with his comfort, but he could never after this lie on his back without inducing headache. The most remarkable effect, however, was that he no longer felt any inconvenience from stooping, as had previously been the case, but was accustomed to relieve his headaches by bending his head lower than his body, and thus has been able to do work which he could not otherwise have attempted. During the last eight years the tumour had gradually increased to at least double its former size. Whenever he hurt it he uniformly suffered severe headache, it became soft and flaccid, and no relief was ever experienced until, as in the first instance, it recovered its accustomed form. In other respects his general health has been very good, and during the last two years he has worked underground as a lead miner. A fortnight ago, while at work, he struck the tumour a severe blow, and since that occurrence its increase in size has been much more rapid than on any previous occasion, until it burst yesterday.

He was sent home, and directed to apply water dressing to the sore, to remain in bed, and take aperient medicine if required. On the evening of July 10th he had considerable pain in his back, and heat in the tumour, which was relieved by free discharge from it. On the 11th I pressed out about half a pint of curdled matter from it, without pain. He was ordered to lie on his left side, so as to favour the discharge, to continue the water dressings, and to take a dose of saline aperient medicine twice or three times a day. On the 13th he was better, the tumour was of a more fleshy consistence, and much diminished in size. On pressing in every direction, not more than a teaspoonful of thick purulent matter was discharged. From this date to the 28th he improved; the tumour was gradually assuming a firmer feel, and was much diminished in extent; the discharge from it healthy, and in sufficient quantity. His appetite was good, he slept well, and every symptom led to the hope of a favourable result, when on the 29th he was attacked with pain in the head, and along the whole length of the spine. There was no discharge from the sore, and the muscles of the back were in a perfect state of opisthotonos. General and local bleeding, with other active treatment, was unavailing. He became paralyzed, coma supervened, and he died on the morning of the 2nd of August.

I regret that an examination of the body was not allowed.

The foregoing case is interesting, inasmuch as very few of the subjects of spina bifida attain adult age.

A case, in some particulars similar, is related by Mr. Dawson, of Liverpool, in the first volume of the "Transactions" of the Association. The patient, a lady, 38 years of age, had a tumour on the upper and back part of the thigh, about the size of a pomegranate, which was the source of much discomfort to her, and she consulted the late Mr. Park as to the propriety of its removal, for which she was anxious. On manual examination it appeared to be fibro-cartilaginous, with a small quantity of fluid occupying its apex. It had existed from birth, and when first discovered was the size of a filbert. It was punctured, and twelve ounces

of clear fluid discharged; after its collapse its connection with the spinal column was traced through an opening between the sacrum and the coccyx. She lived nineteen days after the operation. The details are long and interesting, and well worth attention.

As the tumour had burst before I saw my patient, I was relieved from those difficulties of diagnosis which spina bifida, in so unusual a situation, might have presented. I had, also, been much interested in the perusal of Mr. Dawson's case, and could not fail to recognize the points of similarity between the two.

Mold, June 25, 1851.

ON THE MANAGEMENT OF WOMEN AT, AND AFTER THE CESSATION OF, MENSTRUATION.

By E. J. TILT, M.D.,

Senior-Physician to the Farringdon General Dispensary and Lying-in Charity, and to the Paddington Dispensary for Diseases of Women and Children.

SEDATIVES.

WHEN relating the successive variations of practice which have occurred in the administration of our most valuable medicines, the medical historian will probably state, that during the last thirty years there has been too much timidity in the employment of sedatives, and particularly in that of opium, for the present generation of medical men seem to forget that often nature only requires to be freed from present pain, to enable an organ to return at once to the regular performance of its function, without future distress or inconvenience. Is it, then, necessary to remind the reader, how generally useful sedatives are, that in most diseases they not only assuage the acuteness of pain, but lull excited action to a slower rate of progress, and to a more subdued tone. The blood-vessels serve under the immediate rule of the accompanying nerves; and hæmorrhage as often depends upon their perturbed agency as on any peculiar state of the blood-vessels themselves; and although other measures may be indispensable, the return of such hæmorrhages can only be prevented by a judicious use of sedatives.

We have already seen how useful is opium in the relief of many deranged states of action, particularly in dysmenorrhœa, and the utility of sedatives in diseases of the change of life might be deduced from the great frequency of cerebro-spinal symptoms at the cessation of menstruation. It will be remembered that I stated their frequency to be—

CEREBRAL SYMPTOMS.

Headache, sick-headache, hysteria, and pseudo-narcotism had existed in	...	64 per cent.
They were augmented in	...	36 "
„ remained the same in	...	18 "
„ were less in	...	10 "
They did not exist in	...	36 "

SPINAL SYMPTOMS.

Spinal or dorsal pains had existed in ...	70 per cent.
They were augmented in ...	46 "
" the same in ...	17 "
" less in ...	7 "
They did not exist in ...	30 "

100

Hypogastric pains of a bearing-down character, referred by women to the womb and ovaries, had existed in ...	51 per cent.
They were augmented in ...	30 "
" the same in ...	12 "
" less in ...	9 "
There were none in ...	49 "

100

This frequency of cerebro-spinal symptoms warrants an equally frequent exhibition of sedatives, and I do not hesitate to say that, under some form or other, they are always required in diseases of cessation. In the milder forms of catamenial headache and pseudo-narcotism they alone suffice to cure, and they always assist the action of bleeding, of purgatives, and of other remedies which may be deemed necessary.

To relieve the cerebral symptoms, which, though cured, so frequently return, I very seldom make use of opium, but, on the contrary, give hyoscyamus, the mild action of which permits its being taken longer without producing cerebral disturbance or constipation. When there is any great intensity or persistence of spinal or hypogastric pain, I generally give from thirty to forty drops of vinum opii in three ounces of very thin starch, as an enema, repeating the remedy according to the urgency of the case, one, two, or three times a day. Thinking that the outward application of sedatives has been too much neglected, I frequently order the ordinary opium or belladonna plaster to the sacrum, to the loins, and even to the pit of the stomach, whenever the patient complains of a "faint feeling," or of "sinking at the stomach," or "of having no inside." In such cases, I often prescribe a plaster made so as to embody from five to ten grains of opium and the same quantity of camphor to the square inch. Such applications to the epigastric region are too often said by the patients to give great relief, for me not to believe that sedatives thus applied to so important a centre of nervous force must be worthy of an extensive trial; for it is indeed strange that a region of the body to which patients so often refer their sufferings, the application of a small blow to which causes so much debility, while sudden death is the speedy consequence of its more violent concussion—I mean that epigastric region considered by the great Galen to be one of the levers of vital force, the *πρωτοχλιον*,—should remain all but unnoticed by physiologists, unmedicated by therapeutists, and a region almost entirely unexplored. If, in my hands, the lever has well answered to the touch, how much more, when handled by fingers directed with superior skill, would it enable others to use the innate powers with which we are endowed by nature for the more speedy cure of disease. An additional motive for laying stress upon this point of practice is, that in the

profession I have frequently seen an inclination to undervalue the effects to be obtained from topical applications. It was only lately that the well-informed resident officer of one of the public institutions to which I belong said to me, when I was complaining of my patients not having the plasters I prescribed, "I have too high an opinion of your practice, sir, to think that you can hope to cure your patients by *plastering up disease*." I own that I felt somewhat disarmed by the compliment.

Dr. Physick used to say that "camphor was made for women, with whom it always agrees, while it always disagrees with men," thus placing two exaggerations in a small compass; for I have met with women with whom it disagreed, and it agrees with men who, by their constitution, approximate to women.

Camphor has been so often lauded in the diseases of women, that I may be allowed to add my humble testimony to the value of a remedy, without which I should be at a loss to treat diseases occurring at the cessation of menstruation. I generally prescribe the ordinary camphor mixture as a vehicle for other remedies; but where expense is no object, Sir James Murray's fluid camphor is a preferable preparation.

Descending from these general observations to those of more practical application, I shall give a few cases exemplifying my plan of treatment.

Case 14.—Mary B——, a needlewoman, aged 48, with auburn hair and blue eyes, is tall and stout, and has lived always in the country. She applied for relief at the Paddington Free Dispensary, Feb. 6, 1851. She first menstruated without any prodromata, between thirteen and fourteen years of age. It was very abundant from the first, and the function was regularly performed every four weeks, without much pain. She married at twenty-five, had one child, and two miscarriages. For the last eight months, the menstrual flow had become irregular, sometimes very little, at others abundant, and attended by great flushes of heat, perspirations, a great darting pain in the forehead, and a dizzy stupid feeling in the head, with a great tendency to sleep.

I ordered a mixture composed of solution of potash and tincture of cardamoms, of each four drachms, with six drachms of the tincture of hyoscyamus, in six ounces of camphor mixture; a table-spoonful to be taken with a little water ten minutes before every meal; and half a tea-spoonful of bicarbonate of soda, with a little powdered ginger, to be taken in a wine-glassful of cold water, ten minutes after each meal.

I also ordered five or ten grains of the soap and aloes pill, to be taken at night, when necessary, to maintain the free action of the bowels.

This was continued until the 27th February, when, instead of the aloetic pills, I ordered the following powder:—Flowers of sulphur, two ounces; bicarbonate of soda, two drachms. A teaspoonful to be taken in a little milk, every night.

Under the influence of this treatment, and perhaps, also, from the occurrence during the treatment of a papular eruption, accompanied by intense itching, on both hands and arms, the head symptoms soon disappeared. After a severe accession of influenza, she was

again attacked by them, but they again vanished, when the same treatment was had recourse to.

Remarks.—The compound camphorated mixture, as prescribed in this case, is what I usually give, but I vary the proportions of its ingredients according to circumstances, and that it does good is, I think, proved by the fact, that at the public institutions to which I am attached, I am very frequently applied to by my old women, for “some more of the same stuff which did them so much good before.”

The administration of alkalies, which form so useful an addition to the treatment of such cases, improves digestion, and by their action on the blood they doubtless neutralize some of its noxious elements. Their utility will be still further understood, if it be admitted, as I have frequently observed, that notwithstanding the use of diuretics, the urine previous to, and at cessation, is often secreted in smaller quantity, that it is very muddy, and that the patient suffers from a certain amount of general excitement. This condition of the urine at the change of life reminds me of another very important phenomenon of menstruation, to which I have not drawn more particular attention, because I have not as yet been able to work out its value; I allude to the state of the urine previous to the catamenial periods, when some of the nervous symptoms of menstruation have already appeared. Since my attention was first drawn to the subject, by learning from a patient “that she always knew when she was going to be *poorly*, by her urine being so very muddy,” I have made it an object of inquiry. It has often escaped notice, but most women have stated to me that their water was generally thick and muddy two or three days previous to menstruation. This condition of the urine, which, I believe, has never before been noticed, as well as the catamenial diarrhoea, to which I shall allude in treating of purgatives, and the frequency of the nervous symptoms, show indubitably how deep a modification is produced every month in the female constitution. These are the evidences of that species of fermentation admitted to exist at the menstrual periods by Bayle and Etmuller, by De Graaf and Van Helmont;—this is the peculiar commotion of the blood which Democritus had in view when he talked of a “*fervor uterinus*.” In dispensary practice it is impossible to carry out the investigation of the value of this phenomenon, and to inquire into the nature of the saline deposits alluded to by my patients, but those who, being attached to hospitals, enjoy the enviable fields of inquiry which charity lends to science, in the anticipation of a return, might easily arrive at results which would, I think, be interesting to physiologists.

I usually give the sesquicarbonate of soda, bicarbonate as it is now called in the new Pharmacopoeia of the College of Physicians, because it is convenient, cheap, and not unpalatable. After the first few days I give it only once or twice a day. In mild cases, and in those of long standing, I continue this treatment for a month, and then leaving it off for a fortnight, resume it again, combining its influence with that of a tepid bath every week, with sponging the head several times in the day with cold vinegar and water, or camphorated water, and having the feet put for a quarter of an hour every other night in hot water.

It may be said that the preceding case was slight, and that although my treatment did no harm, time alone cured the patient; but the following case will be better calculated to show its efficacy:—

Case 15.—Eliza P——, aged 47, tall and slender, with dark hair, hazel eyes, and nervous appearance, has always lived in London, and is in comfortable circumstances. Menstruation, after three months of pseudo-narcotism, appeared between thirteen and fourteen. Regular from the first, it came every three weeks, in moderate quantity, and without any pain. She married at sixteen, miscarried three times, had seven children, and menstruation ceased, with a terminal flooding, at forty-four, after eighteen months' of menstrual irregularities. About a year ago she was troubled with nervous symptoms similar to those I am about to describe, and followed by copious hæmoptysis, which relieved her. The patient often suffers much from faintness, flushes, perspirations, and lately, to a slight degree, from bleeding piles. She looks exhausted, stupid, and bewildered, and says that for the last few weeks her head has been “as heavy as lead,” with noises and great giddiness. Every now and then she feels a burning heat run across the chest, and through the body; and then follow profuse warm perspirations from the chest only. She compares her sensations to those by which the hæmoptysis was preceded.

I first saw her on April 3rd, when I ordered the same treatment as to the former patient, with the exception of six drachms of tincture of henbane to the six-ounce mixture, of which a table-spoonful was to be taken four times a day. I also ordered a large plaster of opium and camphor to be placed over the pit of the stomach and the lower part of the chest.

5th.—Much better, but weak; the pains in the chest are removed.

7th.—A little better; a slight vesicular eruption has appeared on the back of the left hand; she fainted twice yesterday. I added to the mixture one ounce of spirit of nitric æther, and in other respects I continued the same treatment.

24th.—She looks quite another person; walks firmly, and only feels the pains and noises in the head at rare intervals; for the last few days her whole skin is in a state of moist perspiration.

June 12th.—The patient is very well; the pains in the head have almost entirely left her; she feels well, and has grown stouter.

While under the influence of the same treatment the patient is well, but when she leaves it off there is a slight return of the same symptoms, thus affording evidence that, in this case at least, it was to the treatment and not to time, or to the unassisted operations of nature, that the patient owed her restored health.

In conclusion, I feel bound to state, that by combining the use of sedatives with that of other remedies, it is possible to remove any amount of pseudo-narcotism, and as this treatment, with short intermissions, may be continued for months, it is well calculated to allay some of those tedious ever-occurring infirmities which beset women at the last great crisis, and particularly that pseudo-narcotism which, as I have already stated, sometimes causes them to be falsely accused of consoling the decline of life by an intimacy with Bacchus—a

gentleman not generally admitted into ladies' society. To ladies—to all women, this is, of itself, a matter of serious importance; but the beneficent use of sedatives will be fraught with even a higher import to the meditating medical philosopher. By their judicious, more frequent, and more continued use, may they not be made more available than hitherto in withstanding the overstimulating effects on the nervous system of our present civilization, arresting in its bud that tendency to mental derangement which, if statistics are to be depended upon, occurs more frequently in women than in men? There is a yellow poppy which expands its gaudy petals alike in arctic regions and in sultry southern climates, thriving in both extremes of temperature, as if intended to point out the utility of sedatives to man by the constancy of their companionship, whatever latitude he may inhabit.

8, York Street, Portman Square.

Provincial Medical & Surgical Journal.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 23, 1851.

IN our remarks upon the British Medical Fund, in a recent number of the *Journal*, we inadvertently omitted any distinct allusion to the sickness fund as a branch of the proposed scheme. We have been reminded of this omission by Mr. DANIELL, and we have no hesitation in recognizing the justice of his complaint, though we certainly considered that "sickness" and "premature old age" should be regarded as synonymous terms; and at the very commencement of the article alluded to we stated, that "The British Medical Fund is set on foot to afford to the provident member of our profession the best means of insuring himself against *premature old age*, and his family from the misery and want, which his early death, (before sufficient time has elapsed to allow proper provision,) so often forces upon them." It cannot, therefore, be said that we ignored the principle of insurance against sickness; but we freely confess that in our summary of the advantages held out by the British Medical Fund, we omitted all allusion to the "sickness fund."

Mr. DANIELL will find, by examining our leading article, that we anticipated him in every point in which he shows the want of similarity between the two Societies, and therefore we have nothing to remark on that score, but we have thought it right to do justice to the projectors of the British Medical Fund, as far as lies in our power, by admitting that the principle introduced by them, of insurance against sick-

ness, did not receive that full attention from us, which it deserves.

We do not know that there is any provident society in existence, which insures against sickness, unless under circumstances in which a full supervision can be exercised by its regular officers. But in this we do not see much difficulty, as there is very rarely a case in which a medical man, suffering from disease, is unattended by a brother practitioner, and he would always gratuitously certify as to the state of the invalid, which would be a check against any chance of imposition upon the funds of the Society. It is scarcely probable that any man of education should be so lost to all feelings of honour as to make an attempt of the kind we allude to, but it is better that temptation should be removed, than that we should have to mourn over so melancholy an instance of dissimulation and fraud.

With the superintending care, which we have no doubt will be exercised, we think the "sickness fund" ought to be warmly supported by the profession; and in this department there is certainly no rivalry, as there is no other institution offering the same provision. We have not been able to obtain from Mr. HAWTAYNE, any explanation of the details of the working of the plan, but we have not the slightest doubt that all precautions will be taken which are afforded by the well-known scientific acquirements of Mr. NEISON.

The pressure of other matters, including the proceedings of our Branch Meetings, which have been more than usually interesting, will prevent any further allusion to the subject, but we must repeat our regret that we should, though only in appearance, have neglected the claims of so valuable a provision as the sickness fund promises to be.

Proceedings of Societies.

LANCASHIRE & CHESHIRE BRANCH.

THE fifteenth annual meeting of this branch of the Association was held at the Town Hall, in Manchester, on Wednesday, the 25th ult. The attendance of members was large, including Thos. Turner, Esq., of Mosley Street, Manchester, the President for the current year; John Hatton, Esq., Manchester, the Hon. Secretary; Dr. Eason Wilkinson, Dr. F. Renaud, Dr. C. Bell, Manchester; Dr. W. H. Duncan, (the