæsthesia of cutaneous nerves, I regard its alternation with melancholia as an occurrence of the same kind as the shifting of a neuralgia from one part to another; the only difference being, that a nervous centre is substituted for a nerve-tract. In my work on *Functional Nerve-Disorders*, I have recorded an instance in which severe facial neuralgia, as it gave way to quinine, was replaced

by periodical attacks of hysteria, lasting about two hours. Whether, in the above instance, any *materies morbi*, such as the gouty, existed, and underwent metastasis from the peripheral parts to the central, I have no evidence to show. However, I do not think that in either lichen or prurigo we have much ground for believing that the malady is dependent on any blood-poison. It seems to be of importance to have a clear conception of the possibility of nervous centres suffering in a quite analogous way to nerves, as the mind is thereby taken off from perpetually recurring, in all cases of cerebral disorder, to the notions of congestion and effusion, as it is so prone to do.

ON THE MODERN TREATMENT OF FRACTURES OF THE LOWER JAW.*

By BERKELEY HILL, F.R.C.S.,

Assistant-Surgeon to University College Hospital, and Instructor
in the application of Surgical Apparatus in
University College, etc.

IN the *New York Medical Journal* for September and October, 1866, Mr. Gunning, of that city, has published an excellent paper on a mode of applying caps fitted to the teeth for fracture of the jaw-bone. By this method, external support is abandoned wherever it is possible. In the majority of cases of simple fractures, the caps or interdental splints are so accurately fitted as to require no fastening to the teeth; but, when the displacement is considerable, he supports the fragments in the splint by screwing the one or more teeth to the splint.

Mr. Gunning recommends that the jaw should be adjusted in its splint as quickly as possible; but he procured union in one case, which is narrated at length, where four months of ineffectual treatment had been previously tried, and fragments of bone were escaping through wounds under the jaw, with copious discharge of pus. His mode of proceeding is as follows. He first brings the fragments as much on a level and into their true position as possible. For this purpose, if his fingers do not suffice, he uses wooden levers or a small screwjack placed in the floor of the mouth, to force out obstinate deviation of a fragment inwards. Gaps, through loss of teeth at the line of fracture, are to be filled by plugs of hard wood, and the fragments kept in place by tightly wiring the teeth. It is best to remove all these means for keeping the fragments in place while the splint is being fitted, when that is accomplished, though ligatures used solely to support loosened teeth may be left, as there is no traction upon them. Stumps and teeth, loose before the accident, are best taken out, if they interfere with the arrangement of the splint.

Having done this, Mr. Gunning takes a mould of the lower jaw in wax softened by heat, holding the wax in an ordinary dentist's tray. From this mould he makes a plaster cast of the jaw. If the line of teeth be uneven in the cast, he saws it through, raises the pieces to the right level, and casts again. In this way he obtains an exact copy of the jaw in its natural position; on this he makes a vulcanite mould, which fits the teeth exactly. (Fig. 4.) The margins of the mould or splint should be carried down below the line of the gums, so as to grasp

* Concluded from page 226 of last number.