a book, but omitted some words altogether and mispronounced others.

Upon the 8th he told the time by my watch correctly and without hesitation, could now say the word "key," and pointing to several articles in the room, named them without being asked, as if proud of his ability. Is much improved in every respect. Some five or six days since he had some involuntary twitching on right side of the face, and seemed more stupid for a few hours.

March 14th.—Is quite sensible when addressed, and knows the names of things. I now tested him both in reading and writing. On being asked to name some capital letters, he was partly successful, but failed several times, or if he answered correctly, did so only after some hesitation. In repeating the Lord's Prayer, he omitted some of the words altogether. He afterwards wrote out the Lord's Prayer for me without the book, but spelt about thirteen words wrongly and omitted several words entirely, but says he could write it correctly before he was ill. He wrote it correctly from the book, however, as in the previous cases, with his own name and the word "Manchester." Subsequently he repeated and also wrote out the Lord's Prayer (without the book) with scarcely a mistake. There was still some weakness of the right side.

He was discharged on the 29th, and when seen subsequently was quite well. He told the nurse that he knew what the objects were which were shown him, but could not name them.

Remarks.—This case only calls for two or three remarks. I think the sequence of events was as follows:—A mild attack of scarlatina, followed by meningitis and thrombosis of the left middle cerebral artery, interfering with the proper vascular supply and nutrition of that portion of the brain supplied by it. This explanation seems to me more likely than that there was simply embolism of the artery, for the pain in the head on the left side, with vomiting, &c., previous to the convulsive attack, followed by partial hemiplegia and totally unconscious state, clearly point to some morbid action antecedent to the actual attack of convulsions with insensibility, which was probably coincident with, and caused by, the cutting off the blood-supply through thrombosis of the artery.

It is interesting also to notice in the amnesic patient (as in this case), that whilst he is unable to write from dictation or memory correctly, yet he can copy a printed page without any difficulty and with few mistakes. Of course it may be said that this is due to imperfect education and inability to spell the words, but that it was not so here is clearly proved by the boy subsequently writing the Lord's Prayer correctly without the book; and though fourteen years old, and more than usually intelligent for his station of life, he utterly failed to write his own name until he copied it from the medicine bottle, although afterwards he could write it correctly. I have by me several specimens of his attempts at writing, from which one can see at a glance that it was not through imperfect education that he failed to write when the words were dictated to him. This subject will be found fully treated of, and cases mentioned, with a facsimile of what one patient wrote from copying and from dictation, in a paper by Dr. Bristowe in the 2nd volume of St. Thomas's Hospital Reports.

Southport.

THE DANGERS OF CHLOROFORM, ETC., AND THE NITRITE OF AMYL.

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SOME years ago, when nitrite of amyl was first used at Guy's Hospital, Dr. Goodhart and myself studied its effects, when taken internally, upon the bloodvessels in the healthy optic disc and retina. The effect is as rapid as it is striking. Three or four seconds after taking three drops of the drug on sugar the bloodvessels of the retina (arteries and veins, but especially the veins) become enormously dilated and gorged with blood, leaving no doubt as to simultaneously existing cerebral hyperæmia, with greatly accelerated circulation of blood.

Lately, after observing upon myself the effects of inhalation of the vapour of the nitrite of amyl, it occurred to me that in cases of faintness or of defective breathing or heart's action, while under the influence of an anæsthetic, nitrite of amyl might be of use. A few cases will show the encouraging effects of this agent.

CASE 1.—Given a mixture of alcohol, ether, and chloroform. Young man, hydrocephalic, inherited syphilis; iridectomised on both eyes; suddenly became pale, deeply insensible, with pulse and respiration very defective. Lint, with a few (three) drops of nitrite of amyl, was placed over nose and mouth. In two or three seconds a deep inspiration, followed by others, flushed face, quick pulse, and return of sensibility, were observed.

CASE 2.—Given chloroform. A boy, pale, fat, blue lips and cheeks, became suddenly very faint (blue lips, blood turning black, breathing very imperfect). The same quick result, with vomiting, followed the inhalation of the nitrite of amyl (three drops).

CASE 3.—Given chloroform. A middle-aged woman suddenly became blue in the face and stertorous (tongue falling back). Lint, with ten drops of the nitrite of amyl, was placed over mouth and nose. In a few seconds the blueness and stertorous breathing gave way to good colour, regular breathing, and sickness and vomiting, though no food had been given for several hours.

The most striking effects of the nitrite of amyl were the quick restoration of breathing, of a good colour, and the rapid appearance of sickness. It remains to be shown whether injection of this agent will have a still better effect.

Medical Societies.

PATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

At the ordinary meeting of this Society on May 4th, Mr. George Pollock, President, in the chair, the debate on the Germ Theory of Disease was resumed and concluded. Dr. Murchison made a powerful speech against the germ theory and in favour of the *de novo* origin of specific fevers. Mr. Wagstaffe and Dr. Goodhart detailed the results of their examination of blood and pus under different conditions, the conclusions arrived at by each observer being somewhat conflicting; while Dr. Payne, in a speech favouring the germ theory, directed attention to the precise significance of bacteria and their relation to putrefaction. Dr. Bastian made an effective reply, and the meeting (which was less fully attended than on the previous two evenings) adjourned. It is understood that a very large number of specimens are down for exhibition at the next meeting (May 18th)—the last of the session.

Dr. MURCHISON.—Mr. President: Not having much personal knowledge on the subject of bacteria, it was not my intention to have taken part in this debate; but, having been requested to do so, I will make a few remarks suggested by the observations of previous speakers and by my own experience of those diseases in which bacteria are believed to play so important a part. And, in the first place, I would advert to the very interesting speech of Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson at the last meeting, who endeavoured to draw a distinction between so-called virulent and contagious inflammations and the acute specific fevers. He maintained that "their phenomena and their clinical history prove that they are specific; that they run a definite course, protecting the organism afterwards; that they breed true, which is the test of specificity; that they seem to require that the germs which have produced them in one individual shall be applied, and that they are producible by no other means." For this class of diseases Mr. Hutchinson expounds the germ theory in its entirety, and he maintains that "these diseases are only produced by a germ in the sense of a seed, just as we may sow a definite crop in the