A CASE OF OSSIFICATION OF THE MUSCLES.

BY WILLIAM SKINNER, M.B., LOND., &C., OF MANCHESTER, ENG.

THIS singular case is that of a boy, 13 years old, the second of eight children of healthy parents. He was quite healthy until about six years ago, when a swelling was noticed at the back of his neck, without any known cause. "This disappeared in about a week, another being observed behind the right shoulder. Three weeks later the arms gradually became so stiff that for about three months they were firmly fixed, and the boy was obliged to be fed. He, however, somewhat improved in this respect, and for some time past has been able to feed himself, although with much difficulty. From that time to the present, various lumps have formed in different parts of the body, these being principally about the spine and chest; and whenever the boy receives a blow it is followed by a similar swelling. Their appearance is preceded by pain, tenderness, and slight feverishness.

"The condition of the boy at the present time is as follows:—He stoops somewhat; the shoulders are contracted; there is no motion in the right joint, and very little in the left; the arms cannot be extended, and are in a semi-flexed position, crossing the abdomen. The chest is narrow, very much flattened on either side, at the junction of the ribs with their cartilages, and these somewhat nodulated. There is no movement of the chest with respiration. The abdomen and lower extremities are well developed, the latter straight, without signs of rickets. There is no movement in the spine, and the scapulæ are fixed; the buttocks and lower extremities present nothing abnormal. On manipulation, a number of small projections are felt over the ribs. The right pectoral muscles are completely fixed, and converted into a hard, bony substance. The lower edge of the greater can be traced from a nodule below the right nipple, crossing the axilla, forming a hard and sharp ridge, which is continued into the biceps as far as its insertion into the radius; a number of little bony nodules may be felt along its course, and a long irregular splinter of bone behind it. The muscles of the forearm do not seem to be affected. On the left side there is much the same condition of things as on the right, except that the muscles of the forearm are here beginning to be more or less fixed, and there exists a long, sharp, bony ridge from the outer condyle to about two thirds of the length of the forearm.

"Posteriorly, on the left side of the neck, and apparently in the trapezius immediately after its origin from the occiput, is a projection of hard, bony substance, about the size and shape of a pigeon's egg. Lower down, between the angle of the scapula and the spine, is a large, hard, irregular mass. In the dorsal region, at about the tenth and eleventh vertebræ, where the trapezius takes its rise, and apparently formed in the angle of this muscle

of the left side, is another hard and somewhat movable mass. It is angular in shape, and extends upward on the side of the spine about one and a half inches, and outward and upward, in the lower fold of the muscle, about one inch. Moreover, in tracing the lower edge of this muscle to its attachment to the scapula some hardness is felt, and here and there sharp spiculæ of bone-like matter. On the right side, about two inches below the lower angle of the scapula, is another hard and irregular projection, about the size of a large egg, the last which has made its appearance; apparently it is incorporated in the lower edge of the latissimus dorsi. In the lumbar region, on each side, hard, bony plates occupy both spaces. The buttocks and lower extremities are quite free from disease, excepting one small nodule, about the size of a common nut, situated over the right os calcis, at the insertion of the tendo Achillis."

This boy exhibited no other structural or functional abnormality. He had taken iodide of potassium, but without any beneficial effect.

"Examples of this peculiar disease may be found recorded by Mr. C. Hawkins in the *Medical Gazette*, 1843 and 1844; by Dr. Rogers in vol. xiii. of the *American Journal of the Med. Sciences*; by Dr. Wilkinson in the *Medical Gazette* for 1846; by Dr. Testelin in the *Gazette Médicale de Paris* for 1839. In the museum of the Royal College of Surgeons of England there is a fine specimen of the disease, the description of which is given in the *Pathological Catalogue*, vol. v., p. 138, No. 3367."—*Medical Times and Gazette*, April 20, 1861.

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BOSTON: THURSDAY, JULY 18, 1861.

THE following letter from Dr. MARTIN contains interesting information with regard to the appearance of variolous disease among the troops at Fortress Monroe. Its statements fully confirm the impression which we expressed in our editorial of the 4th inst., that the newspapers were making a great deal out of what was, in fact, not a very serious matter. We print the letter as it is written, reserving to ourselves the privilege of adding a few comments at its conclusion.

CAMP BUTLER, NEWPORT'S NEWS, DEPT. OF VIRGINIA, }
July 10th, 1861. }

Messrs. Editors,—I notice in the number of your JOURNAL of July 4th (received yesterday), an editorial in regard to the vaccination of the troops from Massachusetts. The article referred to deals in such phrases as "We certainly THINK, so far as we are acquainted with facts," &c.; "We have no reason to doubt," and "We have little doubt," &c. &c. As there is no internal evidence that the editorial alluded to