ROYAL MEDICAL AND CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY.

January 11, 1842.

Dr. WILLIAMS, President, in the chair.

An Account of a Case of Extensive Disease of the Pancreas. By JAMES A. WILSON, M. D., Physician to St. George's Hospital.

Alexander Tait, a gentleman's servant, aged 41, intemperate habits, unhealthy complexion, and distressed countenance, complained of constant pain at the epigastrium, sometimes heightened to agony. He described it as "a pulling together of the pit of the stomach," which he felt most when recumbent, and after food; and which was often accompanied by headache and giddiness. His pulse was regular, its beats 65 in the minute. In a month from this patient's admission into St. George's Hospital, and after an unusually long intermission, the pain suddenly and violently returned. Shivering succeeded, maniacal delirium, and death.

Post-mortem.—A considerable layer of fat over the muscles of the abdomen. Pericardium universally adherent to the heart, which was otherwise healthy. Lungs healthy. Brain softer than usual, and more vascular in its medullary substance. Some serous fluid on the arachnoid; very little in the ventricles. Stomach healthy. Spleen in a very soft state. Kidneys healthy.

Remarks on Typhus Fever. By JOHN BOSTOCK, M.D.

The author expresses his intention to consider typhus under three heads—viz., as asthenic, cephalic, and gastric; which he describes agreeably to these designations. He is of opinion, that the cutaneous eruption frequently seen in typhus fever need not constitute a fourth variety. He considers these varieties of fever as often complicated with each other, and referable to a common origin.

With respect to the cause of these varieties specifically, he is unable to lay it down; but he speaks of the city of Liverpool as containing largely the exciting cause of typhus fever generally.

With respect to its mode of propagation, he considers that both infection and contagion are capable of transmitting it; and he is of opinion that its occurrence does not exempt the sufferer from a second attack, but modifies it if it occurs.

With respect to prognosis, he considers the cephalic variety the most fatal. He praises the system of affusion of Dr. Currie in reference to this variety; and with many judicious remarks on the subject of treatment, calls the attention of the society to the remarkable changes of opinion.

A Case of Stricture of the Trachea. By W. C. WORTHINGTON, Esq., Senior Surgeon to the Lowstoft Infirmary. [Communicated by James Copland, M.D., F.R.S.]

The patient, an agricultural labourer, aged 49, first came under the notice of the author in August, 1837. Four years previously he had contracted syphilis, for the cure of which mercury had been administered, but to an immoderate extent. During twelve months immediately previous to his putting himself under the author's care he had been confined to the house. The state of his respiration most especially attracted the author's attention, both as regarded the peculiarity of the noise attendant upon inspiration, and the very painful effort required for its accomplishment. The sound closely resembled that produced by an unsound horse, called "a roarer;" suggesting the idea that the air passed through a tube of narrow calibre. Each inspiration occupied ten seconds, and was obviously effected at the expense of very powerful exertion of all the muscles about the larynx. Utterance was hoarse and rough, and a troublesome cough was present. The

stethoscope furnished no indication of disease of the lungs. After having suffered as above described, with little variation, for three years and a half, the patient died from suffocation, some particles of bread and milk which he was taking for breakfast having fallen into the larynx.

On dissection, the trachea, just below the cricoid cartilage, was found contracted to the size of a goose-quill, the contraction being quite independent of adventitious deposit of any kind, the product of inflammation. The tracheal rings had entirely disappeared from the strictured part, whilst below, the constrictions of the rings were somewhat dilated beyond their natural calibre. The alæ of the thyroid cartilage were somewhat approximated.

The author considers it probable that the disease had a syphilitic origin, and that the contraction of the membranous part of the trachea was consequent upon the absorption of the cartilaginous rings, and the simple result of the want of antagonism from the latter.

ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, PARIS.

January 3rd.

AMPUTATION AT THE HIP-JOINT.

M. Larrey presented a report on a case of amputation at the hip-joint performed by M. Sedillot; this is the first successful operation of this kind ever performed at Paris.

The patient was a soldier, 28 years of age, who had compound fracture of the right thigh, in July 1837. After having suffered for a considerable time from the results of the accident, union took place, but the injured limb was again accidentally broken. The patient was sent from the country to Paris in the early part of 1840. The leg was shortened, atrophied, and completely immovable; the thigh covered with cicatrices and several fistulous sores; the femur was carious in several places, and the disease could be traced communicating with the hip-joint. The limb was removed on the 7th August, by the double flap operation. The patient was discharged well in 50 days, and now enjoys excellent health.

M. Sedillot asks whether this operation should be performed at an early period, and before the development of secondary accidents, or whether it is not more prudent to wait as he did, until the secondary effects of the injury have entirely disappeared. The author adopts the latter mode of practice. M. Larrey, on the other hand, affirms that primary amputation at the hip-joint may be performed in cases of recent injury as well as in those of chronic disease, and attributes the want of success in the former cases to the severe nature of the injury, on account of which the operation is usually required. M. Larrey also mentioned that he had performed this operation in two cases; in both the wounds had been completely healed, when the unfortunate patients perished from cold and deprivations of every kind.

ACADEMY OF MEDICINE.

LITHOTRITY IN A CHILD.

M. Segalas presented a boy, 23 months old, whom he had successfully delivered of a stone, 14 lines in diameter, by the operation of lithotritry. This was the youngest individual on whom he had, as yet, operated. A great number of sittings was required, but no bad symptom occurred. M. Segalas brought forward this case in support of the opinion which he sustains against most other surgeons—viz., that lithotritry may and should be applied to children. The arrest of the fragments of calculus by the narrow