III.

DIFFICULTY OF SWALLOWING FROM
DISLOCATION OR DIASTASIS OF THE
CORNUA OF THE OS HYOIDES.

SAUVAGES, in his nosology, has given the name of the dysphagia of Valsalva to the difficulty of swallowing arising from this cause, which was first described by the latter author. Since his time, Borsieri and Molinelli have recorded several cases of the affection in question, sometimes occasioned by external violence, sometimes from swallowing large morsels of food. Dr. Gio. Bat. Magna has recently published a similar case in the *Annali Universali di Medicina*, of Milan, for November and December, 1828, of which we shall make a short abstract.

A man of sixty, extremely meagre and flabby, whilst endeavoring to swallow a large piece of the tendon of beef, thought he felt it stick in his throat, and made many attempts to get it down, without being even able to swallow his saliva. Each unsuccessful effort was accompanied with a peculiar noise of air gurgling up the œsophagus, but respiration and the power of speech were free. Nothing could be seen or felt about the pharynx or neck, and a bougie passed readily down the œsophagus, without encountering any obstacle or procuring any relief. The painful spot being precisely the region of the os hyoides, and no foreign body being lodged there, Signor Magna imagined that dislocation, or rather diastasis, of the appendices of the os hyoides itself, might be the cause of all the symptoms. He accordingly passed down, behind the base of the tongue, the fore and middle fingers of the right hand, and moved the

os hyoides in the manner recommended by Valsalva and Sauvages, whilst the left hand was applied on the bone behind. Immediately the uneasy sensations experienced by the patient in the spot disappeared, and he was able to swallow water with ease.

Two years afterwards, a similar accident happened from taking a large mouthful of hard cold boullie, and was remedied by similar means. *Med. Chir. Rev.*

IV.

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Some Account of Affections of the Face, considered in Relation to the Appearance of a new Disease of this Part, designated, by Dr. Jackson, Gangrænopsis.

By R. A. MERRIMAN, M.D.

THREE cases of Gangrænopsis have come under my observation within the last three years.

CASE 1st.—The first was a little girl about ten years old, who had taken, in the course of ten days, four cathartic doses of calomel, repeated once in two or three days. She was so unfortunate as to fall into the hands of two of the fraternity without consultation, which is always a misfortune to the patient, because it is impossible for one to know the doings of the other very accurately. When I first saw her, the swelling and soreness of the mouth were called canker. The swelling of the parts about the mouth progressed uninterruptedly to gangrene and sphacelation of both lips, and the greater part of the right cheek, before her death, and left such a hideous spectacle in the countenance of the child, as made it de-

sirable she might not survive. Our wishes were realized.

CASE 2d.—The second case was a man about fifty years old, who followed the coasting business from this place to Boston. He thought the complaint was caused by shaving off a pimple, and taking cold. This patient had taken no mercury. When I first saw him, he had been under the care of Dr. — a short time. The face had very much the appearance of that of the little girl, excepting it was more confined to one side of the lips and one cheek. The disorder progressed to sloughing and separation of a portion of the cheek to the bigness of a dollar, near the angle of the mouth. The wound healed readily, leaving a large contracted scar.—This was the only fortunate case of the three. The treatment was similar to the others, principally local, the fermenting poultice, charcoal, and the steams of vinegar. The system did not appear to suffer very materially.

CASE 3d.—The third case was that of a servant girl, about whom there could not much be known. She was about sixteen years old, and it was supposed, by those immediately acquainted with her, that she had taken something for the purpose of interrupting a supposed pregnancy. On account of the swelling of the organs of speech, she could not speak intelligibly when I first saw her, about five days before her death. The swelling was great, had been rapid, and continued rapidly to increase and extend; at my first visit, it was confined to the lips, mouth and left cheek. The whole neck above and some below

the clavicles at last was affected. Whether this patient had or had not taken any preparation of mercury, I could not ascertain. Gangrene had commenced a day or two before her death.—No remedies had any apparent effect in this case; she appeared to die from suffocation.

These cases occurred in the same neighborhood, within 150 yards of each other, in three successive years. The first case, the little girl, was connected with a poor family; the other two had all the comforts of health and sickness.

Since writing the above, two other cases have come to my knowledge. One, a girl about eighteen years old, who lived out of town, and was not seen by my friend Dr. Flagg, till three days before her death. This was very much such a case as my third,—the family suspecting that she had taken some means to procure abortion. The other was one to whom much mercury had been given, and pursued for a considerable time, in small doses, and even after profuse ptyalism had been established. This patient was a sea-faring man, about forty years old. His mouth and face swelled; he could not distinctly articulate for several months; his teeth fell out; and portions of his lower jaw, including the sockets of the teeth, came out. At the end of nine months he died, either of the original, or instituted disease.

In the year 1813, typhous fever prevailed in the part of the country where I then was practising. I recollect that in two protracted cases where mercury had been given in small doses for

a number of weeks, the cheeks were affected, as I supposed, with the medicine. In one, a small perforation, near the angle of the mouth, about the bigness of a dime, sphacelated and separated, without any swelling or inflammation; and this happened some time before the patient, a young lad, died.—The other case was a lady between fifty and sixty, who had swelling and inflammation in the neighborhood of the parotid gland. A large portion of the cheek sphacelated, and left an opening the bigness of a dollar, through which her food and drink flowed for some time. This patient recovered, and the wound healed, contracting the cheek and drawing her mouth on one side.

Other instances of sudden and unusual swellings about the mouth and face have occasionally arisen, which have subsided without making a lasting impression on our memories. A case happened in this town three years ago, where the tongue of a child eight or ten years old swelled beyond the boundaries of the mouth, and so continued for ten days, accompanied with much dropping of saliva. This case was unattended with much disturbance of the system.

When I first saw Dr. Jackson's account of "Gangrænopsis" in the Medical Recorder, I felt as though there might be some doubt about the specific character of the disease in most of the cases which he enumerated,—that they might have been the legitimate effects of mercury: a doubt which Dr. Jackson has more than hinted. It cannot be disguised, that the action of this most powerful weapon against disease, produces

sometimes very disastrous effects. It has fallen to my lot to witness these effects too frequently; and it must be confessed that we are all sometimes surprised at the sudden and accumulated effects of this medicine: but, of the severe cases related in this paper, in one certainly, the second case, no mercury had been taken. This was a very severe, but successful case;—and it is most probable that in two others, the third and fifth, none had been taken. In Dr. Jackson's cases, the most of them had taken mercury. Dr. Webber, in the Journal of Science, has not even appeared to suspect that mercury may have been the cause of the complaints. Only two of his cases appear to have been very severe. In these, one was established on his first visit, and amended under the use of mercury; in the other, mercury had been given. In the other two it is likely, agreeably to his custom, calomel had been given.

In Dr. Brown's case mercury was given, though several weeks previous to the appearance of the swelling. I have never observed anything like a mesial line marked in this disease, though most of the swelling has been on one side, but not confined to it. In the first case here related, the little girl, the sphacelation included all the lips and one cheek. The disorder has not been confined to children.

I have thought that these affections may be accounted for without considering them *sui generis*, or, that a new disease is making its appearance. The face and parts about it are peculiarly liable to sudden swellings and inflammation. These swellings are not only sudden, but very great,

so as entirely to obliterate the distinguishing features of the individual. The tongue is liable to these sudden swellings; carious and diseased teeth produce them; the whole face is frequently so swelled from exposures to vegetable poisons, as they are called, and the stings of poisonous insects, that the features of the individual are not recognizable. These swellings most generally go off by resolution. This peculiar diathesis probably is more susceptible in children than in more mature life. This aptitude to inflammation and swelling may be brought into action by various exciting causes; such as carious teeth, vegetable and animal poisons, and, as in one of the cases above related, by shaving off a pimple in taking off the beard, and by mercury.

In the first case related in this paper, we were satisfied that the gangrenous erosion was caused by the operation of mercury. The case was supposed to be one of debility or atrophy, where worms had become troublesome. Cathartic doses of calomel were directed once in two days, and observed till four doses were taken: the patient then was visited by Dr. —, without any knowledge of medicine having been prescribed previously, or taken; calomel was again prescribed, and upwards of one hundred lumbrici were discharged from the bowels a few days previous to the child's death. In this case, the patient evidently took a double portion of mercury. I would here too remark, that the lips both of old and young are subject to eruptions, but more particularly in young; and they may be more liable to the specific action of mercury in

young subjects than older, and more perhaps than other parts of the face.

Murblehead, Jan. 1, 1830.

V.

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ANEURISM OF THE TEMPORAL ARTERY SPONTANEOUSLY RELIEVED.

By EBENEZER STONE, M.D.

IN the spring of 1827, while visiting a lady sick of a lung fever, she showed me a tumor upon the scalp, near the foramen in the parietal bone, which, on examination, proved to be an aneurism of the temporal artery, of the size of a walnut. It pulsated strongly, as did the different branches of the temporal artery, which were enlarged and tortuous, spreading over the whole side of the forehead. She informed me that the tumor took place while she was sick, some time before, of a fever attended with severe headach.

It remained stationary till the summer of 1828, when it enlarged and became more troublesome, interrupting sleep by the throbbing pain. Pressure was now tried, with temporary relief. The distress, however, occasioned by the aneurism was so great, that an operation was proposed and consented to. But, in the mean time, she was seized with pneumonia, attended with a violent cough, which produced great pain in the tumor. Inflammation took place, so that the side of the head was much swollen, and the eye became œdematous. But, on the subsidence of the inflammation, we were surprised to find that the varicose arteries had disappeared, and that the tumor