commencement of the attack, on the 17th of October, thirteen days ago; the stool is liquid, small in quantity, and healthy in appearance. The treatment to be continued.

November 1st.—The bowels have again acted this morning, and the character of the evacuation leaves no doubt that it cannot have been merely the accumulated contents of the rectum from the injections.

From this date the case was straightforward. The utmost caution was pursued in the administration of food, and no relapse interfered with a gradual and progressive convalescence.

The attention of the profession has latterly been much directed towards cases of this description, with a view to their relief by operative means, where the symptoms appear to depend on mechanical causes. It would be a great boon if some clear diagnostic sign of distinction could be shown to exist between the effects of an internal strangulation, and the paralysis induced in its functions by an inflamed condition of a portion of the bowel. I fear the case I have just read will not tend to elucidate this difficulty. From reviewing the history of my patient's malady, I am totally at a loss to say in what it differs from those of persons in whom some accidental stricture was proved to exist. In cases of the latter kind the pain and tenderness may sometimes be more definite, but this is by no means a rule. There is nothing to be observed in the more tardy or violent onset of the symptoms; in both they come on with equal violence, and with equally rapid effect upon the powers of life. In both there is the permanence of the prostration so long as the bowel is impervious, and the continued absence of reactionary fever. Trace the individual signs, the flatulence, the character of the spasms, the hiccough, the stercoraceous vomiting, &c., and the analogy becomes only the more complete.

I have, therefore, I regret to say, no other practical deduction to bring forward than the testimony this case affords, of the favourable result that sometimes attends the resources of nature in cases of intestinal obstruction where art is of no avail.

NOTES

ON THE

TREATMENT OF CURABLE DISEASES.*

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PORRIGO SCUTULATA. (RINGWORM.)

RINGWORM is primarily a local disease, appearing in annular patches. It most frequently infests the scalp, although it sometimes occurs also on other parts of the surface of the body, where the rings are generally of a

larger size. This disease is of a contagious character, and hence when it commences in a community of children, such as a school, it hardly ever fails to infect the whole establishment, through the medium of hats, caps, combs, &c., or by contact.

When this kind of porrigo takes place upon any part of the surface not covered with hair, it is easily recognised, and can be at once destroyed by the application of lunar caustic; and doubtless the same remedy would be equally successful on the scalp, but it generally happens that in such a hiding place, before the medical attendant is called in to take charge of the case, the disease has got possession of an extensive portion of the cranial region, and often, for a length of time, bids defiance to medical skill.

When porrigo scutulata is first discovered upon the scalp, the whole of the hair should be carefully, and as closely as possible, clipped off, in order to ascertain the extent of the disease; and should there be only a few patches, they should be touched with the nitrate of silver, wetted with water, every other day.

If the scalp be extensively affected, the lotion (1) may be substituted, and applied with a camel's hair brush. I have seen instances of the eruption exceeding the boundary of the hair, and reddening a considerable portion of the skin of the forehead, in which a solution of the chloride of lime was successful, although the cases were of long standing, as in 2.

1.—R. Argenti Nitratis, gr. xx.
Acidi Nitrici, gtt. vj.
Aquæ Puræ, oz. j.

Misce fiat lotio.

2.—R. Solutionis Chloridi Calcii, oz. iij.
Aqua Samb. Flor., oz. j.
Aquæ Puræ, oz. ij.

Misce fiat lotio bis quotidie bene applicanda.

When the disease has degenerated into an inveterate character, with acrid favi involving the follicles of the hairs, it becomes most obstinate, resisting almost every remedy; but even in this state the disease may sometimes be removed by the alkaline lotion

3.—R. Potassæ Carbonatis, oz. j.
Aquæ Pluvialis Oct., ij.

Misce fiat lotio bis die, rasis capillis, capiti applicanda.

During the local treatment the constitution must not be overlooked, and if in anywise disordered, must be treated according to circumstances. 4 will be found a good alternative.

4.—R. Hydrargyri cum Cretâ, gr. iij.
Antimonii Oxysulphureti, gr. j.

Misce fiat dosis, alternis noctibus sumend in mellis pauxillo.

ECZEMA OF THE LEGS.

This kind of eczema is generally met with in elderly persons after the age of 50 years, and often occupies the whole or greater part of the space between the knees and ankles. In the acute form the skin is of a bright red colour, but when it has become chronic, it assumes a venous or purple hue. There is, in most cases, a profuse serous discharge from the vesicles,

* Continued from page 32.

which thickens, and forms scabs, and, as these are loosened by the continued discharge beneath them, they fall off, leaving the surface of the leg painful and raw till it scabs over again in the same manner. The legs are somewhat swollen, and the ankles and feet more or less oedematous.

Unless the constant irritation and pain attending the disease prevent sleep, the system is not much disturbed, indeed it may be sometimes relieved by the outbreak. Various local remedies have been used for the cure of this eruption, in the way of ointments, fomentations, lotions, &c., but most of these rather aggravate than relieve it, and cannot be borne long. The application which I have found most beneficial, is a bread-and-water poultice, with its surface spread with the *fresh* ointment of elder-flowers.

Case.—A clergyman, of delicate habit, and upwards of 70 years of age, became affected with eczema on both legs to a considerable extent. He was treated with various remedies, both internal and external, but all were unavailing, and appeared to increase rather than diminish the pain and irritation. His legs were red and swollen, and his feet oedematous. He could get no sleep, his appetite failed, the circulation was feeble, and he became alarmingly debilitated. Under these circumstances I resolved to wrap each leg in a large and smooth bread-and-water poultice, having its surface smeared with fresh elder-flower ointment, and repeated twice a day. It was at once evident that this was the remedy. The application was felt to be comfortable; the pain and irritation soon ceased, and allowed him to take rest; his appetite returned, and his general health improved. By continuing the poultices the inflammation of the legs, and the oedematous state of the feet, rapidly subsided, and in about a fortnight the treatment was attended with complete success.

The good effect of a poultice very much depends upon the way in which it is made. It should be prepared in the following manner:—Crumble a sufficient quantity of white bread, as finely as possible, into a good sized basin; then add boiling water, by little and little, and at the same time stir and mix the mass with a wooden spoon till it becomes a soft pulp. The poultice is to be spread on a napkin, or on linen cloth, about a third of an inch deep, and of an equal thickness throughout. Fresh elder-flower ointment, or whatever unctuous matter is made use of, should be smeared upon its surface, which will keep the poultice moist, and prevent it from adhering to the skin. When sores on the skin are of an irritating character, fresh ointment, made with elder-flowers, will be found to add to the soothing property of a poultice, but if not recent, it will become an irritant, and aggravate the disease.

If the eczematous outbreak take place in a full habit, the pill (1) and the mixture (2) will sometimes greatly conduce to its removal.

1.—R. Pil. Hydrarg. Chlor. Comp., gr. v.
Fiat Pil. omni alternâ nocte sumenda.

2.—R. Magnesiae Carb., dr. iss.
Magnes. Sulphatis, dr. vj.
Spir. Ætheris Nitrici., dr. iij.

Aquæ Cinnamon., oz. ss.

Aquæ Destillatæ, oz., v.

Misce Cap. cochlearia larga duo omni mane et meridie.

The Plummer's pill should always be taken in a soft state, otherwise it will pass through the intestinal canal without being broken down by the digestive process.

In chronic eczema, where the skin is of a dark venous colour, inactive, and without much heat, the poultice will be too sedative to be continued for any time; and, therefore, as soon as it has soothed the cuticular irritation, and cleared the surface of scabs, it should be discontinued, and the morbid skin dredged with flour twice a day. This will soon become encrusted. support the vitality of the integument, exclude the air, and allow the surface to heal; so that when the crusts are detached and fall off, the cuticle will be found restored.

Case.—I was requested to see a lady of advanced age, who had been affected with chronic eczema for some time on both legs. The cuticular surface was of a dark venous colour, and discharged a watery fluid, which formed scabs. The ankles and dorsal parts of the feet were somewhat oedematous; but the system was undisturbed. It was decided to try the poultice above described, and continue the liquor potassæ, which had been before taken. The local treatment was found comfortable and soothing, and in about a fortnight removed the oedema. The cuticle, however, showed no disposition to heal, and the temperature of the surface became so lowered that it was deemed necessary to discontinue the poultice, to dredge the legs twice a day with flour, and to substitute the nitro-muriatic acid for the liquor potassæ. The flour agreed well, and soon formed crusts over the whole of the disease, which were not disturbed; and as they loosened and fell off the cuticle was found restored.

SCABIES. (ITCH.)

Itch is an eruption of a local character, said to be produced by the irritation of an animalcule called "*acarus scabiei*." The eruption is sometimes small and vesicular, and at others comparatively large and pustular. It is, in either case, contagious, and appears principally between the fingers and toes and in the flexures of the larger joints.

Nothing is more easy than to diagnose this disease; and yet it is remarkable, amongst the better classes, how long a time will often be suffered to elapse before the proper remedy is applied, simply from an obstinate scepticism on the part of the patient, who is naturally anxious to escape the odium of having caught such a disease, as well as the annoyance of using the remedy necessary for its removal. In order to avoid the unpopular smell of sulphur, many remedies have been recommended for the cure of scabies, such as the white hellebore root, the nitrate of potash, dilute sulphuric acid, &c.; but neither of these can be depended upon, and they almost always fail to *eradicate* the disease. Mercury will sometimes succeed; and formerly it was the custom for old nurses to undertake the cure by

encircling the loins with a flannel girdle, smeared with mercurial ointment, and this mode of application was used as a means of introducing this medicine into the system, by which the disease was got rid of without further trouble; yet not always, for it not unfrequently happened that severe salivation was produced, which was a far more serious malady than that which it cured. There is, indeed, another external application, in which I have reason to have some experience, and that is the common solution of the chloride of lime. This should be well applied to the eruption, wherever it may be found, twice a day, by dabbing it with a bunch of linen rag, made wet with the solution. But, beyond all controversy, sulphur is the remedy most to be depended upon for the cure of scabies. It should be applied externally and taken internally. The ointment (1) is to be well rubbed into the pustules every night and morning for five or six days, after which the skin is to be washed clean with soap and hot water.

1.—R. Sulphuris Sublimati, oz. iij.

Adipis, oz. iv.

Olei Lavendulæ, gtt. v.

Misce fiat unguentum bis quotidie diligenter in partes affectas fricandum.

This process will generally suffice for the cure; if not it must be repeated in the same manner. In the mean time a scruple of this preparation of sulphur should be taken twice a day (if the patient be an adult) in honey or any other thick vehicle for three weeks. I have found the sublimed sulphur quite as effectual as the roll, which is unpurified sulphur; and it has the advantage of being less offensive in point of smell.

The pustules of scabies, if long neglected, will occasionally coalesce, and occupy a considerable portion of the skin with an intolerably itching scab. This is liable to be mistaken for an eczematous or impetigenous crust; but an examination of the pustules in other parts of the body will distinguish it from eczema; and the absence of stinging pain and cutaneous cracks from impetigo. The effect of external applications will also help us; for scabies will in nowise be benefitted by those which are soothing and curative; and in such eruptions the application of sulphur will not be tolerated by them.

Case.—An elderly female consulted me for a pustular outbreak on one of the legs, which had run into a filthy scab, occupying a large portion of the skin between the knee and ankle, discharging a thin matter, and causing intolerable and incessant itching. Believing the disease to be of an eczematous character, I treated it accordingly; but nothing that was applied had the least effect in lessening the eruption or abating the itching, which deprived her of all sleep and greatly exhausted her strength. Considering that it may have been originated by scabies, I next ordered the application of the sulphur ointment (1) which at once discovered its real character, put a stop to the itching, and removed the disease.

LEPRA. (LEPROSY.)

Lepra has been divided by pathologists into three principal species—the albidæ, nigricans, and candida;

but all are probably derived from the same root, modified by circumstances—constitutional or climatic. Malignant lepra is rarely seen in these islands, at least such a form has never fallen under my observation. This species is called “candida” from its bright whiteness, and the denomination has a complete agreement with that emphatically given to it in several parts of the Old Testament, such as “leprous as snow”—“a leper as white as snow.” It appears that in former times the malignant species was considered to be contagious, and hence those severe clauses in the Mosaic law, which excluded an Israelite, afflicted with this degree of the disease, from mixing with society. Celsus thus describes it:—“*Leuce habet quiddam simile alphi, sed magis albidæ est et altius descendit; in eaque albi pili sunt et lanugini similes* * * * “*Leuce quem occupavit, non facile demittit.*” According to the same authority a singular method was practised to diagnose as to whether the disease was curable or not. “*Utrum autem aliquod horum sanabile est, an non sit, experimento facile colligitur. Incidi enim cutis debet aut acu pungi: si sanguis exit, quod ferè fit in duobus remedio locus est; si humor albidus sanari non potest.*”—*Iiber v.*

The lepra more commonly met with in this country is of the alphoid kind. It is characterised by elevated patches of squamous matter and of a dull white colour. When situated upon the spaces between the larger articulations, they are of a distinct circular form, about the size of half-a-crown, with a slight reddish areola; but they most frequently form upon the knees and elbows, where they are less defined. Sometimes the leprous surfaces are more extensive, occupying a considerable portion of the skin either of the extremities or trunk, associated with circular patches of small sizes here and there on the intervening spaces.

Lepra is accompanied with considerable local irritation; but although it continues for a long time, does not produce any great amount of constitutional disturbance.

In its more common form, the disease gradually yields to the efficacy of medicine. The liquor potassæ in doses of from forty minims to one fluidrachm, taken thrice a day in dilute milk, and the external application of the oxide of zinc ointment will not fail to be successful. But it will not always yield to this mode of treatment. There are examples of the alphoid character, which will not in the slightest degree be benefitted by it; but which will succumb to the use of the arsenical solution, as in the following case:—

A married woman, of middle age, and of healthy aspect, was admitted into the Royal South Hants Infirmary for lepra alphoides, which had existed a long time. It was extensive and confluent on the posterior surface of both arms, and small circular patches were thickly scattered over other parts of the body. She menstruated regularly and sufficiently. She was occasionally affected with hysteria, and her hands were as cold as stone and almost dripping with sweat; but notwithstanding this her general health did not appear to be much impaired.

She was first placed under the alkaline treatment, with a supporting diet; and the leprous surfaces were smeared with the oxide of zinc ointment, and afterwards with an alkaline application. Being in nowise benefitted by these means, she was ordered to take various tonics consecutively, such as the iodide of potassium, the disulphate of quinine, the compound iron pill, &c.; but as all these alike failing to make the slightest impression upon the disease, five minims of the liquor arsenicalis were given her three times a day. In a few weeks it was manifest that the disease was gradually yielding to the therapeutic influence of the remedy; and by persisting with the same dose for some time longer the skin became free from any leprous appearance.

APHTHA. (THRUSH.)

Thrush more commonly occurs either in early infancy or towards the termination of organic diseases. In the former it yields to the simplest remedies; in the latter it is incurable and is the forerunner of death. The thrush, however, may and does occur at other times, unconnected with the infantile causes or organic lesions; and this is the case alluded to here, which generally takes place in advanced age.

The disease invades the mucous membrane of the mouth, fauces, and alimentary canal; and it consists of small superficial ulcers, covered by a white deposit, but in some cases it is of a darker colour. The eruption, if such it might be called, is usually distinct upon the anterior and lateral surface of the mouth, and confluent upon the palate and fauces. It is often preceded by great drowsiness, which is followed by a burning sensation down the œsophagus and in the stomach, soreness of the epigastrium under pressure, and painful and difficult deglutition. These symptoms are accompanied with asthenic feverishness, depression, and debility. Thrush, under these circumstances, unconnected with organic disease, is curable, and by the following treatment:—The mouth and fauces are to be well washed or mopped out three times a day with the lotion 1; the bowels, if there be no diarrhœa, are to be regulated by 2, and the strength supported by 3, and a generous diet.

1.—R. Solut. Chlor. Sodii vel Calcis.

Mellis Rosæ Sing., oz. ss.

Tinct. Opii, dr. ss.

Aquæ Destil., oz. v.

M. Fiat lotio ter die utenda.

2.—R. Olei Ricini, dr. ij.

Tincturæ Hyos., m. x.

Tincturæ Aurantii Comp.

Syr. Zingiberis Sing., dr. j.

Mist. Acaciæ q.s. ad benè miscend., et Aquæ Destil. ad oz. iss. Fiat haustus aperiens. Vel.

R. Pulv. Rhei, gr. x.—xv.

Mist. Acaciæ, Syr. Rosæ Sing., dr. ij.

Tinct. Hyos., m. x.

Aq. Cinnam., dr. iij.

Aquæ Destil., oz. ss.

Misce.

3.—R. Quinæ Disulp., gr. vj.

Acid. Sulph. Dil., gtt. vj.

Tinct. Aurantii Co.,

Syrup. Ejusd. utrq., oz. ss.

Mist. Camph., oz. v.

M. Capiat cochlearia larga duo ter die.

The chloride of sodium or calcium in solution is most efficacious in removing apthæ from the mouth and fauces, indeed the rapidity with which they are removed by it is quite remarkable. I have met with several of these cases, three of which occurred to men over 70 years of age. Two were of the higher, and one of the lower, class of society. They all did well. It will suffice to relate one of them.

Case.—A gentleman, aged 78, whose residence was on a high hill, in a very healthy locality near the New Forest, complained of sore-throat, and requested my attendance. Upon examining the mouth and fauces the mucous membrane was found apthous. Upon the cheeks the apthæ were distinct, on the posterior part of the palate confluent, and they were of a whitish colour. The deglutition was painful and difficult. A sense of heat was felt in the throat and down the œsophagus, and his aspect was extremely depressed and debilitated.

The gargle (1) was prescribed, with which the mouth and throat were to be well washed three or four times a day. The bowels were to be moved with a gentle aperient, and one grain of the disulphate of quinine, as in 3, was ordered every four hours, with animal jellies, and a liberal quantity of wine. On my second visit, the next day but one, all the apthæ were clean gone, and he was so improved in his general health as to be past all further anxiety.

Should there be d'arrhœa, which is not an unfrequent association with thrush, showing that the membrane of the alimentary canal is involved, a few drops of the liquor opii sedativus may be added to each dose of the quinine mixture.

Southampton, February 3, 1852.

[To be continued]

Hospital Reports.

QUEEN'S HOSPITAL, BIRMINGHAM

CASES

Reported under the Terms proposed by the Association.

BY SCRUTATOR.

Fracture of the Femur; Post-mortem Examination.

WILLIAM DAVIS, aged 75, admitted into the Queen's Hospital, Jan. 13th, under the care of Mr. Knowles. He had, some short time before, slipped from a step and hurt his hip. On examination, the leg was found shortened almost two inches, the toes and knee turned outwards, and the hip much swollen. Upon making extension and rotating the limb, crepitus was plainly felt, and the case was diagnosed as fracture external to the capsule. The patient was very thin, had been suffering some time from extreme debility and cough, and apparently had scarcely had a sufficiency of food. A pillow was placed under the whole length of the limb,