of art, than in thus successfully snatching a patient away from the very jaws of death.

The two following cases that have occurred in my practice, are good illustrations of the success that may attend laryngotomy, even under the most unfavourable circumstances:—

CASE 2.—About six years ago I was called up at about two, A.M., by Mr. Baker, to see the wife of a tradesman in my neighbourhood who was in imminent peril of suffocation from laryngeal disease of a chronic character, in which an acute attack had recently supervened. On reaching the house I found the patient, a woman between fifty and sixty years of age, apparently at her last gasp. I immediately prepared to open the windpipe; but before I had got the instruments out of the case she fell back to all appearance dead. I lost not a moment in opening the crico-thyroid membrane, and inserting a large silver tube, and at once proceeded to set up artificial respiration by breathing into her lungs through it. In a few minutes we had the satisfaction of seeing signs of returning animation, in a quivering of the eyelids and a fluttering beat of the heart, and before half an hour had elapsed, I was enabled to leave her completely resuscitated. She made an excellent recovery, but has never been able to lay aside the tube, which she wears to this day, the larynx being evidently partially occluded by the results of the chronic inflammatory mischief which had preceded the acute attack. But though unable to breath with freedom without the tube, enough air passes through the larynx, even when she is wearing it, for her to speak distinctly; and it is not a little interesting, that though the tube has been worn for between six and seven years in close proximity to the vocal cords, the action of these has been in no way impaired, nor does the patient's general health appear to have suffered, or a liability to the occurrence of inflammatory disease of the windpipe been set up.

CASE 3.—This case is one of especial interest on account of the difficulty of establishing artificial respiration, and in reference to the means that it was found necessary to have recourse to in order to restore the patient to life. Whilst making the visit at the hospital, about three years ago, I was requested by Mr. Tweed to accompany him instantly to a patient of his, in the neighbourhood, who was dying from laryngeal obstruction. On reaching the house, that of a tradesman in the Hampstead-road, I found his wife in the last stage of asphyxia from laryngeal disease. She was a short, stout, thick-necked woman, about thirty years of age, and had suffered for some months from a chronic laryngeal affection, which had suddenly become aggravated by the super-vention of an acute attack of inflammation brought on by incautious exposure to cold in a boating excursion on the river. I saw at once that there was not a moment to lose; the patient was purple in the face; breathing with very great difficulty in spasmodic gasps, and with a loud stertorous noise. She was nearly unconscious, and, in fact, appeared to be moribund. I immediately proceeded to operate; but, on making an incision through the integuments, the vessels of the neck, over-distended by asphyxial congestion, poured out so large a quantity of dark blood that it was necessary to wait a few moments before opening the windpipe. During this delay the patient was seized with a severe spasm, ceased to breathe, and fell back to all appearance dead. I immediately plunged the scalpel through the crico-thyroid membrane, cut this freely across, and put in a large silver tube; through this I attempted to inflate the lungs, but found, to my distress, that no air would enter there. For a moment I gave the patient up for lost; but an instant's reflection assured me that the obstruction to the entry of the air must be dependent on the accumulation of inspissated mucus in the trachea and bronchi. There was evidently but one thing to be done to save the woman's life—viz., to empty these passages so that air might gain admission into the lungs; and so absorbed was I in my anxiety to rescue her, that without thinking of the nature of the act, which would have been disgusting had it not been the only means of salvation at hand, I applied my lips to the bleeding wound in the throat, and sucked out three mouthfuls of coagulated mucus and treacly blood. This saved the woman. Air immediately entered the lungs, and resuscitation was gradually effected. She made a good recovery, and was, some short time since, in perfect health.

These two cases appear to me to illustrate the advantage that laryngotomy possesses in the speedy manner in which it can be performed. In this respect it possesses an undeniable superiority over tracheotomy in cases such as those in which every second is of the greatest value, and in which the more careful dissection required in tracheotomy, and the extent of the hæmorrhage that generally ensues, cause a loss of time that may entail the sacrifice of the patient's life.

ON THE TREATMENT OF SCIATICA BY CROTON OIL. WITH CASES.

BY HENRY HANCOCK, Esq.,
SURGEON TO CHARING-CROSS HOSPITAL.

IN February, 1854, I read a paper before the Medical Society of London, to prove that sciatica, in the majority of cases, depended upon mechanical irritation of the pelvic nerves, from loaded intestines, or tumours within the pelvis, and not upon rheumatism or inflammation of the nerve, as was commonly supposed. The following cases, whilst supporting this position, show the value of the treatment adopted.

CASE 1.—Captain C.—consulted me on the 30th of December, 1853. Has been ill twelve months, with pain in the lower part of the back, extending down the right hip, increased by fatigue. He attributes the pain to a fall on the flat of his back, at which time he had symptoms of ague, rigors, total loss of appetite, great weakness, and nausea, profuse sweating, with bad nights. He had stiffness, like lumbago, after stooping, for above eighteen months. His bowels, at present relaxed, act regularly once daily, but if balked, they become confined; he sleeps badly; his appetite is moderately good, but very capricious; is easily tired, but becomes refreshed after a short rest. He had a slight attack of yellow fever six months ago. Condition of urine natural; pain relieved by pressure; he is most easy whilst lying on one side (either), with knees raised; he feels blown out after eating. Take of croton oil, one minim; of mercurial pill and extract of henbane, of each four grains; and compound extract of colocynth, eight grains: mix; divide into four pills; take two every other night.

Jan. 13th, 1854.—Better; the medicine acted very powerfully; he felt better directly afterwards; has had much to do, but has been so free from pain as scarcely to notice it. To take five grains of compound aloes pill occasionally.

CASE 2.—C. A.—consulted me, in November, 1853, for sciatica of the right leg. He has been ill four months, and treated for rheumatism by colchicum, blisters, &c., without benefit; he is bent nearly double with pain extending down the course of the sciatic nerve and in the lumbar region; pain most severe at the knee, foot, and calf of that leg; his appetite is good, but he gets no sleep, and feels very weak. Ordered the aperient pills, with croton oil.

The patient came again in four days; he says he was much better the day after the first dose, but, contrary to my advice, he repeated the pills on the following night, which acted so violently that he felt knocked up, the pain being very severe. To have three grains of disulphate of quinine three times a day.

I saw no more of this patient, but on the 2nd of January, 1854, his brother, who consulted me for a similar complaint, informed me that he had rapidly recovered under the use of the quinine.

CASE 3.—H. A.—consulted me, on the 2nd of January, 1854, for sciatica of the right side, of five months' duration. He complains of pain in stooping extending down the sciatic nerve, but most severe at the calf of the leg; he cannot straighten his leg with comfort; urine plentiful, but thick; appetite good; bowels rather relaxed. Ordered the aperient pills, with the croton oil.

Jan. 6th.—Pain better in the back, but very severe at the calf of the leg and tuber ischii; complains of sensation of pins and needles in his foot. The medicine acted freely, producing watery evacuations. To have five grains of compound aloes pill every night.

10th.—Better; pain less severe in the back; has still numbness in the heel; urine more clear. The medicine has acted twice daily, removing solid, dark, pulpy, and scybalous matter. Repeat the aloetic pills every night. To have two grains of disulphate of quinine twice a day.

14th.—Well.

CASE 4.—E. C.—consulted me July 24th, 1854, for sciatica of right side, of five years' duration; he has never been free from pain during that time. Has taken thirty grains of quinine daily, colchicum, arsenic, hydrocyanic acid, calomel to salivation, and is now taking the iodide of potass. Has had blisters and various irritants applied, also a hot iron passed down the leg in the course of the nerve. When at the worst he became deaf, but has now recovered his hearing; was galvanized for nine weeks. He has suffered from habitual constipation, and occasional diarrhoea. Having read my paper in

THE LANCET, he took the remedies advised therein, and has been better since, but he does not attribute any benefit to them, having occasionally been better, and then relapsed; he is better for change of air. The complaint commenced with lumbago. He has difficulty in passing his urine, and when in great pain cannot micturate without straining for half an hour; his pulse averages 72. For the last twenty years coughing or sneezing has produced pain down the sciatic nerve, and eight years ago he suffered so severely from sciatica, that in walking he was obliged to assume the sitting position for two or three minutes before he was able to walk again. He now complains greatly of a sensation of weight in his loins, and states that his sufferings are so great, particularly at night, that he cannot obtain ease without taking frequent large doses of opium. Ordered two of the aperient pills, containing croton oil, every other night.

Aug. 4.—Mr. C—— has taken two doses of the medicine, both operating very powerfully; the secretions were dark-coloured and mixed with scybala. He has slept better the last two nights, and has had more ease in walking, with less pressure upon the back; but the pain always returns in greater violence about half-past nine in the evening. He has taken twenty-five drops of the bimeconate of morphia for the last two nights, and has slept comfortably; he can pass his urine with less difficulty. To have three grains of disulphate of quinine three times a day.

18th.—Has repeated the aperient pills of his own accord with similar results, and has since taken the quinine. He has not had such acute pain of late, and the pressure upon the back is removed; but he has still much pain as soon as he gets to bed every night, and some flatulency, but the latter he thinks is in some measure relieved. He is still obliged to have recourse to opium. To repeat the quinine, and to diminish the quantity of opium, with a view to its discontinuance.

Sept. 5th.—He has continued the quinine to this date; has had no return of pressure upon the back, but complains greatly of flatulency, particularly when in bed; he has better nights, having rarely had recourse to opium, which he had been obliged to take almost every night for some weeks. He says, however that at different periods he has been able to abstain for a few weeks. His bowels now act regularly without aperient medicine.

Dec. 18th.—I have not seen the patient since last report. To-day I received a letter stating that there had been no return of pressure upon the back; that he generally sleeps well, having only found it necessary to take opium two or three times, and that for extreme flatulency; that he considered the sciatica cured. He finds that when he dines out, and takes more stimulant, that he has less flatulence. Has discontinued the quinine for three weeks. To have three grains of compound aloes pill every day before dinner.

Feb. 7th.—Has derived great benefit from the last prescription; does not now take opium, and sleeps well; can now bear the motion of a two-wheeled carriage, which he has not done for five years.

March 1st.—Mr. C—— called upon me to-day; he is cured.

CASE 5.—Mr. W. K——, aged fifty-two, residing in Essex, was sent to me in October, 1854, having for years experienced weakness in his back and numbness down the right leg. At present he is suffering from lumbago and pain in the right leg, of six weeks' duration. He caught cold, and was attacked with lumbago, for which an embrocation, a warm bath, and blister were employed, with sufficient relief to enable him in the course of a fortnight to resume his occupation of a farmer for nine days. He was not cured, as walking and riding caused him great pain; he could not ride on horseback. At the expiration of this time he again caught cold, and he became worse, the lumbago being more intense, and the pain extending along the gluteal region down the thigh to the knee. Another blister was applied, and tonic medicines prescribed, with some little benefit. He says his bowels are easily acted upon; has suffered from internal piles, and experienced considerable languor for three weeks before the attack, also weakness of his back and chilliness, and a sensation of fulness after eating; perspires greatly. He has had ague several times previous to his present chilliness and that complaint in the absence of the hot stage; during the present illness flexing the right thigh on the pelvis has been effected with difficulty and pain, referred to the back of the pelvis, and latterly a gland in the groin has enlarged. He and his family being very anxious lest he should be suffering from lumbar abscess and spinal disease, Mr. Warwick, the gentleman under whose care he was, sent him up to me, and I had the satisfaction of confirming that gentle-

man's opinion, that there was no mischief of that nature, but that Mr. K—— was suffering from lumbago and sciatica, depending upon loaded colon. To have two pills, containing the croton oil, every other night.

Nov. 2nd.—Mr. K—— called upon me to-day very much improved. He took six pills, and found himself so much better, and the pills had acted so freely, that he discontinued them. He has not taken any medicine for three weeks. He is now quite free from pain, is able to stoop and ride on horseback for a short distance, and can hold himself upright, which he could not do when last here. Describes the alvine evacuations as lumpy, and as though there had been a collection. Repeat one of the pills occasionally; to have three grains of disulphate of quinine, in the form of pill, three times a day.

Not having seen or heard of this patient since the last report, I conclude that he is now quite well.

CASE 6.—Mr. A. H—— consulted me on the 1st of August, 1854, for sciatica of the right side, of twelve months' duration. He had tried the Harrowgate and Cheltenham waters and cold-water cure, without effect. His tongue is much loaded, and complains of itching at anus and bleeding piles. He says he keeps his bowels open by taking cold water night and morning. He has applied very strong stimulating liniments to the leg without benefit. He has suffered from gout. Ordered, spirits of turpentine, two drachms; castor oil, half an ounce; add cinnamon-water to an ounce and a half; make a draught, to be taken at bed-time.

Aug. 7th.—The medicine acted very powerfully, and with decided relief to the pain. It is now dull, like that of a bruise. To have an ounce of the compound guaiacum mixture twice a day.

I have not seen this gentleman since the last report, he having returned home into the country; but his cousin, who consulted me a short time afterwards, informed me that he was quite recovered.

Harley-street, April, 1855.

ON SPURIOUS PREGNANCY.

ILLUSTRATED BY CASES.

By W. BURKE RYAN, M.B. Lond.

(Continued from p. 382.)

I WILL now detail my own cases:—

CASE 1.—In 1841, I was engaged to attend Mrs. J—— (Warwickshire) in her accouchement. She had previously had eleven children, and her eldest daughter (whom I attended during her confinement) was married a year afterwards. When I called on her, she appeared as large as at the full period of utero-gestation, breasts similarly enlarged, bodily health in the best condition, and spirits in the highest flow. I took my leave, asking few questions, and treating the engagement as a matter of course. I called occasionally for some time after the period named for my attendance, and the patient was much surprised at her miscalculation, having been generally, previously, pretty correct. I waited patiently for two months after the period mentioned, but no labour coming on, it was evident the woman was not pregnant. She got quite ashamed of the neighbours coming to inquire what she was about in delaying the event so long, and asking if she intended taking "a second round of it"—a phrase used in that part of the country when a woman goes much beyond her calculation.

In June, 1844, she informed me, that in about twelve months from the period of her imagined conception, she was taken ill with severe pains, simulating labour, and that a large substance, dark, like liver, and large as an after-birth, came away, with a considerable quantity of fluid. This I did not see.

Since that time she has never menstruated. During the period of her supposed pregnancy she frequently, as she thought, felt the movements of the fetus. She had baby-linen, "and all appurtenances," prepared.

In this case, there was gradual increase of size to the full extent, suppressed catamenia, enlargement of the mammae, morning sickness, and all the other symptoms necessary to deceive a woman of intelligence, and the mother of so many children.

CASE 2.—On the 25th of February, 1849, I received a note from Mons. V——, a French gentleman. On calling, I found he had been married about nine months to an English lady, aged twenty-one, and he wished me to attend her in her con-