IPSWICH MEDICAL SOCIETY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL AND
SURGICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,

If the accompanying cases selected from the proceedings of the above Society be thought acceptable for the pages of our Journal, you will oblige me by their insertion.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

C. M. DURRANT, M.D.,

Ipswich, December, 1846.

Hon Sec.

APOPLEXY.

A girl, aged 26, while in apparently good health, was suddenly seized with apoplexy. Coma, with dilated pupils obtained from the commencement, and she died in five hours. Bleeding was twice had recourse to without relief.

Inspection. The membranes as well as the substance of the brain were found injected, together with slight but general softening of the entire organ. A coagulum, weighing three ounces, was found lying beneath the pons Varolii, and extending into the fourth ventricle.

In the discussion upon this case, it was thought that in all probability chronic inflammation of the brain had existed for some time previous to the attack, and that the ramollissement was a precursor of the hæmorrhage. The pathological condition of the brain in this instance, was clearly of a totally opposite character to that of elderly persons, in whom hæmorrhagic apoplexy is not unfrequent, and where also, the arteries of the brain are often found to be brittle. An instructive conversation followed upon the important subject of bleeding in apoplexy. It was shewn that this measure should be had recourse to with caution after the patient had passed the age of sixty years.

FACIAL PARALYSIS.

This affection occurred in the case of a young man, of anæmic habit, after a mild course of mercury, administered for suspected secondary syphilis. It commenced with sudden pain in the right ear, not increased by pressure; deafness; pain in the right side of the face; inability to close the right eye, with double vision of that organ. The left side of the face was greatly distorted in consequence of the loss of antagonism in the muscles of the opposite side. The case was cured by the exhibition of quinine.

PARAPLEGIA FROM ASCARIDES.

The disease existed in a child aged twelve months, in whom, in addition to general excitement of the nervous system and irritability, there occurred sudden loss of power in, with greatly exalted sensibility of, the lower extremities. After the complete failure of purgatives, with a view to improve the general tone of the system, the sesquioxide of iron was prescribed, the result of which was the expulsion from the bowels of a firm ball of ascarides, together with a simultaneous and complete relief of all the symptoms.

CHOREA CONFINED TO THE LEFT SIDE.

In this case, occurring in a boy, the entire left side was in a constant state of convulsive action. The free use of purgatives, which brought away an enormous quantity of feculent matter, affected a cure.

NEURALGIA TESTIS.

A young man, aged 18, had been much exposed to privations and the effects of the weather, while surveying the line for one of the Scottish railways. At this period he had frequently been wet for many consecutive hours, at the same time being able to procure but little else than oatmeal cake and whisky. The disease commenced with acute pain in the testis, preventing sleep, uneasiness in the loins, and general debility. He was then seen by a medical practitioner in Scotland, and advised to return home as speedily as possible, as he was the subject of psoas abscess. On his return, his countenance was anxious; tongue tolerably clean; appetite indifferent; bowels sluggish; urine occasionally depositing lithates. He was emaciated, had a slight cough, and was suffering intense pain in both testes, which occurred in paroxysms. On examining these organs, they were neither enlarged, nor painful on pressure. The spermatic cord was healthy. The pain, which occasionally extended down and around the upper part of the thighs was so severe, as entirely to preclude sleep. There existed slight dulness under the right clavicle, with some deficiency of respiration, and a loud bruit in the right subclavian artery; venous murmur was audible in the neck, more particularly, as is generally the case, upon the right side.

The case being regarded as arising from anæmia, he was treated with the syrup of the iodide of iron and nitric acid, with small doses of quinine and colchicum; morphia to procure rest; and leeches below the clavicle to remove the congestion at the apex of the right lung. Under this treatment the pain soon subsided, and the patient gradually but perfectly recovered.

SETONS IN EPILEPSY.

Several cases of sympathetic epilepsy were detailed, in which the most marked benefit had accrued from the introduction of a seton in the nape of the neck. In one case the attacks were completely kept in abeyance by this method, but returned as surely as the seton was removed, and to be again warded off by its re-introduction.

SOFTENING AND RUPTURE OF THE LEFT VENTRICLE OF THE HEART.

An unmarried female, aged 65, having enjoyed tolerable health, complained for a short time previous to her decease of an ill-defined, but not severe pain about the chest. The physical signs of disease were not ascertained. Treatment directed to the stomach afforded considerable relief. Death occurred suddenly. On inspection the pericardium was found distended with coagulated blood; the left ventricle was softened, and a rupture of its walls was discovered near its apex. No other signs of disease presented.

PERICARDITIS; SOFTENING OF THE HEART.

The patient was a soldier, of stout make, and was apparently well up to two days prior to his death. He had served in India, where it was reported that he had lived freely. The only symptoms under which he laboured before death were those of common catarrh.

Inspection. Both pleuræ as well as the pericardium contained a large quantity of serum; the external surface of the pericardium, and also of the heart itself, was covered with flocculent lymph. The substance of the heart was of a peculiar brown colour, completely

softened throughout, and permitting the finger to penetrate into any part of its structure. The valves were healthy.

HEPATIC TUMOUR.

The disease presented in a female six months advanced in pregnancy. The tumour was large and firm, and its margin clearly definable from below the false ribs of the right side towards the umbilicus. On examination it closely resembled in its physical characters scirrhus of the liver. Under the use of local depletion, mercury, and the iodide of potassium, the tumour entirely disappeared.

It was remarked that similar cases are alluded to by Andral and Thompson as arising from congestion of the organ: The former states that he has frequently found this affection to be connected with disease of the heart.

ENTERITIS TREATED BY OPIUM.

The patient was a male, aged about 60, in whom the disease commenced after exposure to cold, with the usual symptoms—vomiting; pain, increased by pressure; constipation; small quick pulse; and subsequently melæna, singultus, tympanitis, and great prostration. Venesection was contra-indicated from the commencement of the attack. Two dozen leeches were three several times applied to the abdomen, and calomel and opium exhibited internally. The symptoms continuing, one grain of opium was prescribed every four hours, together with daily enemata, containing two drachms of the oil of turpentine. An anodyne fomentation, consisting of one ounce of laudanum to two pints of the decoctum papaveris, was applied constantly to the abdomen, covered with oiled silk. The opium was subsequently given in grain doses every two hours. In about a week the patient took one drachm of opium, which neither produced sleep nor clouded the mind. Sleeplessness prevailed throughout the disease. The recovery was complete, the opium being continued for a lengthened period in gradually decreasing doses.

In the discussion that ensued upon this interesting case, it was stated by several members present that they had seen great benefit accrue from the full exhibition of opium in internal inflammation. It was thought by some that the effect was more decided if depletion had been in the first instance adopted.

ACUTE MELÆNA CURED BY GALLIC ACID.

This affection occurred in a youth aged 20, of cachectic habit. Antiphlogistic remedies and the acetate of lead having failed, the oil of turpentine with tincture of opium was prescribed, which in its turn, was of necessity abandoned, in consequence of the supervention of hæmaturia. Gallic acid, in doses of four grains every four hours was now given, in combination with tincture of opium, under the use of which remedy the discharge ceased, and a cure was effected.

ABSENCE OF THE GALL-BLADDER.

An infant, jaundiced from birth, died comatose, after surviving fifteen weeks. On examination the gall-bladder was found wanting.

GALL-STONES.

The patient, a lady, aged 45. The leading symptoms consisted of the recurrence of violent spasms and epigastric pains, recurring about every six days, with collapse, cold extremities, lividity of countenance, and

a hardly perceptible pulse. The treatment had consisted of purgatives, fomentations, and opiates. The symptoms were completely relieved by the passage of four gall-stones, which from their shape had been apparently impacted in the duct as one. These were exhibited.

URIC-ACID CALCULI DISCHARGED FROM AN ABSCESS IN THE LEFT BUTTOCK.

The patient, a female, aged 40, was the mother of three children; she was of full habit, and had previously enjoyed good health. Her symptoms commenced with pain in micturition, accompanied by a sensation of pricking in the region of the left buttock. This continued until the formation of an abscess, from which were discharged two uric-acid calculi.

VICARIOUS MENSTRUATION.

Several cases were detailed in which this affection assumed the character of hæmoptysis and hæmatemesis.

In one case mentioned the catamenial flow took place periodically from the axilla. In another the rectum became the seat of the monthly discharge.

A very singular and interesting instance of vicarious menstruation was related as occurring in three members of the same family. The affection continued only during the early periods of menstruation. The portions of the body from which the discharge exuded in each of the sisters were the lower regions of the abdomen, the inguinal fossæ, and the thighs.

UTERINE HÆMORRHAGE.

The patient, a female, of middle age, of relaxed flabby habit, the mother of twelve children, and at that time supposing herself to be three months advanced in pregnancy. The discharge was profuse. The acetate of lead and ergot of rye totally failing, the oxide of silver was administered in grain doses three times a day, and effected a cure.

STRICTURE OF THE URETHRA; EFFECT OF OPIUM.

An elderly man had for some years been the subject of severe and obstinate stricture of the urethra. The bladder became enormously distended, no urine having passed from the Saturday to the Tuesday. It was determined to puncture the bladder, previous to which operation two grains of opium were directed to be taken every hour. Two doses having been swallowed, the spasms relaxed, and the bladder was relieved without operation.

CONGENITAL HYPERTROPHY OF THE TERMINAL PHALANXES OF THE FINGERS AND TOES.

This affection presented in a boy, aged 8, in whom the terminal phalanges of the fingers and toes, including the nails, were hypertrophied, and resembled in size those of an adult. There existed also congenital valvular disease of the heart.

METHOD OF ARRESTING THE HÆMORRHAGE FROM LEECH BITES.

The following method of arresting the hæmorrhage from leech-bites is proposed by Andrew Marshall, M.D., Belfast, in a communication to the *Dublin Quarterly Journal of Medical Science*:—Finding that an easy and certain method of stopping the bleeding after the application of leeches is still a desideratum, I beg leave, through the medium of your valuable