Water	785.000
Solid constituents	215.000
Fat	2.580
Albumen	76.540
Hæmato-globulin	120.400
Extractive and salts	8.600

Here the solid constituents were greater than in normal blood.

From an analysis of menstrual fluid made by Denis, it is composed of.

Water	825.0
Solid constituents	175.0
Fibrin	0.5
Phosphorized fat	3.9
Albumen	48.3
Blood corpuscles.....	63.4
Mucus	45.3
Osmazome and cruorin	1.1
Soluble salts	9.5
Earthy phosphates and carbonates .	2.5
Peroxide of iron.....	0.5

And Rindskopf and Vogel's analyses, though not complete, are also closely allied to Denis's—that is, they indicate about 17 per cent. of solid residue.

Simon believes that fibrin is always present in menstrual blood, but that the mucus deprives it of the power of coagulating. I am inclined to think that his explanation is erroneous, and that the fibrin, if it exist at all in the fluid, is employed in the production of the exudation globule, for this appears to me to be the general product of that substance when blood is poured out upon any living surface.

Tredegar-square, July, 1845.

ON THE USE OF ERGOT OF RYE IN PURPURA HÆMORRHAGICA AND SOME OTHER DISEASES.

By A. Ross, M.D., M.R.C.S.E., Boulogne-sur-mer, late Physician to the Suffolk General Hospital.

I HAVE read with much interest, in the last number of *THE LANCET*, (July 19,) the case of purpura so carefully reported by Mr. Hogg. I am not, however, quite clear as to the share of merit due to the lead in effecting the cure; nay, it appears to me, that though one of the symptoms—viz., the petechiæ, began to disappear on the day on which the lead was discontinued, after three days' use, many of the most serious symptoms—the hæmorrhage from different parts of the mucous membrane, and the great constitutional disturbance, assumed a more aggravated degree after this period of the disease, and only yielded by slow steps to the various means so judiciously employed.

The report of the case extends from the 21st of April to the 25th of May; the lead was used from the 24th till the 27th of April; and on the 4th of May the prognosis was, as appears to me, still very unfavourable. I think, therefore, there is room to doubt the correctness of setting down the case as one successfully treated by lead.

Nothing can be further from my intention than to imply any doubt as to the propriety of the treatment, which must be allowed to have been most judicious, and to evince much readiness of resource in a case where the symptoms continued so urgent for so long a period. My only object is to avail myself of this opportunity of pointing out to the profession a remedy which I have found to be most energetic in a case similar to the one reported by Mr. Hogg, and which was doubtless a most obstinate one.

I was asked, in the spring of 1840, by Mr. Stutter, at that period the zealous house-surgeon of the Suffolk General Hospital, to see, as a matter of curiosity, a young man who had just been admitted under the care of my colleague, Dr. Jackson. I forget whether Dr. Jackson had then seen him or prescribed for him, but finding him labouring under purpura, with hæmorrhage from different organs, accompanied with such prostration as led us to fear that a fatal termination to the disease was not distant, I suggested, provided Dr. Jackson should approve of it, the trial of the ergot of rye, which it struck me might be usefully combined with compound infusion of roses. The use of this combination was immediately commenced, and continued for some days, in the dose, as far as I remember, of five grains of the powdered ergot, and an ounce of the compound infusion of roses, every four hours, with a generous diet. Under this treatment, with the addition of some aperient when necessary, the case went on with great rapidity to a favourable termination, without a single untoward symptom occurring to interrupt its progress.

The effects of the treatment were so decidedly beneficial in this case, apparently so unfavourable, that Mr. Stutter was anxious, I remember, that it should be communicated at the time

to *THE LANCET*.—However, I considered then that it might be considered premature, and am only now induced to make the communication, from my attention having been recalled to the subject by Mr. Hogg's severe case.

Several years' experience of the effects of the ergot in certain stages of labour, leaves no doubt in my mind of the value of this medicine in obstetric practice.

I have also found it a valuable remedy, combined or not with infusion of roses, in menorrhagia, and in controlling sanguineous discharge from the uterus after abortion.

I have no doubt, if my idea of the value of the ergot as a remedy in purpura should be confirmed by further trial, that it might be found useful also in sea scurvy, and other passive hæmorrhages, depending on a peculiar and vitiated state of the blood.

Boulogne, July 21st, 1845.

A NEW HÆMORRHOID NEEDLE.

By G. BORLASE CHILDS, Esq. Surgeon to the City Police Force.

I BEG leave to forward to you a drawing of an instrument which I have recently invented, for the purpose of applying ligatures to small tumours of the vagina and of the rectum.

This instrument will be found particularly adapted for the removal of hæmorrhoids. It not unfrequently happens in those affections, that considerable difficulty is experienced in getting the ligature to remain close around the base of the tumour, and sundry attempts are made ere the operator succeeds. This is peculiarly the case when the tumours are not very prominent, their bases broad, and a number of them situated close to each other.

The ordinary mode of proceeding in such cases, is to pass the ligature around the tumour, with the right and left index fingers, either aided by a tenaculum or not, as the operator may deem expedient. With the utmost precaution, it sometimes occurs, that our endeavours to complete the operation are embarrassed by the constant slipping of the ligature, or, what is still worse, the operation may prove unsuccessful from the ligature embracing a portion only of the hæmorrhoid.

Such accidents are less likely to occur when the hæmorrhoid needle is resorted to, for it enables the operator, with great facility, to keep the silk in close contact with the base of the tumour, and when two or three are close together, and are situated high up the rectum, the ligature is readily passed between them.

As seen by the drawing, the instrument is of very simple construction, and in shape is somewhat similar to a button-hook; on its under surface, B, is a groove, for the reception of the silk, which latter must be well waxed before it is used; at each extremity C, A, is a slit, or notch, for the purpose of nipping the silk, and retaining it in its proper situation.

The operator carries the needle, previously threaded, behind the tumour, and with the handle slightly raised, in order that the groove may be brought to bear immediately upon its base; he gives it to an assistant to hold, directing him to keep a steady and firm pressure downwards and outwards; the operation is then completed in the ordinary way, the ligature, as it is tied, releasing itself from the groove of the needle.

A modification of the same instrument might, I think, be advantageously resorted to for the removal of polypi, and other tumours of the uterus.*

* The needle is made by Mr. Ferguson, of West Smithfield.

Vaidy, in his article "Hygiene Militaire," in the "Dictionnaire des Sciences Medicales," states that, under the most favourable circumstances, an army will furnish about 5 per cent. of sick. During a campaign, not less than 10 per cent. must be calculated on, and in the event of reverses or other untoward circumstances, this becomes immensely increased.