of the accident, nor consulted any one about it, till she called in Mr. Yate the day before. The dislocation was into the axilla; the usual means of extension and counter-extension were employed by pulleys. Finding that we did not succeed, and that the pain was becoming intolerable to our patient, we determined on exhibiting chloroform; and shortly after she came under its influence, we succeeded in reducing the shoulder, and she has gone on remarkably well ever since. Previously, she had not slept in consequence of pain accruing from the pressure of the dislocated humerus on the axillary nerves, but with the exception of the first night, she has since slept peacefully, and the old enemy to sleep—pain—is completely removed. I do not say, that we *might* not have reduced the shoulder without the aid of chloroform, but I am satisfied that the reduction was facilitated, while the pain to the patient was spared by its employment.

April 10, 1848.

CLINICAL NOTES FROM PRIVATE PRACTICE.*

By W. H. RANKING, M.D., (Cantab.) Norwich.

2. Coma from retained Biliary Secretion: Leeches; Cold Douche to the Head; Active Mercurial Purgative: Cure.

I was called about eleven at night, three months since, to the son of an innkeeper, aged 13. It appears that he had returned from school a few days previously, and had gone to bed in apparently his usual health, at ten o'clock. About half an hour before I saw him, he roused the house by a most piercing scream, and upon his mother reaching his room, he was discovered sitting up in bed, screaming loudly, and staring with an intense expression of terror into a corner of the room. While in this condition I arrived.

I found him as I have just said, staring with fright, and uttering piercing screams. The countenance was flushed, the eyes glistening, the pulse natural in volume, but a little quickened. He took no notice whatever of any one near him, but continued to stare wildly in one direction, in spite of every attempt to attract his attention. He had vomited once. While I was making enquiries as to the antecedents of this formidable condition, he slowly fell upon the bed, and in a few minutes was in a state of complete insensibility. I immediately sent to the nearest chemist for leeches and calomel, and in the mean time had him raised up, and kept a continuous stream of cold water upon the head, first removing the hair; mustard cataplasms were also applied to the calves of the legs. As soon as they arrived a dozen leeches were applied to the temples; and ten grains of calomel were also put upon the tongue, to be repeated in two hours. I staid with him an hour, and left him with returning consciousness, the leeches having bled freely, and the cold douches being continued at intervals of a few minutes. At ten in the morning he was perfectly collected, the bowels had been freely purged, an immense quantity of dark offensive bile having passed. He required no further treatment.

My first impression on seeing this case was, that it was an instance of the sudden invasion of meningitis, an opinion which might have been countenanced by the boy's age, and by the fact that he had lost two brothers, or a brother and sister, of "water on the brain," and was himself of strumous aspect. But the rapid supervention of complete coma, and the absence of convulsions, at once disabused me of this view of the case, and I had therefore no hesitation in attributing the symptoms to sudden congestion of the brain, induced either by the presence of indigestible matter in the stomach, or by the retention of vitiated secretions elsewhere. The age was against the probability of the congestion being due to disease of the cerebral blood-vessels, as was his aspect against the suspicion of the agency of general plethora. I confess, however, that under the urgency of the symptoms, and the clearness of their indications, I felt inclined to leave the pathology to be determined by the progress of the case. The first object was to relieve the cerebral vessels, which was done effectually by the combined effects of leeching, and the cold douche, the latter especially; the second was to remove the exciting cause, which, as the stomach had been freely evacuated, I judged to be seated in the intestines. This was accomplished by the calomel. Many would have used the lancet freely; and as the result proved, by so doing, would have inflicted a very unnecessary loss of blood,—a loss more easily produced than remedied. The cold douche would, I am convinced, if properly applied, in many cases of threatened apoplexy, puerperal convulsions, &c., completely obviate the necessity of the wholesale blood-letting, too often indulged in in such cases; often, I believe, from the convenience with which the lancet is applied, and the little trouble it involves.

The result of this interesting case will, I think, justify the diagnosis at the head of these remarks,—the proximate cause of the symptoms being cerebral congestion; the remote cause, the retention of the fætid cystic bile which was dislodged by the calomel.

For some excellent remarks on the production of coma by retained secretions, &c., I would refer the reader to a paper by Mr. Corfe, (*Medical Times*, October 9, 1847, or *Half-yearly Abstract*, Vol. 6, p. 25.

PROVINCIAL

Medical & Surgical Journal.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 1848.

The French medical journals give a lamentable account of the position and prospects of medical men, under the dislocation of social interests at present existing in Paris. It is in vain that the Feuilletonist of the *Gazette Médicale* attempts to be facetious on the subject; his witticisms are evidently extracted from a spirit more disposed to grieve than to be merry. Miserable as the remuneration of the French

* Continued from page 207.