The right leg has now become nearly quite powerless, and she can hardly walk. Complaints of great headache; speech very difficult and indistinct. No affection of the sight, no noises perceived in the ears. Appetite very bad from the beginning. The only cause for the appearance of the above symptoms was rheumatic fever, which she suffered from for three weeks just before the chorea appeared. Never noticed any worms in excrements.

On the 25th, she began taking one grain of oxide of zinc morning and evening; but, on the 28th, no improvement being perceptible, the pills were omitted, and she was ordered one grain of blue pill, and one-fifth of a grain of opium, twice a day. On the 1st of August, the morbid symptoms had rather increased; the oxide of zinc was then resumed instead of the mercury pills, which she continued to take regularly. From August 4th till September 5th, one grain of oxide of zinc was taken twice daily. On the 4th of August and 2nd of September, a small blister was also applied behind the neck, for the purpose of diminishing the headache. She took half an ounce of castor oil on the 5th of September, on which day the dose of oxide of zinc was increased to two grains. On the 12th, castor oil was again prescribed, to relieve the bowels. The 15th, she was directed to take three grains of oxide of zinc twice daily, and two drachms of cod-liver oil three times a day, besides the pills. (The patient only took two drachms of cod-liver oil once a day, by mistake, until the 21st.) I may observe, that the patient had at this period nearly quite recovered. The chorea was hardly if at all perceptible; she could walk quite straight, and without difficulty; and the power of the hand was gradually increasing; so that it is impossible to attribute the recovery in this case to the cod-liver oil: still it appeared to hasten the cure, and may be useful in cases similar to this one, as an addition to the oxide of zinc. On the 18th, the dose of oxide of zinc was increased to four grains, which she took twice a day, besides the cod-liver oil, until the 21st. She was now quite well; the pills were omitted, and the cod-liver oil continued until the 13th of October, as she had considerably fallen in flesh. On this day she was dismissed, cured.

CASE IV. Hannah Watts, aged 14, admitted on the 3rd of August. Has a healthy constitution, but suffers since the 27th of July from epileptic fits. During the attack, she is convulsed, and screams; becomes red in the face; grinds her teeth a great deal, and foams a little at the mouth. There is no cause to account for these fits, except perhaps an accident the girl met with when only eight years old, on which occasion she fell from a barge on the gravel, and received a severe wound on the left side of the scalp. Her sleep is very restless; she talks a great deal in her dreams, and attempts to get up whilst asleep. She complains much of headache, and, just before a fit, feels distinctly the aura epileptica. The fit was brought on first by a reprimand from her mistress, and continued occurring once daily until the 3rd of August. She had not been subject to epilepsy previous to the 27th of July, but had now and then what she calls a fainting fit, especially in summer. On the 3rd of August, the 5th, the 7th, the 10th, the 14th, and the 16th, she had one fit; from which date she continued to mend in all her symptoms, the fits not recurring; and on the 13th of October she was dismissed, apparently cured.

OBSERVATIONS. Oxide of zinc is one of the numerous tonics recommended for the treatment of nervous disorders; it has proved very useful in the hands of Dr. Herpin, of Geneva, and is considered as an important medical agent. Still, I am not aware that zinc, in form of oxide, has been found so efficacious in this country as abroad for the treatment of nervous affections; and my hospital practice offering a good opportunity of testing the value of this remedy, I have given the medicament in many cases of nervous affections. About nine out of every ten patients submitted to this treatment were either cured or remarkably relieved.

I have not yet employed this substance in a number of cases sufficiently extensive to allow me to state precisely

where oxide of zinc ought to be administered or avoided, but from my observations it appears:—

1st. That the medicament is useful where giddiness, nervous weakness of sight and hearing, headache, and other symptoms of this kind are prominent; also in epilepsy, in which case it appears to possess peculiar medical properties; in chorea, and for the treatment of general nervous debility.

2nd. That oxide of zinc can be administered without the slightest fear of danger, and that the only inconvenient symptoms it may produce are sickness and constipation.

3rd. That the dose of this preparation may be increased gradually to from fifteen to thirty grains and upwards daily.

I continue to avail myself of every opportunity to test the medical properties of oxide of zinc, and trust it will be found useful by other members of the medical profession.

St. Mary's Hospital.

CASES OF LICHEN AND PRURIGO: WITH REMARKS.

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

CASE I. Eliza B., aged 37, female, married, admitted Sept. 18th; of healthy aspect, rather tall. Has an eruption on trunk, and left arm, and neck, which approaches near to the character of lichen agrius. There is not at present much itching, but it is dreadful when she gets warm in bed at night. It comes on in the hot months, and goes away in the cold completely. She has had it seven years; it has lasted for about five weeks on the present occasion. Is otherwise in pretty good health, except that food lies heavy. The eruption is aggravated if she eats food that is not easily digestible. No cause known for disorder. Skin cool; pulse weak; bowels costive; catamenia quite regular.

R Hydr. cum cretâ, pulv. Doveri, aa gr. ij. Bis die.

R Acidi hydrocy. dil. ℥v; tinct. nucis vomicæ ℥x; sod. carb. gr. v; inf. gent. co. ʒi. Ter die.

R Ung. hydr. nitratis ʒiiss; adipis 3vss. M. Fiat unguentum.

Diet of boiled fish, puddings, milk.

Oct. 12th. Has been improving pretty steadily, although the eruption reappears, and then recedes again. Feels a great deal better inwardly; has more appetite and strength. She finds the ointment allays the itching. Pt. in mist. c. liq. pot. arsenit. miv in sing. dos. Pt. in ung. and in pulv. o. n.

Oct. 19th. Is very much better; very hungry; gums are slightly sore.

Nov. 13th. Is now well, the powder having been taken every other night only since last date. Mouth not sore. Some stains left by the lichen. Eats food well; it does not lie heavy. The eruption usually ceases about this time of the year, but she feels much better in herself for the treatment.

Near the end of the following May, she returned to me again, suffering with the same disorder, which prevented her from having any rest at night. It was aggravated also by the heat of the fire, and the laundry work in which she was occupied. Under hydr. bichl. gr. 1-10, dec. sarzæ ʒi, ter die, and the following ointment—

R Ung. hydr. ʒij; cerati plumbi acet. ʒi; adipis 3vij. M.—she obtained great relief.

June 23rd. She reports that she can sleep comfortably now; but without the medicine she used to itch all over in bed, and could not rest at all. She says she is sure to have the eruption during the hot weather.

Markworthy features in this case are the intimate dependence of the disorder upon heat; its control by mercury cautiously administered, and the improvement of the general health by the same means. On the first occasion, arsenic appeared serviceable, after the force of the diseased action had been subdued.

CASE II. E. W., aged 12, errand boy, admitted April 24th. He had been ill some weeks, suffering from an eruption consisting of numerous inflamed patches covered with scabs, and others presenting several little vesicles, or prurigo-like spots, rendered bloody by scratching. Tongue clean; health good; skin cool.

R. Liq. pot. arsenit. $\mathfrak{m}\mathfrak{x}\mathfrak{x}\mathfrak{v}$; liq. potass. $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{j}$; inf. gent. co. $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{i}$. M. $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{s}$ ter die.

R. Liq. plumb. diacetat. $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{i}$; aq. destill. $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{j}$. M. Fiat lotio.

May 1st. The eruption continues; it presents the form of lichenous patches, and pustules mingled with them. Itching not checked by lotion.

R. Hydr. bichloridi gr. i; dec. cinch. $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{i}$. M. $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{s}$ ter die.

R. Ung. hydr. nitratis $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{i}$; adipis $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{v}$. M. Fiat ung.

May 15th. Much better; less itching. Pt. in mist. and ung.

June 5th. The eruption improves, and he looks much better. Did not return.

I believe this eruption was essentially lichenous, though showing a tendency to become vesicular, partly from the appearance it presented on May 1st, but especially from the failure of arsenic, and the success of bichloride of mercury. The saying of Hippocrates, "Naturam morborum curationes ostendunt," expresses a great truth; viz., that the reaction of the human body towards remedies while in diseased states makes known to us more of their intimate invisible nature than we could learn by any other means of observing. It is like applying chemical tests to an unknown substance.

CASE III. C. T., aged 70, male; ill off and on for three or four years; suffers severely from prurigo senilis. His limbs and body are covered over with the characteristic black-topped papules. Is obliged to scratch himself very much at night, and his rest is very much disturbed. Feels rather weakly. Is of calm self-possessed temper. Admitted April 30th.

R. Strychnie gr. i; acid. sulph. dil. $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{s}$; aquæ $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{x}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{i}$. M. $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{i}$ ter die.

May 10th. Is certainly better; the itching is not so heating, nor so frequent. Is obliged, however, to jump out of bed, and walk about the room for two hours at night. Skin cool. Pt. in mist.

R. Extr. conii gr. iv; ipecac. pulv. gr. i; morph. acet. gr. $\frac{1}{4}$. Fiat pil. ij. capiat i ij o. n.

R. Mist. sennæ $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{i}$; tinct. aloes $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{i}$; o. mane.

May 17th. Worse last two nights, but has slept better with the pills. Is covered all over with a papular rash, having brownish stains, and marked with bloody heads from scratching. Urine natural; tongue also.

R. Hydr. bichloridi gr. i; pot. nitratis $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{v}$; mist. ammon. acet. $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{v}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{j}$. M. $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{i}$ ter die.

R. Ung. zinci $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{i}$; plumbi subcarb. $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{s}$; ung. hydrarg. $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{j}$. M. O. n. utend.

May 24th. Eruption is very much less, and itches less; it is most felt about the knees, backs of thighs, and in groins. Pt. in mist. and ung. Warm bath twice a week.

June 14th. "Is quite in heaven to what he was"; eruption still showing itself on calves of legs and thighs to some extent. He has had a bath this morning, but the skin nevertheless is covered with brownish stains, the relics of the eruption. Pulse of good force. Has been taking the last week—

R. Ol. morrh. $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{s}$ bis die.

R. Dec. sarzæ $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{i}$; hydr. bichl. gr. $\frac{1}{4}$ bis die.

The same treatment was continued up to July 6th, the eruption being kept under so as not to cause him much annoyance, but still continuing to some extent on the legs. His health improved. The bichloride was now given in dec. cinch. ter die, and one grain of hyd. cum cretâ also every night, and soon after he had ung. hyd. nit. oxyd. $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{s}\mathfrak{s}$; opii $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{i}$ as a local application, instead of the former one. Some further improvement took place in the local disease, but a complete cure was not effected.

August 23rd. tried acid. sulph. dil. $\mathfrak{m}\mathfrak{x}\mathfrak{v}$; dec. cinch.

$\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{i}$; ter die; but under this he became rather worse, and more eruption appeared on the thighs.

Sept. 3rd. I commenced to give him the following mixture, altered from a prescription of Mr. Startin's:—

R. Hydr. bichloridi gr. 1-10th; acidi arseniosi gr. 1-20th; acidi muriat. $\mathfrak{m}\mathfrak{j}$; tinct. opii $\mathfrak{m}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{i}\mathfrak{j}$; aquæ $\mathfrak{z}\mathfrak{i}$ ter die.

This he took up to the date of his discharge, November 3rd. Some traces of the eruption still continued to show themselves to the last, but he benefited decidedly by the above combination. He was much improved in health and spirits, felt quite a different man, and passed tolerable nights. He mentioned, when I discharged him, that he had had the same eruption last year, and that it ceased about the same time, but that he did not feel so well then as he did now. I examined the urine on September 29th; it was quite healthy, with the exception of depositing some oxalates, and being perhaps unduly acid.

REMARKS. The controlling influence of bichloride of mercury is well shown in the above case, as well as the improvement of the health under its prolonged use. The conclusion to be drawn from the other cases is the same, and affords a complete refutation, in my opinion, of the views of those who think that the administration of mercury is never beneficial, but often injurious. That which is true of all other remedies is eminently so of mercury, that its use must be "tempestivus." It is not so much a disease called by a certain name that calls for the employment of mercury, as the existence in a particular patient of certain vital conditions. According as these vary, mercury must be given or withheld. The intimate connexion of the papular eruptions with an elevated temperature is well illustrated by Cases I and III, and is an instructive circumstance. It seems to indicate the compound nature of the affection, which consists probably of a nervous element and a vascular. The abnormal nervous condition must be a kind of hyperæsthesia of sensory nerves, which so long as the external temperature is low, is not painfully excited. When, however, by an increase of warmth more blood is received into the superficial vessels, and the nerve sensibility is also heightened, then the phenomena of severe irritation show themselves. The excited nerve filaments determine foci of inflammatory irritation around their extremities, which constitute the papules. The existence of this inflammatory irritation I consider as essential, and I believe the beneficial action of mercury takes place by annulling it. In some cases I know the tonic influence of strychnia or arsenic may cure the disorder by diminishing the hyperæsthesia of the nerves; but I have no confidence in them at all while there exist decided indications of sthenic inflammatory movement. Dr. Burgess looks on the diseases in question as essentially neuralgic, involving the peripheral nerves, and regards the eruption as a mere accessory condition. I agree with him so far as that the peculiar nervous state is the primary disorder; but I attach more importance than he does to the superadded change. There must be some peculiar state wrought in the cutaneous tissue, which produce phenomena so entirely wanting in ordinary neuralgia. Lichen urticatus seems to hold an intermediate place between the eruptions we are now considering and neuralgia. Its spots, by the suddenness of their appearance, and their less permanence, show the predominance of the nervous element, and in accordance with this, the disorder is pretty certain curable, at least in children, by arsenic. I do not think that much benefit was derived from the warm baths in Case III.

1, Southwick Place, Hyde Park, Nov. 1855.

St. Marylebone General Dispensary.

TERTIARY SYPHILITIC PERIOSTITIS.

By T. W. NUNN, Esq., Surgeon to the Dispensary.

NOVEMBER 10th, 1855. W. B., aged 35 years; carpenter; a well made man, of middle height; has nodes upon the