RADICAL CURE OF STRICTURE,

BY THE

USE OF THE CAUSTIC BOUGIE.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—Should you deem the inclosed paper worthy a place in your periodical, its insertion will confer an obligation on, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,
CONWAY T. EDWARDS, M.R.C.S.

Batheaston, Bath,
Dec. 10, 1841.

An officer in her Majesty's service applied for my advice for a stricture in the urethra, and an abscess in the perineum.

The stricture had existed many years, and latterly the passage had become so very contracted that no urine could be passed without the assistance of a very small bougie. The continual lacerations of the lining membrane of the urethra, which naturally resulted from the unscientific manner in which the instrument was introduced, tended further to block up the passage; and this, in conjunction with the violent straining, which took place during every attempt to relieve the bladder, produced inflammation in the surrounding structures, and excessive irritation of that organ.

In this miserable condition the patient was compelled to seek professional assistance; and after great difficulty a medical gentleman introduced a catheter, and emptied the bladder. Further than continually passing the instrument, no attempt was made to effect a radical cure: the prostate became painful, and so much enlarged as to offer another impediment to the evacuation of the bladder, and an abscess made its appearance in the perineum.

As the patient lived above 180 miles from me, I requested he would come to Bath. On his arrival, what with the fatigue occasioned by the journey, and the exhaustion consequent on his having taken no sustenance of any kind from the time he started, a feverish state of the system was induced, that aggravated the disease from which he was suffering.

I succeeded in passing a small catheter, and having relieved him so far, requested he would retire to rest. On the following morning I made a thorough examination of the affected parts.

The whole of the prostate was enlarged and painful; there was an irritable ulcer in the perineum, unconnected with any important part. On passing a composition bougie, I found that a stricture existed about the centre of the urethra; on gently insinuating the instrument it passed through the contraction, and, on being withdrawn, gave evidence that about a quarter of an inch of the passage was obstructed. The bougie was of the smallest kind. A dozen leeches were applied to the perineum, followed by a smart dose of the protochloride of mercury, and a cathartic draught. The catheter was passed at bed-time, and a dose of morphia, with James's powder, secured the patient a good night's rest. On the following morning the prostate was free from pain, and after evacuating the urine I left the catheter in the bladder. For several days the antiphlogistic treatment was pursued, and the sedative given at night; and each time, after passing the catheter, it was allowed to remain in the bladder for several hours. By these means all the irritation was subdued, and the stricture, with the enlarged prostate (for the abscess had healed) was all I had to contend against.

I now submitted my plan of treatment (which was to destroy the stricture, with the caustic bougie, and disperse the enlargement of the gland, by iodine, and its preparations) to my patient, and he willingly assented to it. An ointment of metallic iodine, with hydriodate of potass was rubbed into the perineum

night and morning, and two doses of a mixture, in which the hydriodate was dissolved, taken at the same time. I passed a good sized armed India-rubber bougie down to the stricture, which gave great pain on its first application; and, on removing it, introduced a very small bougie through the stricture; in the evening I drew off the water as usual with the silver catheter. Every second day for a week I used the armed bougie; and not only no bad symptoms were produced, but little pain was felt by the application of the caustic. At the commencement of the second week, I increased the diameter of the armed bougie, and a few days after this I succeeded in introducing an elastic catheter, which remained in the bladder until the following morning. Thus was an important point gained; for the catheter passed with comparative facility, and as it was much larger than the silver one which I had been using, a certainty of a cure now for the first time took possession of my patient's mind.

In this manner we progressed, passing the instrument every day, and increasing the diameter of the elastic catheter, until one of moderate dimensions could be passed with facility. At the termination of a month, the catheterism was omitted, and a large elastic bougie worn in its place for half the day.

The patient could now evacuate the contents of the bladder with the greatest ease; the prostate returned to its original dimensions; his health and spirits were restored; and he returned home a sounder man than he had been for many years.

On a review of this case, I am justified in stating that the chances certainly were against the patient; for he was not a young man; had been in every first-rate action during the last war; was wounded in the battle of the Nile; was in numerous single engagements, and, moreover, had essayed to treat his own complaint, all of which tended greatly to weaken the energies of the system. I was therefore rather tenacious at first, respecting the application of the armed bougie, and represented the possibility of a certain train of symptoms supervening on its use; but as the disease would certainly have produced speedy destruction to life, unless shortly subdued, so I feel quite justified in risking the application of that which, when holding the situation as dresser at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, I had sometimes seen produce no very trifling irritation.

C A S E

OF

FUNGUS HÆMATODES IN A CHILD TWO YEARS OF AGE.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—I beg to forward the following case for your insertion in your very useful Journal, which I have taken in from the commencement.

I remain,

Your obedient servant,
HENRY EWEN.

Long Sutton, near Wisbeach,
Dec. 11, 1841.

April 21, 1840. I was consulted this day by the parents of M—— Pulford, aged two years, respecting a tumour of the left leg, and received from them the following history of the child's case. A small swelling was observed just above the outer angle a few days after birth; three months afterwards it had increased considerably; after that it decreased and nearly disappeared; the tumour continued stationary for about nine months, and then began to increase again, and has continued increasing up to this time; the tumour involves the whole limb from the ankle to the