IV. *On the Effects of Abstinence in Diseases of the Digestive Tube.*

No practitioner would dream of giving animal, or any kind of full diet, in acute inflammatory affections of the stomach or bowels; but, M. P. observes, there is some difficulty in ascertaining the time when we ought to discontinue the starvation system, when the disease assumes the chronic form. The appetite of the patient is some indication; though it is not always to be depended on. The effects resulting from the process of digestion, and also from the sanguification which ensues, are more safe criteria. Because the tongue is loaded, and the appetite null, we are not thence to conclude that food is unnecessary. Often, in such a case, the attempt to masticate will recal some goût for victuals, and quickly clean the tongue. Pain in the stomach is not always a counter indication against food. On the contrary, there are many cases and constitutions, where the epigastric pain is lessened by eating and increased by long fasting. Patients of this kind will throw off slops from their stomachs, and both relish and digest animal food.

The author has pushed his remarks to the diseases of the encephalon, and the effects of rigorous depletion and abstinence in such cases. But our limits are exceeded, and we must close the paper here.

II.

ON DISEASE OF THE COLON AND LARGE INTESTINES, SIMULATING HEPATIC AFFECTION.

By T. NUGENT, Member of Apothecaries' Hall, Dublin, &c. &c.

I AM induced to offer the following remarks, chiefly to the junior mem-

bers of the profession, from the circumstance of my having so frequently, in the course of my experience, met with cases illustrative of the subject to which they relate. Chronic affections of the colon, proceeding from the irritation of feces long retained in the cells of the large intestines, I have found to be productive of a variety of symptoms which would seem to indicate liver disease: such as fullness, pain and tenderness of the right side aggravated by pressure, languor, diminished appetite, furred tongue, high-colored urine, &c.; but which, by the steady and regular use of purgatives (of the resinous kind more especially), with the daily use of large emollient enemata, saline aperients being occasionally interposed, have, upon the expulsion of hardened and apparently long-impacted feces, completely disappeared and left the patient restored to perfect health. Nor is it the least important benefit derived from this treatment, that the patient is frequently saved by it from the deleterious effects which mercury produces on some constitutions — mercury, which, when rashly administered and long persevered in, leads to such debilitating consequences and the continuance of that state of the system most favorable for the disease in question. It has been my lot, in many instances, to observe, with much pain, mistakes of this sort committed: intestinal affections confounded with and treated as diseases of the liver, while the liver was, in fact, no more than functionally, and that too but slightly, deranged; with the usual bad effects of long confinement, and unnecessary mercurial courses, more strongly manifested, of course, when delicate females were the subjects of such injudicious management.

I shall give the details of a few out of several cases which have come under my observation; my object, as I have already hinted, being simply to draw the attention of practitioners to complaints of the kind in question, and to their proper exciting causes. The treatment here detailed, it will be understood, is not laid down as anything more than a mere outline; it is to be modified in each particular case, according to circumstances, especially should there be appearances of inflammatory action supervening—when the methods of depletion and antiphlogistic remedies will, of course, be adopted; but after the subsidence of which, the purgative treatment, especially as it will act best upon the large intestines, will be adopted. It is my wish to confine myself to such facts in the history of my cases, as will be most useful for the illustration of my views.

June 20th, 1829.—Miss ———, æt. 22, of a delicate and spare habit of body, and of a marked nervous and lymphatic temperament. Complained for several months of a dull pain and tenderness, increased upon pressure, in right side, near the margin of the ribs, and extending upwards. Her countenance sallow; her appetite, previously good, now defective; her spirits low, with feelings of great languor and debility, slight exertion producing dyspnoea, palpitation, &c.; her pulse quick, but regular; the urine highly colored, sometimes depositing a lateritious sediment; the bowels scantily, although daily opened; the fæces generally duly tinged with bile. For these complaints, in the country where she resided, she had been twice salivated, blistered, &c. and subjected to a long and rigorous

confinement whilst under the mercurial influence; and notwithstanding all these, with scarcely any mitigation of pain in right side, but considerable aggravation of nervousness and debility.

Judging from the history of the case, and from the circumstances; the fæces almost always appearing duly tinged with bile, indicating that the liver could not be much functionally or organically deranged; the appearance of the side, which was swelled and gibbous, the seat of pain and tenderness, which corresponded with the great arch of the colon; and judging, also, from the non-beneficial effects of the mercurial treatment, blisters, nitro-muriatic baths, &c., which she had previously undergone,—it occurred to me that these symptoms might be caused or depend upon the presence of hardened fæces, not duly evacuated, but accumulated and lodged in the cells of the colon and larger intestines, producing the effects which have been already detailed. I determined upon trying the effects of regular and full purgation for a short time, and, if possible, effect the removal of the offending matter. With these intentions I directed her to take the following:

R. Extracti colocyth. comp. Pulv. scammonii. Rhei. sing. ʒj. Pulv. ipecacuanhæ gr. iv. Olei carui. gutt. v. Ext. Hyosciam. Nigr. gr. viij. M. f. pilulæ xiv. quorum sumantur duæ vel tres H. S. om. nocte. Diebus tribus interpositis sumat. æger. haust. seq.:

R. Sulph. magnesiae 3ii. Carbon. ejusdem. ʒj. Aquæ Menth. sat. 3ij. tinc. sonnæ com. 3ij. M. fiat haustus, et mane quotidie ad tres vel quatuor dies, Injiciatur enema.

And also to use the following liniment :

R. Ole. camphor. de terebint.
utrusque 3vi. T. opii 3ijj.
M. f. linimentum, quo bene
affricetur pars qua dolet mane
nocteque.

After the fourth day some hardened fæces were observed to pass, which increased in quantity on the fifth and sixth. I then interposed a castor oil purgative draught, omitting the other remedies, except the pills, which I directed to be continued every night until further notice. Upon the first appearance of passing the hardened fæces, there was experienced considerable mitigation of pain, tenderness on pressure, and irregular fulness of the side, &c. ; and after the eighth day all the symptoms appeared completely removed, by directing her to take a good deal of exercise in the open air, attention to diet, and particularly attend to the alvine evacuations, taking care that no accumulations took place. She continued, from that period up to the present, upwards of two years, in perfect health.

The other case was also of a very delicate female, æt. 20, from the country, of highly scrofulous character and nervous temperament, and who had been subjected to a similar treatment, on the supposition of the liver being the seat of the complaint ; only, on account of the peculiar and violent effects of mercury on her constitution, the smallest quantity, in any shape, when exhibited, producing great debility, nervousness, hectic fever, cough, &c., it was more sparingly administered than in the preceding. In this case, as in the former, the pain was *lower* than the margin of the ribs ; and the seat of pain and

tenderness, when examined, seemed to correspond with the situation of the great arch of the colon ; and the swelling had the same gibbous appearance as observed in former cases. Upon continuing the purging plan of treatment (without going into detail) much after the preceding, in milder doses, however, in consequence of greater debility ; after continuing this practice for a few days, hardened fæces began to be voided, which was quickly followed by the same remarkable diminution of pain, tenderness, fulness, &c., and in a short time restoration to health,—at least such health as she had not enjoyed for a year preceding.

Another case was that of a gentleman, ætat. 35, of robust frame, strong and muscular, of the sanguine temperament. This person, whenever he allowed, for any time, his bowels to remain costive, was generally subject to a violent and acute attack of pain in the right side, accompanied frequently, or followed, by an attack of well-marked peritonitis. It was often found necessary in this case to pursue the antiphlogistic treatment most rigorously ; copious bleeding, both general and local, fomentations, enemata, mild unirritating laxatives, &c. until inflammation was subdued. On the supposition that the liver was exclusively the seat and the cause of his complaints, his former medical attendants subjected him to long courses of mercury, exhibiting it both by inunction and mouth ; as also to long and rigorous confinement, without either apparent benefit or injury to his constitution, or mitigation of pain, tenderness in the right side, &c., and although the mercury was twice pushed to salivation, and each time the salivation continued for some weeks, the

mercurial treatment having failed in this case as in the preceding (although his strong constitution resisted its deleterious effects with impunity) either in removing pain, or lessening the sensibility of future attacks, he, after the salivations, having had three or four attacks in quick succession, I then determined upon trying the purgation plan, much as detailed heretofore, due allowance being made for difference of strength and constitution; and in some time after the expulsion of hardened fæces, the symptoms rapidly disappeared, with almost perfect remission of pain, &c.; and, by directing him to attend to the future state of the bowels, taking care that no partial retention of fæces were allowed, but that the bowels were fully and duly evacuated, attention to regular living, &c., he continues quite free from complaint of any kind, a period now upwards of eighteen months; although, previously to this, he was subject to attacks, as before mentioned, every three or six months.

There are a number of other cases which I do not think it necessary to add, sufficient, I trust, having been advanced to prove that the mistake of confounding all diseases of the digestive apparatus, accompanied with pain, tenderness in the right side, &c., with inflammation of the liver, acute or chronic, is one of a very serious nature: and to show that, by endeavoring to establish a more accurate diagnosis, a simpler, better, and safer mode of treatment might be adopted, and the injurious, and, in many constitutions (particularly when long continued), the deleterious effects of mercury avoided, as well as the inconvenience of long confinement; both of which may lay the foundation of future confirmed ill health,

and at no remote period undermine the constitution, particularly in those of a strumous diathesis, or predisposed to pulmonary consumption.

III.

ACCOUNT OF THE POST-MORTEM EXAMINATION OF THE BODY OF PATRICK CONNELL, UPON WHOM MR. BRODIE PERFORMED THE OPERATION OF TYING THE EXTERNAL ILIAC ARTERY, IN THE YEAR 1828.

PATRICK CONNELL was a patient under the care of Mr. Brodie, in St. George's Hospital, for inguinal aneurism, in the early part of the year 1828, and for which it was found necessary to tie the external iliac artery, which was accordingly performed with success by Mr. Brodie, on the 21st of February in that year. As the details of this case have been published in this Journal, (April 1828, p. 328,) I presume that the following account of the state of the patient subsequent to the operation, and of the appearances observed on dissection, will be interesting to your readers.

Since the performance of the operation, the patient, who had always been very unhealthy, and had been exposed to many hardships, has never been completely well, constantly suffering from cough and affection of the lungs; his legs became œdematous; and continuing thus to get worse, in the early part of the present year he became dropsical and died.

Upon examining the remains of the aneurismal tumor, it was found to be somewhat larger than a pigeon's egg, situated immediately below Poupart's ligament, and filled with a firm coagulum. Upon tracing the vessels connected with it, it was