REPORT OF
TWO CASES OF ANOMALOUS CREEPING
ULCER.

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DURING the last year I have treated two cases of creeping ulcer, of a kind which I have not found anywhere described. They are both very similar, and therefore a detailed description of the one will answer for the other if the differences between them be pointed out.

J. E—, aged twenty-six, a married woman, of dark complexion, somewhat sallow, presented herself on Jan. 8th, 1857, amongst the out-patients of Charing-cross Hospital, with a remarkable ulceration on the shoulder, just at the root of the neck. It may be thus described:—A line of red scar, about a quarter of an inch wide, and an inch and a half long, extended from near the inner end of the clavicle backward along the root of the neck; at each end of this line was a small indolent ulcer, circular in shape, occupying simply the width of the red mark. It appeared that the sore had originally begun at about the middle of this line, that the ulcer had lengthened out, then scabbed over, and remained so for about a month; that when the scab fell off, it showed the ulcer to be healed in the middle, but still open at both ends. There were, in fact, two ulcers, which began to travel, the one forwards towards the clavicle, the other in a contrary direction, each one healing on one side as it broke into new skin on the other, until the sores presented the appearance described on her first consulting me.

Such ulcerations as these are usually regarded as being of syphilitic origin; and though in cross-questioning her I could not make out that she had ever contracted such disease, I conceived it right to put her on an anti-syphilitic course, and the more so as she was two or three months advanced in pregnancy. She took five grains of Plummer's pill every night, and three grains of the iodide of potassium in a bitter infusion three times a day. She did not improve under this treatment, although local applications of various sorts were tried. The ulcers continued to creep onwards, and rather increased in size. The above medicines were discontinued, a teaspoonful of cod-liver oil was ordered to be taken upon twenty minims of dilute nitro-muriatic acid in water. This treatment agreed better; considerable diminution of progress was observed; still the ulcers did not heal, and at last, when she was nearly at the end of gestation, the sores became much larger. She gave birth to a child, suffered greatly from difficulty in nursing it, on account of scantiness of milk. The child died during last October, and in a fortnight the ulcers had healed.

In the next case, the subject of these ulcerations was suckling a large strong child. She came to me on the 14th of December, 1856, a month after her confinement, with two ulcers, one on the middle of the neck, just below the thyroid body, the other over the acromion process; they both presented the creeping character. Finding that in this case, as in the last, the woman was giving part of her nourishment to a child, I did not use any anti-syphilitic remedies. She improved very considerably upon a tonic regimen, judiciously and frequently changed. Suddenly the improvement became more rapid, and I found that she had succeeded in partially weaning the child. When this was quite accomplished, the ulcers healed.

I am not aware of any reported cases in which a spreading and intractable ulcer was clearly to be traced, as in these instances, to mere non-specific debility, such as that from child-bearing and suckling, and they seem to me to be therefore valuable.

Old Burlington-street, 1858.

JOURNALISM ON THE CONTINENT.—Dr. Garin has resigned the editorship of the *Gazette Médicale de Lyon*, and is succeeded by Dr. Diday. Professor Rey has ceased to act as editor in chief of the *Journal de Médecine Vétérinaire de Lyon*, and is succeeded in that post by Professor Rodet and M. St. Cyr. This year has witnessed the birth of a new weekly paper in Paris, *Le Progrès*, a journal devoted to "science and the medical profession," edited by Dr. L. Fleury, and essentially destined to develop the relations of medical hydrology. *La Gazzetta Medica Italiana-Toscana* has changed its title to that of *Lo Sperimentale*, and will no longer be monthly but weekly. A new weekly medical journal has appeared at Madrid, *La Actualidad*.

A Mirror
OF THE PRACTICE OF
MEDICINE AND SURGERY
IN THE
HOSPITALS OF LONDON.

Nulla est alia pro certo noscendi via, nisi quam plurimas et morborum et dissectionum historias, tam aliorum proprias, collectas habere et inter se comparare.—MORGAGNI. *De Sed. et Caus. Morb.* lib. 14. Proœmium.

ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL.

SYPHILITIC ULCER OF THE LEG, EXTENDING TO THE
KNEE-JOINT; AMPUTATION; DEATH.

(Under the care of Mr. COULSON.)

IN the following case, the perforation of the joint by the syphilitic ulcer is a circumstance worthy of notice, on account of its great rarity. We do not remember to have met with any other instance of the kind. Malignant ulcers in the neighbourhood of joints have a tendency to penetrate into the articulations; but specific sores, even when tertiary, seldom exhibit the same tendency; and we think it right to place the case on record, both from its rarity and the interest attached to it.

Henry J—, forty-one years of age, was admitted into the accident ward on the 2nd October, 1857. The patient was a confectioner by trade, of anæmic and worn-out appearance. Several years ago he had laboured under gleet, which continued for a very considerable time, but had ceased about eight years back. About two years ago, two ulcers appeared on the inner side of the right leg. These sores were considered as venereal, and an anti-syphilitic treatment was employed. Subsequently a syphilitic wart appeared on the glans penis; it yielded, however, to appropriate treatment, and the man continued to enjoy good health until the month of April last. At this period an ulcer formed in the left popliteal space, for the relief of which he was admitted into St. Mary's hospital; he, however, soon left, because he did not improve as quickly as he expected.

When readmitted, under the care of Mr. Coulson, on the 2nd October, the patient presented the following conditions:—The left lower extremity was the seat of several sores. One of these ulcers, about two inches and a half in diameter, was seated a little below the patella, and several sinuses extended from it above and below the joint. Another ulcer, about two inches in diameter, occupied the popliteal space, exposing the hamstring tendons; and a large ulcer extended over the dorsum of the foot. All the sores had an unhealthy appearance, and were surrounded with sinuses, which burrowed extensively beneath the integuments. Little doubt could exist as to the nature of the disease. Black wash was ordered to be applied to the ulcerated surfaces, and the patient was directed to take three grains of the hydriodate of potass in decoction of bark, twice a day.

Oct. 10th.—The patient complains of pain in the affected limb. Poppy fomentations ordered, and the whole limb to be poulticed.

14th.—The left leg has gradually become flexed on the thigh, until it now forms almost a right angle with it; the joint does not admit of any motion; the foot is everted; the joint is very painful, and shooting pains extend along the limb. Inflammation has evidently extended to the knee-joint from the sores in its vicinity.

18th.—Continues in a very weak state. Bark and stimulants have been freely administered during the last few days.

From this period the patient continued in an unfavourable state; the disease had manifestly extended to the interior of the knee-joint, and would in all probability terminate fatally, unless active measures were resorted to. It was therefore determined that the limb should be removed.

28th.—The operation was performed this day by Mr. Coulson, at the junction between the upper and middle thirds of the thigh. A posterior flap was made by transfixing with a long, narrow, straight knife, while the anterior flap was completed by cutting down elliptically on the bone, from one angle to the other of the posterior flap. Eight arteries were tied. The flaps were not brought together immediately, but their surfaces were left exposed for four hours, in order to avoid the chance of any subsequent hæmorrhage.