come impacted, and no other resource be left but craniotomy.

Two methods have been recommended for altering the position; the first consists in flexing the head, with a view to bring down the vertex. To do this, it is advised to make steady pressure with the finger upon the forehead, so that it may be arrested, whilst the back part of the head is pressed down by the uterine efforts, and the chin caused to ascend towards the chest. This mode seems very easy in theory, but will be found very difficult in practice; and I agree with M. Chaillly in considering it as next to impossible. By pressing on the forehead, we act on the centre, and not upon either extremity of the lever represented by the head, and thus have little or no power. The second method is much more feasible, and will generally prove successful; it consists in bringing down the chin (provided it can be reached) by two fingers in the form of a crotchet; but if it cannot be reached by the fingers, it may be drawn down by means of a vectis. The object of these manipulations is to place the chin beneath the arch of the pubes, and thus to convert the case into an ordinary face presentation.

Clifton, Bristol, March 1853.

CAN EXCESS OR A DEPRAVED STATE OF THE GASTRIC AND PANCREATIC JUICES DECOLORIZE THE BILE, AND SIMULATE FUNCTIONAL DERANGEMENT OF THE LIVER?

By CONWAY T. EDWARDS, Esq., Surgeon.

[Read before the Bath and Bristol Branch of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association, March 24th, 1853.]

THIS is an important question, in reference to the treatment of persons, who, having resided many years in India, return to England suffering from derangement of the whole digestive apparatus. Under a belief that the liver is the one source of all their sufferings, they naturally seek the advice of medical men who have practised in India, and whom they suppose to be more conversant with the nature and treatment of diseases of that organ, than practitioners whose sphere of occupation has been limited to this country.

"I do not" (observed a practitioner in London, to an officer who had seen an extensive service in India), "I do not give it as an opinion that your liver is affected; I state it as a fact." This gentleman had suffered much from dysentery, and from the "heroic" treatment used to subdue it. He had been invalidated for several months, from a casualty produced by a cannon-shot, and had returned to England for his health. The clay-coloured alvine dejections, their want of solidity, and the repeated calls to evacuate the bowels in the day, led him to consult a gentleman whom he had known as a practitioner in India, but who was now established in London.

He was put on a treatment of blue pill, tonics, acids, and alkalies; and with returning summer, came his convalescence. Towards the latter end of last autumn the symptoms reappeared. He consulted a physician nearer home, who pronounced the cause of all these symptoms to be liver.

On this, he communicated with his medical friend in town, who recommended a recurrence to the treatment of the previous spring. But a severe winter was before him; a condition of atmosphere existed inimical to healthy life, and which was incessantly draining the electricity from the system. The treatment which had proved so successful in the spring, failed to produce a single favourable change in the disease. His friend advised him to have his liver examined, and to report the result of the examination.

As he resided in my neighbourhood, he came to me.

There was no tenderness nor fulness in the region of the liver; no tangible hardness of that organ; and no external evidences in the colour of the skin, of the tunica albuginea, or beneath the nails, that any functional, or organic disease of that organ existed. The intestines were filled with flatus;

the motions were loose, frothy, and colourless; and the inclination to pass them frequent, and very urgent. The renal secretion was scanty, and high coloured, and its transit irritated the neck of the bladder; the eyes were bright; the heart's action was healthy; the tongue clean, but rather too red; the function of the skin greatly at fault; the appetite good; but the sleep disturbed and unequal. He dwelt strongly on an intense acidity of the stomach; and believed it to be the cause of his sufferings.

The report was, that there was no organic disease, but functional derangement of the liver, and general debility of the organs of digestion.

The order came to take blue pill until the liver gave evidence of its proper function being restored, and to use the alkaline mixture (which was composed of liquor potassæ and infusion of gentian), as the acidity demanded. The blue pill treatment was continued for nearly two months; and his altered expression, and loss of flesh and spirits, told at once how great had been the failure of the treatment. Not a symptom had been removed, not a suffering mitigated. I advised him again to communicate with his friend; who, in addition to his former prescription, urged the use of the nitro-muriatic acid bath twice a day for two months.

During the whole of this treatment, I never interfered; and as each letter assured the sufferer that the disease must ultimately give way to the plan, he was content to follow it. I think, however, he said to me one day, "You are all wrong about my liver; I begin to doubt if it is liver at all."

An accident at once put an end to the further pursuance of this treatment. It was no less than a dinner party: "I must," said my patient, for so I may now call him, "have these urgent calls to stool arrested. I cannot attempt to visit my friend, with the horrible fear of an urgent call before me!" I could not give him positive assurance that he should not be so troubled; but I deemed it highly probable that he would not, if he could abstain from all food, except bread and chicken, and be content with cold brandy and water, in place of a variety of wines. To this he consented; and I gave him two doses of medicine composed of chalk, chloroform, tincture of opium and cinnamon water; one to be taken directly, and repeated before dinner.

On the following day, he expressed himself greatly indebted for the relief he had experienced from all his symptoms. He had had no stool, had slept better than he had done for many months; and the only troublesome symptom was the immense distension from which he at first suffered, and the consequent dispersion of the flatus. I advised him at once to cease taking the blue pill, and continue the nitro-muriatic acid baths, and those only three times a week; to take the chalk medicine twice a day; to live plainly on roast and boiled meat, eggs, toast, milk, rice, and such simple diet; to walk regularly; and not to give himself a moment's uneasiness about his liver or his stools.

From that hour to this time, he has had no return of his sufferings; the acidity has entirely left him, and the stools are gradually assuming a natural hue.

The question which naturally arises from this case, is this:—To what can the colourless condition of the motions be attributed? If to impaired function, or total arrest of the biliary secretion, are such states compatible with healthy life? Is it possible that an organ of such magnitude as the liver could suffer from arrest of its peculiar function for many months, without producing more serious results than clay-coloured stools? Is it out of the range of probability that the real source of the suffering in this instance may be looked for in an increase of the gastric and pancreatic juices? and that these secretions might be endowed with such an increase of intensity, as to be capable of decolorizing the bile?

It certainly is remarkable, that a long course of judicious treatment failed to produce any beneficial results; and that a treatment which had for its object the neutralization of the acid, and subduing nervous irritability, should be attended in a few days with production of bile of a proper colour.

Bathaston, Bath, March 1853.