

He had since suffered neither from palpitation, fainting fits, or depression of spirits; his pulse was now perfectly natural in every respect, and only 60 in the minute. His health is now excellent.

Mr. DENDY was inclined to think that there had been metastasis in this case, and not that one disease had been cured by the supervision of another of a different character. He thought it might be probable that the attack at Brighton partook more of the character of rheumatism than of gout, and that its occurrence had the effect of relieving the disposition to that disease in the pericardium, which interfered with the heart's action. He believed he was right in stating, that after the removal of the steatomatous tumour from the head of George the Fourth, the wound seemed to be going on well for a few days, when it began to discharge a quantity of ichorous matter, and erysipelas made its appearance. An attack of the gout coming on altered the character of the sore, the discharge improved in quality, and the wound rapidly healed.

Mr. CLIFTON was inclined to account for the cure in Mr. Blenkairne's case, in another manner. He had seen cases where disease of the heart had set in with the most alarming symptoms, which, however, disappeared as the heart accommodated itself to the affection, and the patient, by quiet and the avoidance of all kinds of excitement, lost all symptoms of disease, and lived sometimes for years without inconvenience, though he perished ultimately of the affection. He remembered an instance of this kind in a gentleman, who, for five years, had never suffered from a symptom of heart disease, though at its commencement, the symptoms were most alarming. He died after a fortnight's illness; the heart was extensively diseased.

Mr. HOOPER remembered an instance in which the symptoms of diseased heart were suspended in a young lady, after her marriage; but they always returned during the time of pregnancy. Immediately after parturition, however, she was again in apparent health. The stethoscope did not detect organic change. She died three weeks after one of her confinements; no post-mortem, however, was allowed.

Mr. HEADLAND thought we were much more frequently in error, in considering functional diseases of the heart organic, than in considering organic diseases merely functional. How many instances had occurred in which the stethoscope detected organic disease of the heart, when the patient dying from some other affection, the heart was found healthy? The disturbance of the heart's action, in the generality of cases, he considered to arise from mental causes, or from sympathy with disorder of the digestive function.

In the course of the discussion Mr. DENDY alluded to the object he had in bringing his paper before the Society. There were great errors abroad respecting the interpretation of John Hunter's axiom. He (Mr. D.) was aware of all the facts that had been stated, most of which, indeed, were comprehended in the paper. It was in the deductions from these facts, that he differed from many pathologists. He believed that diseases simultaneously *active*, as supposed by their reporters, were, in fact, modified. Modification, he considered, *must* take place in one of two diseases existing at one and the same time. Was not this the case in the instances recorded by Dr. M'Bride and others.

TREATMENT OF
STRICTURES OF THE URETHRA
 BY
CONICAL METALLIC BOUGIES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—I transmit the following observations for insertion in a corner of your Journal. I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
 HENRY T. GREEN, M.D. Ed.,
 Surgeon.

39, Essex-street, Strand, Oct. 16, 1837.

In the natural course of gonorrhoea it sometimes happens, from the inflammatory symptoms being severe, that a stricture is formed; much more frequently does this troublesome complaint arise from the *treatment* of such gonorrhoeal discharges. Several cases of stricture, which have come under my care, have been produced by large doses either of copaiba, or cubebs, administered during the inflammatory stage. Such doses I have often noticed to have the effect of completely checking the discharge for a short time; but, at the expiration of some days, there has been a return of it, accompanied by certain symptoms, such as a prickling sensation in a particular part of the passage; the stream of urine takes on a twisted appearance, and is much diminished in size; pain is experienced in the penis, in the progress of its becoming erect; and after having made water, there is frequently a feeling as if the bladder were not completely emptied. Some of these symptoms may continue for an indefinite time, particularly the discharge, and the twisted appearance of the stream of urine. In several such cases, if we attempt to pass a common metallic bougie, of as large a size as the meatus will take without inconvenience, an impediment will be discovered at a variable distance from the orifice, generally about four inches. This is the seat of a stricture, which is the cause of the discharge, and all

the other unpleasant symptoms. In such a case all our endeavours to check this discharge by means of medicine will prove ineffectual. The so-much-vaunted specific, called after Mr. Franks, has entirely failed in these cases; but I have not yet met with an instance where the discharge did not yield to perseverance in the use of the conical metallic bougies.

In the treatment of these cases, my practice is to pass an ordinary metallic bougie, of as large a size as can be easily passed through the external orifice, for the purpose of ascertaining the seat of the stricture; which being ascertained, my next step is to pass a conical bougie of such a size as will just traverse the stricture without pain; the next sized conical bougie will then have the effect of dilating it very gradually. It is very important that the process of dilatation be proceeded with very gradually, and the patient must have the same sized instrument passed repeatedly before the next size be used. During the process of dilatation there is generally a slight discharge of blood at almost every change of size in the bougie; and the use of the various sizes must be persevered in until the stricture be completely effaced. I need scarcely state, that it is of consequence to thoroughly warm and oil the instruments previous to their being used.

A severe case came under my treatment about a year and a half ago. The subject of it was a gentleman, twenty-two years of age, who contracted gonorrhœa while at Gibraltar, about four years since; he was treated with both cubebs and copaiba, in large doses, which produced two very troublesome strictures; it took him a very long time to pass his urine, and he had a constant and abundant gleet discharge. I attempted to pass No. 6* bougie, but without success. After much trouble, No. 3, silver catheter, was passed; and it was some weeks before I succeeded in the use of the conical bougie, No. 6. I have gradually dilated the passage, until he now uses No. 12, with which size he expresses himself quite satisfied; the discharge has ceased, and I now consider him well; the meatus, indeed, will hardly admit of a larger size.

Some patients have expressed their surprise, when I informed them they had a stricture, when a bougie, of No. 14 size, could be easily passed. A person, a married man, applied to be cured of a gleet of six months standing; he had had a gonorrhœa, which had been suddenly checked by a large dose of copaiba. No. 14 was passed into the bladder with ease, but on attempt-

ing No. 15, it was arrested about four inches from the orifice. The conical bougie, No. 15, was then used, and the stricture gradually dilated, until the cure was effected by No. 17. It was in this case that I witnessed the superiority of the metallic over the wax bougie; the latter, when passed through the stricture, was with great difficulty withdrawn, owing to the constricted part grasping firmly the instrument. It caused the patient very great pain, and when it was examined, there was an evident circular depression on it caused by the stricture. Similar results have occurred in other cases, so as to lead me to condemn their use.

It is stated upon very high authority (Sir A. Cooper and Mr. Samuel Cooper), that bougies should never be used of a larger size than No. 14; but cases frequently occur where such a size would have no dilating effect. A patient that is now under treatment is rapidly being cured by bougies of the extraordinary sizes of 21 and 22. It is very necessary to advise the patient, after having been cured, to pass occasionally, for a month or two, the last sized bougie which he used, in order to ensure a permanent cure.

CARBONATE OF IRON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—I have just received THE LANCET containing the query of Mr. Sandalls. In reply to which, I beg to state that I have generally succeeded in drying proto-carbonate of iron, so as to contain the proportions of carbonic acid stated in my paper, by filling a tall narrow bottle with the proto-carbonate, washed and freed as much as possible from the moisture by pressure, so as to expose as narrow a surface as possible to the action of the atmosphere, and then placing the whole in a tolerably warm oven. The surface of the carbonate invariably became iced over with peroxide of iron, but this did not extend further than a line or two downwards. The mouth of the bottle containing the carbonate, while drying, may be covered with bibulous paper. Should Mr. Sandalls adopt this plan, I think he will succeed. I may, however, observe, that the best pharmaceutical preparation of this kind is that which has not been submitted to any heat. The carbonate may be freed from as much moisture as possible by pressure, and then bottled for use. It ought to be made often. I have further to remark, that washing repeatedly with hot water is very essential, inasmuch as it appears to me as if the carbonic acid became more firmly united to the protoxide by this process, and that the protoxide was in some measure divested of its

* As different instrument-makers may have various sized bougies, corresponding to the numbers that may be mentioned, it may be as well to state that those which I use are after the gauge of Messrs. Weiss.